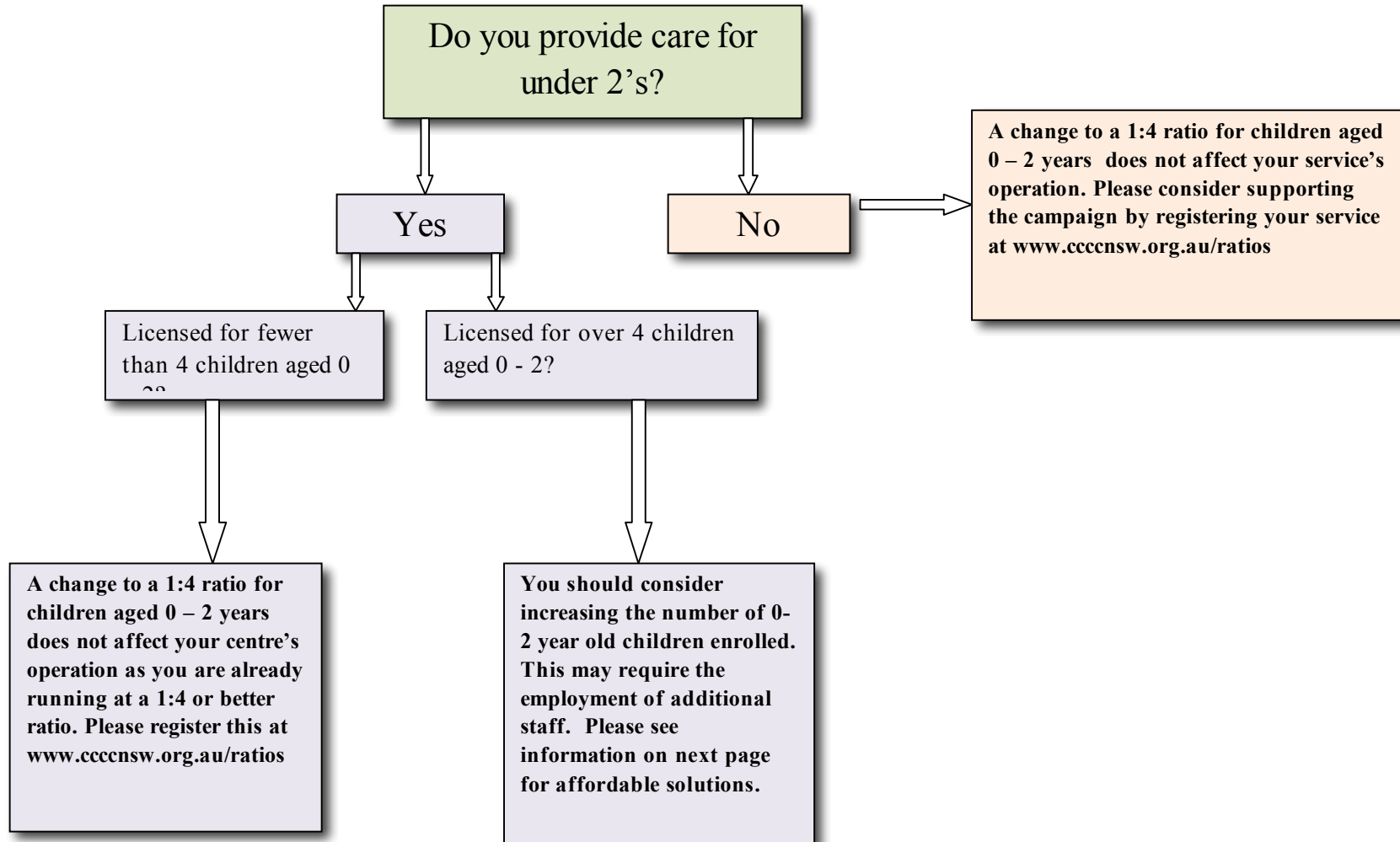


# A 'how to' guide for implementing a 1:4 ratio at your centre.



**If you provide care for over 4 children aged 0 – 2 years and wish to implement a 1:4 ratio:**

- 1) **Compare the waiting list and vacancy rates for children aged 0 – 2 years and children aged 3 – 5 years.**  
If this comparison identifies that your community needs more 0 – 2 places. Take action.
- 2) **Check the licence for the number of children aged 0 – 2 years.** Your enrolment history may differ from the licence. Check your licence. To make it economical for the centre to introduce a 1:4 ratio you may be able to increase your 0 – 2 year old places to the next number divisible by four. If for example you are licensed for 12 children aged 0 – 2 years, but you currently only have 10 enrolled, you can easily increase the number of place you offer to 12.
- 3) **Apply to DoCS to increase the number of children aged 0 – 2 years on licence.** If you are at the maximum number of 0 – 2 year old children allowed under your license and this figure is not divisible by four. Apply to DoCS to increase the number of 0 – 2 year old places at your service. This does not necessarily mean increasing the total number for which you are licensed. Just increasing the number of 0 – 2 year places within the total number of licensed places. **Always contact your Local Government Authority as some Councils require notification for licensing changes.**
- 4) **Check whether you have or whether DoCS will give you a flexible licence.** A flexible license allows you to vary the number in each age group while not increasing your total number of licensed places.
- 5) **Check whether you can deploy staff members from other rooms at your centre to meet the improved ratio.** It is possible that you are above the ratio in other rooms/age groups at your centre. You may only need an extra staff member for core hours or during the middle of the day.
- 6) **Work out what the appointment of the additional staff member will mean to operational costs and subsequently to fees.** If the service is under the Federal Industrial Relations System an full time untrained staff member on Step 1 of the Award, will cost just under \$35,000. \*On costs will cost around \$10,500 (based on a 30% rate). This means your increased costs will be approximately \$45,500 per year. A trainee would cost approximately \$18,800 + \$5640 on costs = \$24,500. **PLEASE NOTE** These figures may differ according to each centre’s individual circumstances.

