



National Survey of Early Care & Education

Fact Sheet

April 2015

Who is Providing Home-based Early Care and Education?

INTRODUCTION

This fact sheet provides the first nationally representative portrait of home-based providers of early care and education using data from the newly available National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE). We describe individuals who care for other people's children, age five and under, in home-based settings. Key characteristics we report include the numbers of such providers, numbers of children cared for, whether providers are paid/unpaid for care, and what if any prior personal relationships existed between providers and the children they care for.

NSECE analyses use a three-part classification for individuals providing home-based care to children age 5 and under who are not yet in kindergarten. The classification emerges from the study's sampling approach, which achieved comprehensive coverage of all individuals regularly providing home-based care by drawing on two different ways of identifying those individuals. These two sources were 1) state and national lists of ECE providers, and 2) a nationally representative sample of households that were screened for individuals providing home-based care at least 5 hours weekly to children not their own.

'Listed' individuals appear on state or national lists of early care and education services, such as licensed, regulated, license-exempt, or registered home-based providers.

'Unlisted, paid' individuals do not appear on state or national lists, but were identified in households. Individuals in this category receive payment for the care of at least one child.

'Unlisted, unpaid' individuals do not appear on state or national lists, but were identified in households. They do not receive payment for providing care. This category includes family and friends who may or may not live in the same household as the children they look after.

The National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) is a set of four integrated, nationally representative surveys conducted in 2012. These were surveys of 1) households with children under 13, 2) home-based providers of ECE, 3) center-based providers of ECE, and 4) the center-based provider workforce. Together they characterize the supply of and demand for early care and education in America and permit better understanding of how well families' needs and preferences coordinate with providers' offerings and constraints. The study is funded by the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The data for this fact sheet come from 5,241 home-based provider questionnaires completed in 2012 by individuals regularly providing home-based care to at least one child birth through age five years, not yet in kindergarten.



The NSECE classifications are quite different from many other commonly used terms in the field, such as family child care provider or family, friend and neighbor care. Exhibit 1 below indicates, however, that the reality of home-based care is quite complex. Virtually any categorization will result in overlap and miss some of the nuances of who is actually providing care to whom and for what, if any, payment.

Exhibit 1. Examples of Common Home-based Arrangements and their NSECE Classification

Examples of Home-Based Care	NSECE Classification
Family Child Care Providers	Listed or Unlisted, Paid, depending on state requirements and provider's status
Early Head Start (home-based)	Listed
Grandmother caring for one grandchild who does not live with her	Unlisted Paid or Unlisted Unpaid, depending on whether she is paid (whether by the family or through a subsidy)
Grandmother caring for a grandchild and who also operates a licensed family day care home	Listed
Nanny	Unlisted Paid
Uncle receiving subsidy payments to care for nephew	Unlisted Paid
Adult sibling who lives in the same household as younger sibling children and cares for them for free at least five hours per week	Unlisted Unpaid
Neighbor providing at least 5 hours per week of paid babysitting	Unlisted Paid
Family, friend or neighbor providing at least 5 hours per week of care	Could be any category depending on: - payment status of any child in care - appearance of provider in state administrative lists

Exhibit 2 provides the number of individuals providing each of these three types of home-based care, as well as the number of children birth through age five years who are receiving at least some regular care from that type of provider. **Numbering 2.7 million, unlisted, unpaid providers constitute the large majority of home-based providers, and care for 4 million children not yet in kindergarten. Listed home-based providers would primarily be family child care providers and are far fewer in number – 118,000 – and also care for a small minority of children five and under (751,000).**

