



# Fast Facts: Children, Families and Early Education in Gardner

	Gardner	Statewide
Children birth through 5 (under 6)	1,547	397,268
Total # of preschool-aged (3-5yr) children	569	240,856
% of children under age 5 living below the poverty line*	17.5%	12.4%
% of children under 6 with all parents in the labor force	68.1%	61%
% of public school children attending full-day kindergarten	12.8%	57%
% of students eligible to receive free or reduced lunch	31.8%	27.7%
% of children 5-17 who speak a language other than English at home	6.2%	18.8%
% of students unable to perform classwork in English	3.9%	5.1%
% of students receiving special education services	16.7%	15.9%
% of students who dropped-out of high school	7.7%	3.5%
% of third graders who do not meet the state standards for reading proficiency on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System	41%	38%

\* The 2006 federal poverty line for a family of four is \$20,000 per year.

## Early Education and Care in Gardner

- According to the 2000 Census, 47.4% of preschool-aged children (3-4 years) in Gardner are enrolled in school.
- Census data show that of those children enrolled in school, 70 children (26%) attend public school preschool, while 200 children (74%) are enrolled in community-based or family child care programs.
- In Gardner, there is 1 public school preschool program, 6 licensed center-based programs, and 31 licensed family child care programs, according to the Department of Early Education and Care.
- As of January 2007, 88 eligible children were on a waiting list to receive a child care subsidy from the Department of Early Education and Care. 23 of those children are of preschool-age (2.9-5 years).
- The Department of Early Education and Care estimates that 148 of Gardner's jobs are in the early education and care industry.
- The average salary of a preschool teacher in the Fitchburg/Leominster Metropolitan Area is \$24,440, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Sources: US Census, 2000

Massachusetts Department of Education: Kindergarten Enrollment Data, FY06

Massachusetts Department of Education: School District Profiles, 2006-07

Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care: Early Childhood Education Indicators, 2004

Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates, 2004

Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care, Wait List Data, 2007