



# Learn About Universal PreKindergarten Choices

There are now more free and affordable PreKindergarten options for 3- and 4-year-olds in Los Angeles County. Explore the best fit for your child below!

PROVIDER	Child Care Centers	Family Child Care Homes	Elementary Schools (Transitional Kindergarten)	Family, Friends, and Neighbors
What it is	Licensed programs where services are provided by early childhood educators in a school-like setting. Children are usually grouped together by age group. Multiple classrooms are overseen by a director.	Licensed programs where services are provided by early childhood educators in their own home. This smaller setting serves children of various ages together.	A program offered by public elementary schools specifically for 4-year-olds. It is taught by an elementary school teacher and is available for free to all families, regardless of income.	Care provided by a relative, friend, or neighbor in your home or their home.
Schedule	Half and full day programs.	Half and full day programs. Many offer extended, evening, or weekend hours.	Half and full day programs. Some schools offer extended care.	No set schedule. Many caregivers offer extended, evening, or weekend hours.
Adult to child ratio	1 adult for every 8 or 12 children, depending on the program type.	<b>Small:</b> 1 adult for every 8 children <b>Large:</b> 2 adults for 14 children	1 adult for every 10 children.	No formal regulations. Many care for 1-2 children.
Minimum teacher qualifications	At least 12 college units in early childhood education, plus 6 months of experience.	Pediatric health training, CPR and first aid certification. Some programs also require at least 12 college units in early childhood education.	Have a valid teaching credential from California's Commission on Teacher Credentialing.	Caregivers who accept subsidy vouchers may undergo a background check.
Cost	Free, low-cost, and paid options.	Free, low-cost, and paid options.	Free for 4-year-olds.	Free, low-cost, and paid options.

## Find PreKindergarten Programs in Your Area:



Find Child Care:  
[MyChildCarePlan.org](https://mychildcareplan.org)



Contact your Resource & Referral (R&R) Agency:  
[ccala.net/connect](https://ccala.net/connect)



Find Your School District:  
[childcare.lacounty.gov/maps](https://childcare.lacounty.gov/maps)





# Need Help Paying For PreKindergarten?

There are many programs in Los Angeles County that help families cover the cost of PreKindergarten for 3-and 4-year-old children. These are called “subsidy programs.”

A **subsidy** is financial help from the government.

Provider	Free and low-cost programs offered
Child Care Centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternative Payment</li> <li>• California State Preschool Program</li> <li>• CalWORKs Child Care</li> <li>• Emergency Bridge Program</li> <li>• General Child Care (CCTR)</li> <li>• Head Start</li> </ul>
Family Child Care Homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternative Payment</li> <li>• CalWORKs Child Care</li> <li>• California Family Child Care (CFCC)</li> <li>• Emergency Bridge Program</li> <li>• General Child Care (CCTR)</li> </ul>
Elementary Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• California State Preschool Program</li> <li>• Emergency Bridge Program</li> <li>• Head Start</li> <li>• Transitional Kindergarten</li> </ul>
Family, Friend, and Neighbors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternative Payment</li> <li>• CalWORKs Child Care</li> </ul>

## ★ You may qualify for a free or low-cost Pre-K program based on:

Your Child's Age	If your child will be 4 years old by September 1st they qualify for free Transitional Kindergarten (TK).
Family Income	<p>If your income is below 85% of the SMI (\$9,020/month for a family of 4)* you may qualify for Alternative Payment, CA State Preschool, CA Family Child Care, or General Child Care.</p> <p>If your income is below 100% of the SMI (\$10,612/month for a family of 4)* you may qualify for California State Preschool.</p> <p><small>SMI stands for State Median Income.</small></p>
Government Aid	<i>If you receive CalWORKs or other benefits like Medi-Cal, CalFresh, CFAP, Social Security, or WIC you may qualify for Alternative Payment, CalWORKs Child Care, CA State Preschool, CA Family Child Care, General Child Care, or Head Start.</i>
Your Child's Wellbeing	<i>If your child is homeless, has a DCFS case manager, or is at risk of either, you may qualify for Alternative Payment, CalWORKs Child Care, CA State Preschool, CA Family Child Care, Emergency Bridge Program, General Child Care, or Head Start.</i>



To find out if you can get help paying for a PreKindergarten Program, contact your local Resource & Referral (R&R) Agency. Scan the QR code or go to [CCALA.net/connect](https://ccala.net/connect) to find your R&R.

\*Based on the CDE's July 1, 2025 Family Fee Schedule