Exhibit 2. Counts of Home-based Providers and the Children They Serve

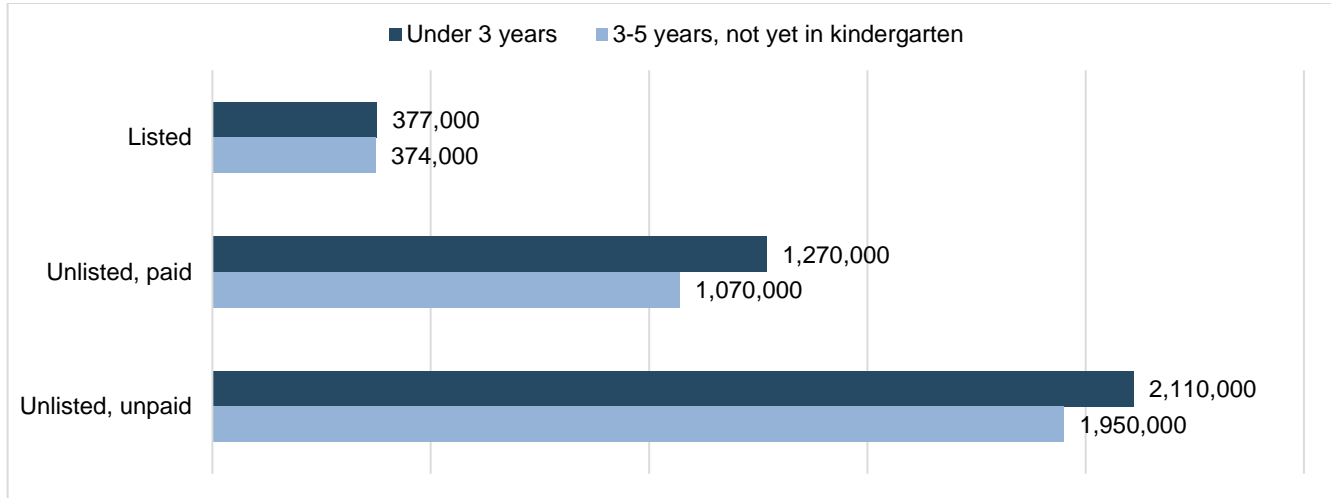
Type of Provider	Number of Providers	Number of Children Served [Age 0-5 Years]
Listed	118,000	751,000
Unlisted, Paid	919,000	2,340,000
Unlisted, Unpaid	2,730,000	4,060,000

AGES OF CHILDREN CARED FOR

Exhibit 3 splits enrollment numbers by children's ages. **In each type of care, roughly similar numbers of children are under age three years or age three through five years (but not yet in kindergarten).** The

greatest difference is among unlisted, paid providers who serve just 18 percent more infants and toddlers than preschool-age children. This is quite different from enrollment in center-based care, which includes many fewer infants and toddlers than children age three through five years.¹ Home-based providers may also be serving school-age children, who are not shown in these tabulations.

Exhibit 3. Enrollment of Infants/Toddlers and Preschool-Age Children in Home-based ECE



COMMUNITY POVERTY DENSITY

Exhibit 4. Number of Home-based Providers by Type and Community Poverty Density

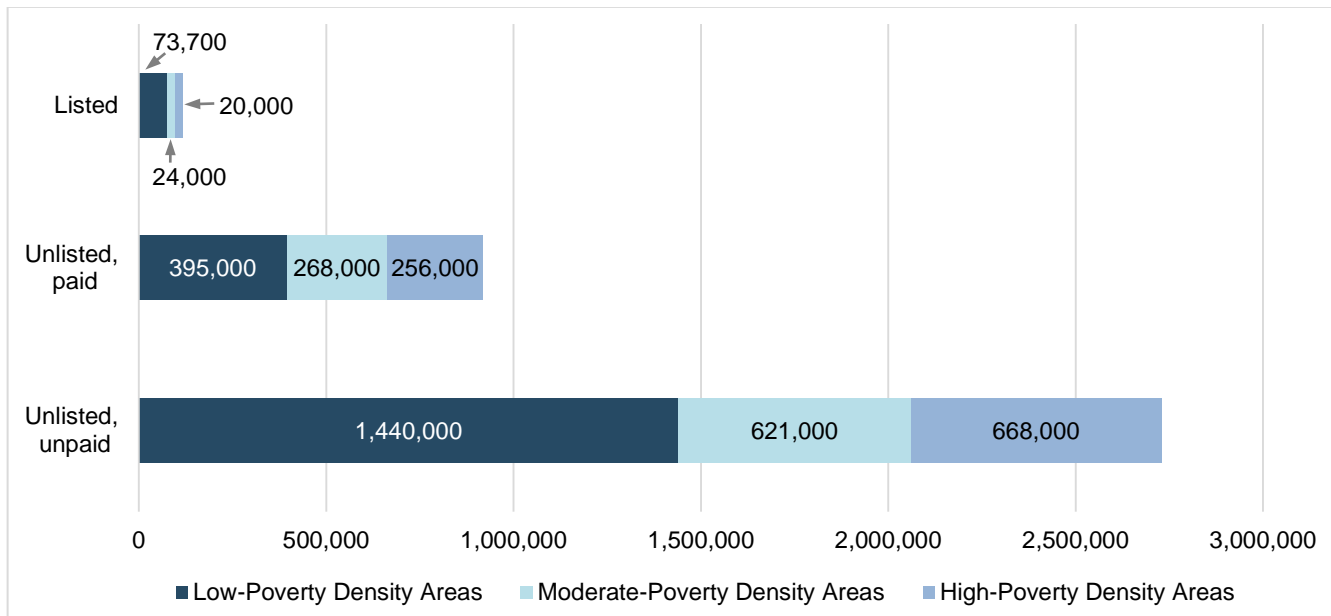


Exhibit 4 shows the community poverty density where home-based providers live. Poverty density of a community is defined by the adjusted share of the population with incomes below the poverty level. In low-

