



Beaverton Childcare Survey Results

November 6, 2019

According to the United States Census Bureau, estimates calculated in 2017 report that 25.7% of households in Beaverton have a child under the age of six and 59.6% have a child between the ages of 6 and 17,¹ which makes access to childcare a major issue for many Beaverton families. To understand the status of childcare and needs of the community, two surveys were conducted to gather their input. The first survey was open to the entire Beaverton community and the second was sent to two of the largest employers in Beaverton, Saint-Gobain and Brown Machining Group. The city-wide survey received 183 responses and the employee survey received 47. The survey asked community members what types of childcare they used, their views on cost and quality of care to understand how to improve accessibility to this service in Beaverton. In addition, some interviews were conducted to hear from the providers to collect more data and to hear their points of view on where improvements could be made. In some cases, the sample size is very low, and the results should be treated as directional and not conclusive.

Childcare Needs

Age

Of the 183 people who responded to the community-wide survey, 73% have a child under the age of twelve. The median age of the children in the city-wide survey was 36 months to kindergarten making access to childcare is a daily concern to parents. In the survey given to employees at Saint-Gobain and Brown Machining Group, their children were, on average, slightly younger at 30 to 36 months and therefore could be more reliant on agencies outside of the school system to provide care for their children.

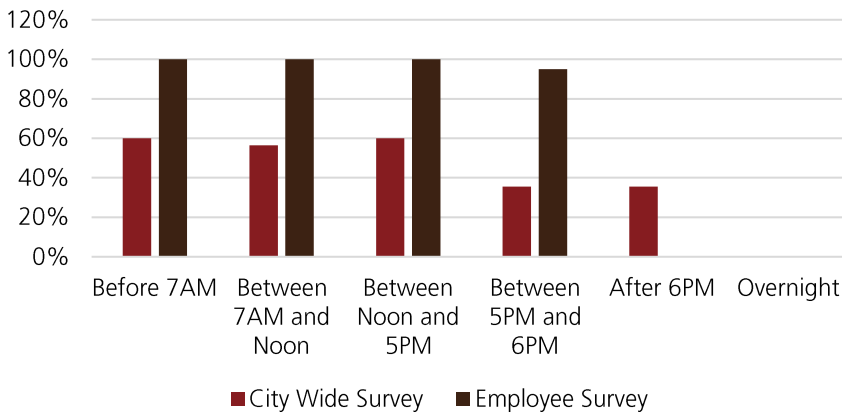
Hours Per Week

Most of the respondents, from both surveys, required childcare five days per week. The difference between the two groups of participants was the amount of time per day required; 95% of respondents in the employee survey require childcare for eight or more hours per day, compared to the four to seven hours daily on average in the city-wide survey. In both surveys, roughly 95% of respondents stated that work was the primary reason for needing childcare, however the employees needed more childcare services more hours per day on average. This could be due to the rigidity of their work schedules seems or that a greater proportion of employee survey-takers had younger children who require more care than those with children attending school. The survey

¹ Table S1101. American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate 2017, United States Census Bureau.



What times during the week do you need child care for children ages birth to three?



results also expose a difference in the times of day that childcare is needed; employees have a need for earlier hours, before 7 am, whereas city residents at large have a need for care after 6 pm. In Beaverton, of the licensed day care facilities, about one-third offer evening services to care for a maximum of 99 children.

Childcare Effects on the Workforce

Residents and employees have had to make significant adjustments due to lack of childcare. For example, both reported that they have left work early or arrived late, have felt distract at work because they are worried about childcare, have cut back hours, chose a job specifically to fit into the childcare schedule, and in some cases, turned down a job. More often than not, the child was too sick to attend childcare which caused the parent to miss work, however, in about a quarter of cases for city-wide survey-takers, childcare was closed for the day, was already full, or was not open during unconventional shift hours. It would be worthwhile to investigate with a larger sample size if increased access to childcare could lower the amount of time employees miss work for those reasons.

Types of Childcare

Overwhelmingly, respondents from the city-wide survey use relatives and family members as the primary source of childcare. In both surveys, respondents indicate that cost is the primary reason for relying on family (42% for the city at large and 100% the employee survey respondents based on surveymonkey's filtering tool). Even more rely on relatives for secondary care, which makes having family nearby crucial for child rearing. Licensed childcare family homes and licensed childcare centers are the second and third types of childcare most commonly used in Beaverton. In choosing a childcare service, hours and days of operation, cost, and a personal relationship with the childcare provider are the top three reasons for choosing a location. However, in the employee survey, respondents listed the location of their childcare as the most important factor for selecting a provider, above personal relationship with provider, cost, and hours available.

