

DHS Ratios

A licensee shall ensure that at least the following staff-to-children ratios are maintained at all times when providing child care services to enrolled children.

<i>Age Group</i>	<i>DHS Staff:Child Ratio</i>	<i>DES Max Group Size Recommendation</i>
Infants	1:5 or 2:11	11
1-year old children	1:6 or 2:13	13
2-year old children	1:8	16
3-year old children	1:13	26
4-year old children	1:15	30
5-year-old children not school-age	1:20	40
School-age children	1:20	40

DES Group Size Definition:

DES Group Size Definition: A specific number of children, distinct from the larger population of children, who are together regularly and interact with each other, and with one or more specific staff members in an assigned space. The size of the group and required number of staff are determined by the ratio set forth by the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) Bureau of Child Care Licensing (BCCL). Each child in a group share two common experiences with every other child in this group; the same primary caregiver(s) responsible for the child's basic and developmental needs and are co-located within the same space. The number of children who may be in a group varies according to the age of the children and the number of primary caregivers* as determined by ratio. The age of the youngest child within the group shall determine the ratio and maximum group size. For special group activities, such as; outdoor play, mealtime, sleeping and field trips, the group may exceed the maximum group size for the specified period of time only for these activities. ADHS BCCL ratios and licensed capacity may not be exceeded.

*Primary caregiving is defined as one caregiver assigned to a small group of children for the majority of the child's care throughout the day. A child is assigned a primary caregiver upon enrollment. This caregiver is responsible for the majority of the child's care and interactions throughout the day; ensuring needs such as diaper changing, feeding, etc., are met in a timely manner; observation and assessment; and communicating with families. Children should always be given the opportunity to make autonomous choices of activity and their level of participation within that setting. ADHS BCCL regulations for supervision while moving between activities must be maintained at all times.

Primary caregiving is an intentional practice, demonstrating individualized care for children one-on-one and within the group setting. Evidence of this practice may be shown in alternate schedules, separate group rosters and classroom postings. When primary caregiving is a program practice, it must be communicated in a written policy. All staff members, regardless of primary caregiver assignments, are responsible for the health, safety and well-being of all children in the child care setting.