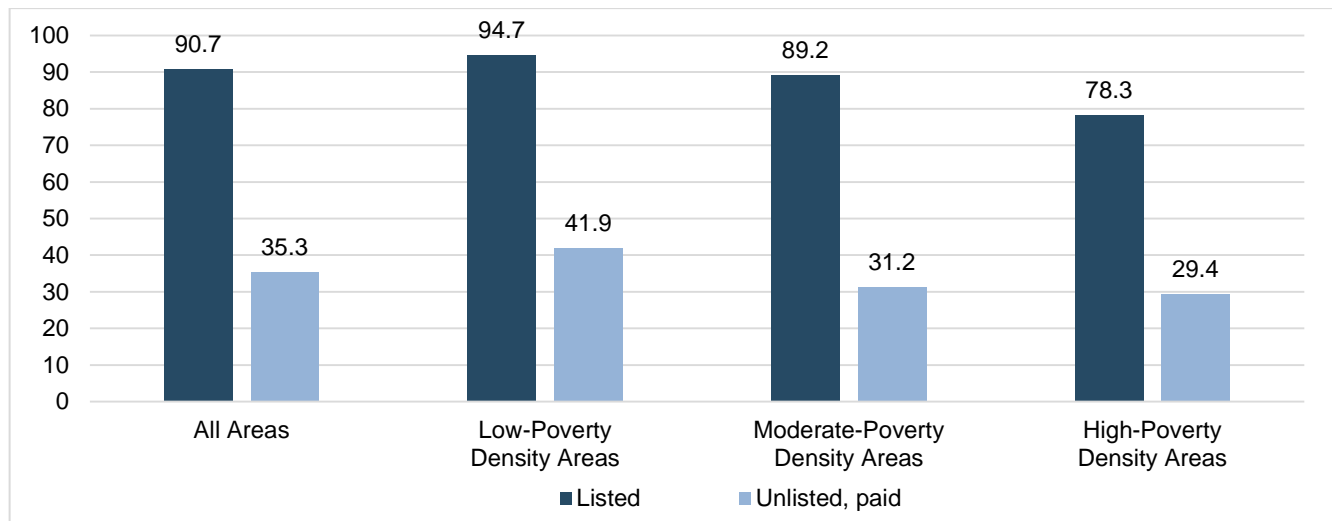
¹ See Exhibit 1, Characteristics of Center-based ECE Programs: Findings from the National Survey of Early Care and Education. OPRE Report 2014-73a.

poverty density communities, less than 13 percent of the population has incomes below the poverty level, whereas in moderate-poverty density communities more than 13 percent but less than 20 percent does so, and in high-poverty density more than 20 percent are living in poverty.² **More than half of listed providers and unlisted unpaid providers are in low-poverty density communities, but about 43 percent of unlisted paid providers are in low-poverty density communities (395,000 in low-poverty out of 919,000 total).**

PRIOR PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Discussions of home-based care often refer to care provided by family, friends and neighbors. NSECE data can describe each person who provides regular home-based care based on whether or not that person had prior personal relationships with the children he or she cares for. Prior personal relationships could include family, friends and neighbors, as well as colleagues, acquaintances from church, or other social ties. Exhibit 5 shows that overall, 91 percent of listed providers care for at least one child with whom they had no prior personal relationship. This drops to 35 percent among unlisted, paid providers; a great deal of paid care is happening among families and providers who also have social ties. Not surprisingly, individuals providing only unpaid care virtually always have a prior personal relationship to the children they care for. Unlisted, unpaid providers are therefore not shown in Exhibit 5. **The exhibit shows that listed and unlisted, paid providers in low-poverty density areas are more likely to care for at least one child with no prior personal relationship than listed and unlisted, paid providers in moderate or high-poverty density areas.**

Exhibit 5. Percentage of Home-based Providers (Listed and Unlisted, Paid) Serving at Least One Child with No Prior Personal Relationship, by Poverty Density



SUGGESTED CITATION

National Survey of Early Care and Education Project Team (2015). Fact Sheet: Who is Providing Home-Based Early Care and Education? OPRE Report No. 2015-43, Washington DC: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Available at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/national-survey-of-early-care-and-education-nsece-2010-2014>.

² Adjusted percentages take into account distance from the center of the community and the presence of children under age 18 within the community. Thresholds are informed by Bishaw, A. (2011). *Areas with concentrated poverty: 2006-2010*. U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics, and Statistics Administration, U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey Briefs, ACSBR/10-17.