

# 2019 NSECE Snapshot: The Role of Faith-based Organizations in Center-based Child Care and Early Education



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Practitioners, researchers, and policymakers often have questions about the size of the faith-based child care and early education (CCEE) sector, and other roles played by faith-based organizations in CCEE. This snapshot provides information about the number of CCEE centers that have some association with faith-based organizations and the number of children they serve.

The nationally-representative 2019 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) allows us to identify CCEE centers whose respondents indicated they were either sponsored by a faith-based organization or were located in a building affiliated with a faith-based organization. For example, a center sponsored by a faith-based organization could include a preschool run by a local church. Alternatively, a non-religious non-profit organization might rent space from a church to house its program for toddlers.

## KEY TERMS

### Sponsorship

Sponsorship was defined for respondents as: “a sponsoring organization may provide funding, administrative oversight, or have reporting requirements; however, organizations that are solely funding sources should not be considered sponsors.”

### Faith-based sponsorship

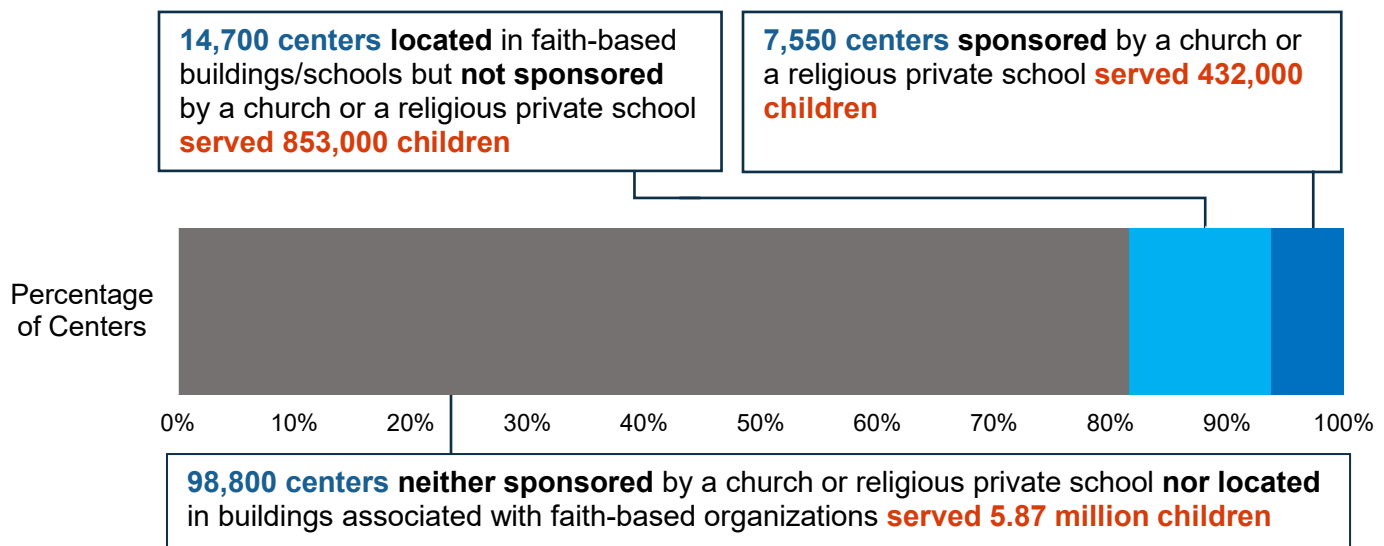
Centers who indicated either “Church or religious group” or “Private school, religious” in response to the question, “What type of organization sponsors your program?”

### Buildings associated with faith-based organizations

Respondents who chose “Religious building” from a list in response to the question, “In what kind of building is your program located? Please choose one only for each building your program occupies.”

### Center-based Provider

Providers that deliver child care or early education services to children birth through 5 years old, not yet in kindergarten, at a single non-residential location.



## Overview of the Data

This snapshot examines the role of faith-based organizations in center-based CCEE, either through sponsorship or by providing space to programs that they do not sponsor. Two questionnaire items from the 2019 NSECE were used to characterize each center's relationship with faith-based organizations. The first item asked about sponsorship from a religious organization and the second asked about the type of building where the center was located. The two questions were used to categorize centers into three groups: 1) those reporting sponsorship from a faith-based organization (regardless of location being associated with a faith-based organization), 2) those reporting being located in a building associated with a faith-based organization and no faith-based sponsorship, and 3) those reporting neither faith-based sponsorship nor being located in a building associated with a faith-based organization. The number of centers providing care to children birth through 5 years old, not yet in kindergarten, and the number of enrolled children in this age group are reported for each category.

## Summary Findings

The data show that, in 2019, a relatively small percentage (6.2%) of CCEE centers serving children birth through five years old, not yet in kindergarten, were sponsored by faith-based organizations. These centers served 6.0% of enrolled children. A larger percentage of centers (12.1%) reported being located in buildings affiliated with faith-based organizations, and not sponsored by a faith-based organization. These centers served 11.9% of enrolled children birth through five years old, not yet in kindergarten. The majority of centers (81.7%), serving 82.1% of enrolled children birth through five years old, not yet in kindergarten, reported neither being sponsored by faith-based organizations nor being located in buildings affiliated with faith-based organizations.

### Number and Percentage of Centers and Children Served by Faith-based Sponsorship and Location

	Centers			Children Birth through Age 5, not yet in Kindergarten		
	Number	Standard Error	Percent of Centers	Number	Standard Error	Percent of Children
Centers reporting church or religious private school sponsorship	7,550	751	6.2%	432,000	48,200	6.0%
Centers located in buildings associated with faith-based organizations that did not report faith-based sponsorship	14,700	1,200	12.1%	853,000	74,600	11.9%
Centers not reporting church or religious private school sponsorship, nor located in buildings associated with faith-based organizations	98,800	4,360	81.7%	5,870,000	299,000	82.1%
Total	121,000	5,195	100.0%	7,150,000	350,000	100.0%

**About the NSECE:** The 2019 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) is a set of four integrated, nationally representative surveys conducted in 2019 of: 1) households with children under age 13, 2) home-based providers of child care and early education (CCEE), 3) center-based providers of CCEE, and 4) the center-based provider workforce. The study is funded by the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This analysis is based on the responses from 6,917 centers that completed the center-based provider survey.

About the NSECE: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/project/national-survey-early-care-and-education-2019-2017-2022>

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