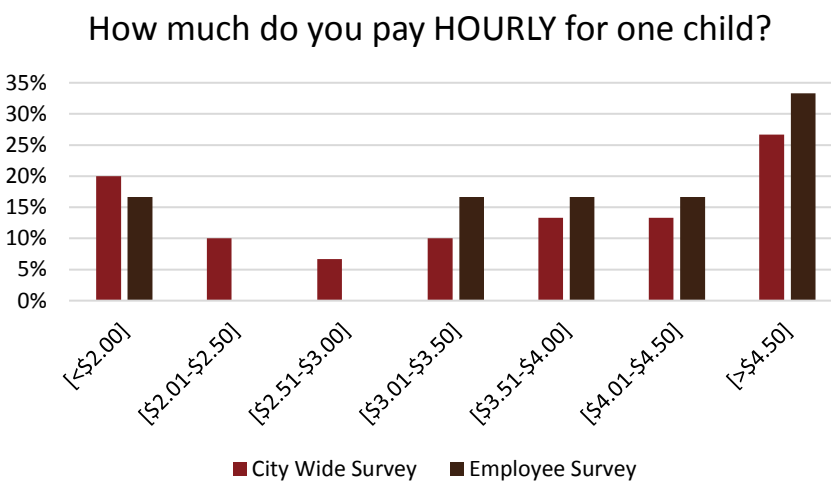


Quality of Childcare

Seventy percent of respondents in both surveys indicated that they are satisfied with the quality of their childcare. In the city-wide survey, respondents are satisfied mainly with the quality of care (38%) and cost (26%). In the employee survey, the respondents are most frequently satisfied with the location of their childcare (79%), followed the hours and days available (71%), and then cost (64%). Based on the employee survey results, the location of childcare options appears to be a major priority for employees at Saint-Gobain and Brown Machining Group. For the 30% of employees that are unsatisfied with the quality of their childcare, cost and hours and days available were the two of the main reasons in both surveys. In the city-wide survey, 36% of respondents are currently searching for new childcare for the reasons listed below. The sample size for the employee responses is too small to evaluate, only six participants responded to the question.

Reasons for Searching for New Childcare	City-residents
Expecting a child	41%
Current childcare is too expensive	29%
Location of childcare is inconvenient	19%
Inconvenient hours of operation	14%
Unhappy with the quality of childcare	12%

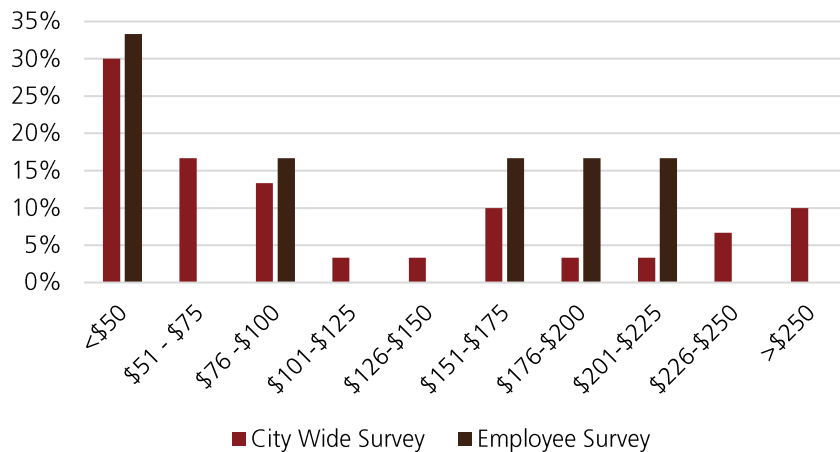
Cost of Childcare



Given that cost is an influential component of childcare accessibility, it is important to consider how much respondents are paying for childcare services. The highest proportion of respondents (37%) in the city-wide survey are paying an hourly fee for their childcare services whereas half of the respondents in the employee survey



How much do you pay WEEKLY for one child?



(50%) pay a flat weekly fee. On average, respondents in both surveys pay \$3.75 per hour for one child. For those who pay daily and weekly, \$22.50 and \$87.50 are the average costs, respectively, for one child. Based on 40 hours of childcare needs per week, those who pay by the hour spend about \$150 a week on childcare and those who pay daily spend about \$112.50, showing that it is cheaper to pay for childcare

by the week as opposed to daily or hourly fee, on average. Roughly half of the respondents indicated that their childcare provider provides a discount for more than one child. According to the Business Broker Network, the average cost of weekly childcare in the State of Michigan is \$328.25,² indicating that Beaverton residents are spending substantially less on childcare compared to the overall state in raw numbers, but compared to City's the median household income, they pay proportionally the same per year as the rest of the state.

In over the phone interviews with childcare providers, information on price was not readily offered. The pay structure is complicated by number of children, number of hours that care is provided, time of day (more for overnight), and the age of the child. It was mentioned that occasionally, caretakers waive fees because the families simply cannot afford the true cost of childcare.

Inventory of Childcare Providers

Based on a search through the Early Childhood Investment Corporation, 11 licensed childcare centers were found that have a capacity to serve 379 children ranging between the ages of 0 to 17 years of age. Using census data to determine the level of unmet demand, it can be estimated that there are about 136 households in Beaverton with children under the age of 18. Because most high school students probably do not require this type of care, and because workers who commute into the City may be using Beaverton childcare services, it is difficult to estimate the number spots needed for childcare. However, based on interviews with providers, many of them report having to turn down requests on a daily basis from parents because they are already full and some of them

² "The Cost of Childcare in Every State" Franchise Opportunities, *Business Broker*, April 12 2018



have had to drop families because they were over capacity. From their perspective, there is pent up demand.

Based on collective responses gathered in the surveys, three major themes arose. In addition to needing more childcare facilities, access to childcare also depends on the cost of childcare, availability of service, and location of the childcare provider. General needs of the community include lowering the cost of childcare, increasing access by providing expanded hours and days available throughout the week, and having childcare providers located in convenient locations close to both the residential and high employment centers of the City.