



Staff-to-Participant Ratios



What is a staff-to-participant ratio and why is it important?

The staff-to-participant ratio describes the number of children/youth for whom each child care provider is responsible within a classroom. The staff-to-participant ratio is usually stated in numerical terms. For example, if each caregiver cares for 10 children/youth, the ratio is 1 to 10.

Lower staff-to-participant ratios are one indicator of a higher-quality program because an Out-of-School Time provider can be more sensitive and responsive to participant's needs if he/she is responsible for a smaller group of children. Staff-to-participant ratios differ depending on the children's age. Because younger children need more direct one-on-one interaction, response, and supervision, staff-to-child ratios should be lower for younger children than for older ones.

Minimum Licensing Requirements (MLR) define the maximum legal staff-to-child ratios for the state. To achieve higher levels in Better Beginnings, lower ratios are required.



Better Beginnings and staff-to-participant ratios

For Level 6, Better Beginnings requires lower staff-to-child ratios for Out-of-School Time programs than Minimum Licensing Requirements (MLR) for Out-of-School Time programs.

For Level 6 the staff/participant ratio shall be 1:15.

Ratios for Out-of-School Time programs applying for Level 6 will be verified through reports from Childcare Licensing Specialist (CCLS) visits.

For more information on staff to child ratios go to:

- <https://childcare.gov/consumer-education/ratios-and-group-sizes>
- <https://nrckids.org/cfoc/database/1.1.1.2>