

CEQR Technical Manual: Chapter 3C – Child Care Update

100. Definitions

Child Care centers. Publicly financed child care centers, under the auspices of the Administration for Children’s Services’ Division of Child Care and Head Start (ACS), provide care for the children of income-eligible households. Space for one child in such child care centers is termed a "slot." These slots may be in contracted group child care or Head Start centers or they may be in the form of licensed family child care arrangements in which child care services are provided to small numbers of unrelated children in a provider’s home: “group family child care” serves 6 to 12 children; “family child care” serves 3 to 6 children. Projects that would introduce a substantial number of subsidized residential units are examined for potential impacts on the availability of slots at contracted group child care and Head Start centers in the vicinity of the project, *i.e.* the study area. In certain instances, vouchers may be provided that allow an eligible child to access care from private providers. However, because the specific locations of family day care and voucher slots cannot be identified, they are not suitable for a study area analysis.

200. Determining Whether a Community Facilities Assessment is Appropriate

230. THRESHOLDS FOR DETAILED ANALYSES OF INDIRECT EFFECTS

234. Child care Centers

Publicly financed child care services are available for income-eligible children through the age of 12. The CEQR analysis focuses on services for children under age 6 because eligible children aged 6-12 are expected to be in school for most of the day.

Families eligible for subsidized child care must meet financial and social eligibility criteria. In general, children in families that have incomes at or below 200% Federal Poverty Level (FPL) (depending on family size) are financially eligible, although in some cases, eligibility can go up to 275% FPL. The family must also have an approved “reason for care,” such as involvement in a child welfare case or participation in a “welfare-to-work” program. Projects that would produce substantial numbers of subsidized, low- to moderate-income family housing units may therefore generate a sufficient number of eligible children to affect the availability of slots at publicly funded group child care and Head Start centers. If the action would generate 20 or more eligible children under age 6, further analysis may be appropriate.

The City’s affordable housing market is pegged to the Area Median Income (AMI) rather than the Federal Poverty Level. Lower-income units must be affordable to households at or below 80% AMI. Since family incomes at or below 200% FPL fall under 80 percent AMI, for the purposes of CEQR analysis the number of housing units expected to be targeted for incomes of 80 percent AMI or below should be used as a proxy for eligibility. This provides a conservative assessment of demand, since eligibility for subsidized child care is not defined strictly by income (generally below 200 percent of poverty level), but also takes into account family size and other reasons for care (*i.e.* low-income parent(s) in school; low-income parent(s) training for work; or low-income parents who are ill or disabled).

Table 3C- 4
Multipliers for Estimating the Number of Children Eligible for Publicly Funded Child Care and Head Start

Borough	Children under 6 years old per unit	Minimum number of DUs to yield 20 children under 6
BRONX	0.139	141
BROOKLYN	0.178	110
MANHATTAN	0.115	169
QUEENS	0.140	139
STATEN ISLAND	0.090	217

Notes: The multipliers are based on 2005-2007 American Community Survey data for children under age 6 at 200% Federal Poverty Level or below, and have been adjusted to account for the proportion of Group Child Care and Head Start slots relative to ACS' Child Care and Head Start total capacity (*i.e.*, excludes Family Day Care Network and voucher capacity from ACS' total capacity).

Source: NYC Department of City Planning and NYC Administration for Children's Services, Division of Child Care and Head Start.

300. Assessment Methods

310. STUDY AREAS

314. Child Care Centers

The locations of publicly funded group child care and Head Start centers within 1.5 miles or so of the project site should be shown. The size of the study area in transit-rich areas may, in consultation with the lead agency and ACS, be somewhat larger than 1.5 miles. Since there are no locational requirements for enrollment in child care centers, some parent/guardians choose a child care center closer to their employment rather than their residence. Nevertheless, the center(s) closest to the project site are more likely to be subject to increased demand.

320. DETAILED ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES

322. Indirect Potential Impact

322.4. Child Care Centers

Existing Conditions. Existing publicly funded group child care facilities (including Head Start facilities) within the study area, obtained from ACS' Division of Child Care and Head Start should be provided, including their location, number of slots (capacity), and their enrollment (utilization)

should be documented. Care should be taken to avoid double counting capacity at the same locations since ACS and Head Start funding may be used for the same “slot.”

Without Action Scenario. Since enrollment projections for child care facilities are not available, the CEQR analysis assumes that the existing enrollment and capacity will stay the same for the build year and be the baseline for the Without Action Scenario (unless affordable housing is identified, see below). However, ACS should be contacted to obtain information on any changes planned for child care programs or facilities in the area of the proposed action, including closing or expansion of existing facilities and establishment of new facilities that would affect capacity in the build year. If changes are planned, they can be incorporated into the Without Action Scenario’s capacity.

The number of eligible housing units, as outlined in the RWCDS for the Without Action Scenario should be identified. Table 3C-4 should be used to estimate the number of eligible children under age 6 based on the Without Action RWCDS. For example, a 200-unit low-income project in the Bronx may be expected to yield 28 children under the age of 6.

Add the projected demand (number of students generated by the Without Action Scenario) to the existing group child care and Head Start enrollment for the study area. The available capacity or resulting deficiency in “slots” and the utilization rate for the study area should be calculated. This assessment becomes the Without Action Scenario projection.

With Action Scenario. To estimate the number of eligible children generated by the proposed project, as outlined in the RWCDS, Table 3C-4 should be used.

Add the projected demand (number of students generated by the proposed project) to the Without Action Scenario projected group child care and Head Start enrollment for the study area. The available capacity or resulting deficiency in “slots” and the utilization rate for the study area should be calculated. This assessment becomes the With Action Scenario projection.

400. Determining Impact Significance

440. CHILD CARE CENTERS

If the proposed project would result in (1) a collective utilization rate of the group child care/Head Start centers in the study area that is greater than 100 percent in the With Action Scenario; and (2) an increase of five percent or more in the collective utilization rate of the child care/Head Start centers in the study area between the Without Action and With Action Scenarios, a significant adverse impact may result, warranting consideration of mitigation. For example, a potential significant adverse impact would be identified if there was a Without Action Scenario utilization rate of 96 percent and a With Action Scenario utilization rate of 101 percent.

Note: For the purposes of CEQR analysis, a Without Action Scenario base utilization rate of 100 percent is the utilization threshold for overcrowding. This takes into account that child care centers have a maximum number of slots that they may accommodate, based on the square footage of the child care center and the staffing levels as prescribed by Article 47 of the NYC Health Code.

500. Developing Mitigation

540. CHILD CARE CENTERS

Mitigation for a significant child care impact, developed in consultation with ACS, could include provision of suitable space on-site for a child care center, or provision of a suitable location off-site and within a reasonable distance (at a rate affordable to ACS providers) or otherwise fund or make program or physical improvements to support additional capacity.

Potential mitigation should be reviewed with the Administration for Children's Services Division of Child Care and Head Start to determine its feasibility, particularly when an action by ACS is required to facilitate the mitigation.

700. Regulations and Coordination

730. LOCATION OF INFORMATION

734. Child Care Centers

Information on publicly funded and operated child care and Head Start centers is available from the Administration for Children's Services. The Department of City Planning's Planning Coordination Division or Environmental Review Division may be consulted for assistance with contacting the appropriate ACS personnel.

For ACS Publicly Funded Group Child Care facilities:

Executive Director, Child Care Services & Administration
Division of Child Care and Head Start
Administration for Children's Services
66 John Street – 8th floor
New York, NY 10038

For ACS Head Start facilities:

Assistant Director, Head Start Planning & Analysis
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