

Mercer County Quick Facts: Children, Families, & Child Care

April 2026



Children in Mercer County

12,617	Children Under Age 3
21,809	Children Under Age 5
18,589	Children Age 5 - 8 Years
13,440	Children Age 9 - 11 Years
20,735	Children under age 6 with Working Parents
25,746	School-age children (6-12) with Working Parents

Family Economic Status

55%

NJ families who say it is very difficult or somewhat difficult to pay rent or mortgage

Source: Rutgers University – New Brunswick [Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling](#), July 2025

Families in Mercer County

43,219	Families with Children Under Age 18
24,989	Married Couples with Children Under 18
1,718	Dads Raising Children Under 18
9,074	Moms Raising Children Under 18
1,301	Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Under 18
34.1%	% of Families working hybrid or remote/NJ 2024

55%

NJ families who say it is very difficult or somewhat difficult to pay for groceries and other food

Source: Rutgers University – New Brunswick [Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling](#), July 2025

Low Income Working Families in Mercer County

15.2%	% of Children under Age 5 Living in Poverty
13.2%	% of Children Age 5-17 Living in Poverty
15.7%	% of Families with Children Under 5 in Poverty
10.6%	% of Families with Children Under 18 in Poverty
23.8%	% of Families with Children Under 5 Living with a Single Mom in Poverty
28,115	Children Living Below 200% of Poverty
33%	% of Children Living Below 200% of Poverty
11,080	Children under 18/Food Insecurity
13.2%	% of Children under 18/Food Insecurity

50%

NJ families who say it is very difficult or somewhat difficult to pay utility bills such as electricity or water

Source: Rutgers University – New Brunswick [Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling](#), July 2025

Education Related Stats for New Jersey

468	Full-day Preschool/County (2024-2025)
12,003	Enrolled in Head Start (includes 3,592 in Early Head Start) State-wide 2025
2019	2024
NJ NAEP 4th Grade Reading Results	
16%	20%
% of White 4 th Graders Reading Below Grade Level	
42%	51%
% of Hispanic 4 th Graders Reading Below Grade Level	
46%	47%
% of Black 4 th Graders Reading Below Grade Level	
45%	51%
% of Low-Income 4 th Graders Reading Below Grade Level	
83,846	NJ Children Age 6-17 Who Repeated a Grade (2022-2023)
6%	% of Age 6-17 Who Repeated a Grade/NJ

County Early Intervention/Special Education	
608	Part C, Infants & Toddlers with an IFSP
495	Section 619, Ages 3-5 with an IEP

County High School Graduation	
90.8%	High School on Time Graduate Rate (2024)
88.5%	High School Graduate Rate, Economically Disadvantaged (2024)

Child Care Subsidies in Mercer County (2025)

3,714	Number of Children Receiving Child Care Subsidy (Unduplicated)
2,456	Number of Families whose Children Received Subsidy (Unduplicated)

Mercer County Child Care Prices (2025)

\$16,172	Center-based Infant Care Annual Fees
\$12,301	Center-based Preschool-age Annual Fees
\$15,080	Family Child Care Home Infant Annual Fees
\$13,312	Family Child Care Home Preschool Annual Fees
\$17,960	NJ Annual Cost of 4-Year Public College Tuition & Related Fees for In-State Residents (2025)
Source: CCR&R child care price data (2025) and U.S. College Board, Annual Survey of Colleges, Public 4-Year Universities for 2025.	

Child Care Subsidy Rates

Child care assistance [rates](#) are tiered based on levels within Grow New Jersey Kids (GNJK). The lowest subsidy rate is paid to providers not participating in GNJK. The subsidy rate increases as GNJK levels rise (e.g., higher rates are paid for 3-star, 4-star, and 5-star care).

As of 4/1/26	Center Providers				Family Child Care Providers			
	Child Age Group	Licensed Child Care Centers Monthly Rate	State Assistance Monthly Rate (4-Star GNJK)	Licensed Child Care Centers Annualized	State Assistance Rate Annualized (4-Star GNJK)	Registered Family Child Care Homes Monthly Rate	State Assistance Monthly Rate (4-Star GNJK)	Registered Family Child Care Homes Annualized
Infant	\$1,591.66	\$1,746.19	\$19,100	\$20,954.28	\$1,217.56	\$1,452.54	\$14,611	\$17,430.48
Toddler	\$1,417.54	\$1,500.55	\$17,010	\$18,006.60	\$1,217.56	\$1,374.11	\$14,611	\$16,489.32
Preschooler	\$1,265.66	\$1,357.41	\$15,188	\$16,288.92	\$1,067.23	\$1,321.83	\$12,807	\$15,861.96
School-age	\$1,193.54	\$0.00	\$14,322	\$0.00	\$1,061.95	\$1,061.95	\$12,743	\$12,743.40

Source: New Jersey Department of Human Services, Maximum Child Care Payment Rates, April 2026

Sources:

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 National Center for Education Statistics, 2024 Reading Grades 4 and 8 Assessment Report Cards: Summary Data Tables for National and State Average Scores and NAEP Achievement Level Results. [2024 NAEP 4th Grade Reading Results, NJ](#).
 NJ Department of Education, [Full-day preschool enrollment](#), NJ School Performance Report 2024-2025
 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Head Start, [2025 Program Information Report \(PIR\), NJ](#).
 Annie E. Casey, Kids Count Data Center, [New Jersey Profile Children Age 6-17 Who Repeated One or More Years of School](#) (2022-2023).
 Rutgers University [Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling](#), July 2025
 NJ Part C, Infants and Toddlers, [Early Intervention Report](#) (2025); NJ Department of Education, [Section 619, Ages 3-5](#) (2025)
 NJ Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) agency subsidy data, 2025.
 U.S. College Board, Annual Survey of Colleges, Public 4-Year Universities, [Average 2025 Tuition and Fees at Public Four-Year Institutions by State](#)

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