**Use the following tables to see the estimated fee increase, over 48 weeks, apportioned across the entire centre for an additional staff member.**

| <b>Number of Children licensed for</b> | <b>Untrained Staff member</b> | <b>Trainee</b> |
|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|
| 80                                     | \$2.37 per day                | \$1.28 per day |
| 60                                     | \$3.16 per day                | \$1.70 per day |
| 49                                     | \$3.87 per day                | \$2.08 per day |
| 39                                     | \$4.86 per day                | \$2.62 per day |
| 29                                     | \$6.54 per day                | \$3.52 per day |

\* This allows for 1.00% Workers Compensation Insurance, 1.3% Annual Leave Loading, 9% Superannuation, 6 weeks relief and 7.00% payroll tax

| <b>If currently have X number of children 0 - 2 years</b> | <b>Staff needed under 1:5</b> | <b>If increased to X number of children 0 – 2 years</b> | <b>Staff needed under 1:4</b> | <b>Increase in number of staff required</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| 5                                                         | 1                             | 8                                                       | 2                             | 1                                           |
| 6                                                         | 2                             | 10                                                      | 2                             | 0                                           |
| 7                                                         | 2                             | 8                                                       | 2                             | 0                                           |
| 8                                                         | 2                             | 8                                                       | 2                             | 0                                           |
| 9                                                         | 2                             | 12                                                      | 3                             | 1                                           |
| 10                                                        | 2                             | 12                                                      | 3                             | 1                                           |
| 11                                                        | 3                             | 12                                                      | 3                             | 0                                           |
| 12                                                        | 3                             | 12                                                      | 3                             | 0                                           |
| 13                                                        | 3                             | 16                                                      | 4                             | 1                                           |
| 14                                                        | 3                             | 16                                                      | 4                             | 1                                           |
| 15                                                        | 3                             | 16                                                      | 4                             | 1                                           |
| 16                                                        | 4                             | 16                                                      | 4                             | 0                                           |
| 17                                                        | 4                             | 20                                                      | 5                             | 1                                           |
| 18                                                        | 4                             | 20                                                      | 5                             | 1                                           |
| 19                                                        | 4                             | 20                                                      | 5                             | 1                                           |
| 20                                                        | 4                             | 20                                                      | 5                             | 1                                           |
| 21                                                        | 5                             | 24                                                      | 6                             | 1                                           |
| 22                                                        | 5                             | 24                                                      | 6                             | 1                                           |
| 23                                                        | 5                             | 24                                                      | 6                             | 1                                           |
| 24                                                        | 5                             | 24                                                      | 6                             | 1                                           |
| 25                                                        | 5                             | 28                                                      | 7                             | 2                                           |
| 26                                                        | 6                             | 28                                                      | 7                             | 1                                           |
| 27                                                        | 6                             | 28                                                      | 7                             | 1                                           |
| 28                                                        | 6                             | 28                                                      | 7                             | 1                                           |
| 29                                                        | 6                             | 30                                                      | 8                             | 2                                           |
| 30                                                        | 6                             | 30                                                      | 8                             | 2                                           |

**Some misconceptions that exist.**

1. To implement a 1:4 ratio will mean employing additional qualified staff. This is not true. A trainee or an untrained staff member over the age of 18 years can be a primary contact staff member for the purpose of calculating the ratio.
2. To implement a 1:4 ratio means needing more space at your centre. Under the Regulation each child, regardless of age needs a set amount of space. To increase the number of babies at your centre does not increase the amount of space required as long as you do not increase the total number of children stated on the licence

### **Special cases.**

Child Care centres need to be aware of four specified situations in the Regulation that that may apply to them.

1. Services with 30 children under 2. Under the current Regulation you cannot exceed 30 children under 2. This means it is not possible to increase the number of children these services are caring for to a higher number that is divisible by 4 (ie 32). These services will have to choose to either reduce their under 2 places to 28, or remain at 30 with improved ratio
2. Nappy Change Table. You must have a nappy change table for each 10 children wearing nappies. This must be a stable surface together with a mat with impervious washable surface. If you have more than 10 children wearing nappies you just need an extra change mat with a non porous surface.
3. The premises of a children's service must have an adequate number of cots, beds, stretchers or sleeping mats, together with waterproof covers or other culturally appropriate forms of bedding for all children who sleep while at the premises. How many children aged 0 – 2 years at your service require a cot and how many prefer a bed, stretcher, sleeping mat or other culturally appropriate form of bedding.
4. The maximum group size for babies under 2 years must be no greater than 10. It is important to note however, that there may be more than one group in a room together. However, the size of the room must accommodate the number of children according to the space requirements in Clause 30(2) of the regulations.