MARYLAND INFANT & EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH CONSULTATION: EQUITY MAPPING REPORT 2023

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MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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BACKGROUND

What is IECMH consultation?

Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH) consultation is an evidence-informed intervention that supports early socio-emotional development and addresses challenging behaviors in early learning settings (Cohen & Kaufmann, 2000), by providing preventive, multi-level, relationship-based, capacity-building services for young children and their caregivers (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2014). Importantly, IECMH consultation is neither training and technical assistance nor individual or group therapy; it is a consultative approach that helps caregivers better understand and address the socio-emotional needs of young children under their care (Duran et al., 2009; Gilliam & Shahar, 2006; Perry et al., 2008).

Some positive outcomes of IECMH consultation include improved teacher-rated child behavior and classroom climate; increases in teacher-reported developmentally appropriate knowledge; enhanced teacher-child relationships; and increased teacher job satisfaction (e.g., see Brennan et al., 2008; Connors-Burrow et al., 2013; Gilliam, 2007; Gilliam et al., 2016; Gilliam & Shahar, 2006; Perry et al., 2010).

Equity in Early Childhood Education

There is evidence of racial inequity regarding discipline practices in early childhood settings. For example, research shows that Black boys in early childhood education settings are suspended or expelled at rates up to four times higher than their White and female counterparts (e.g., Gilliam & Shahar, 2006; Office for Civil rights, 2014). Furthermore, there is concern that Black girls' vulnerabilities are frequently overlooked by their absence in the conversation (Crenshaw et al., 2015; Morris, 2012). Additionally, Pre-kindergartner suspension and expulsion rates can be up to three times higher than the K-12 rate (Gilliam, 2005; Gilliam & Shahar, 2006). IECMH consultation has been linked with reduced preschool suspension and expulsion rates (Gilliam & Shahar, 2006; Perry et al., 2008) and, thus, is one approach that can be used to address these issues and support children and early childhood education providers in facilitating successful completion of preschool.

Maryland's IECMH consultation landscape

Maryland has a robust IECMH consultation system that is funded by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). There are currently 10 programs funded to serve all 24 counties/jurisdictions in the state. The University of Maryland School of Social Work (UMB SSW) Parent, Infant, Early Childhood (PIEC) team works with MSDE to ensure high-quality implementation, provide ongoing workforce development, and conduct ongoing program evaluation efforts.

Evidence from quarterly and annual reports indicate that, overall, IECMH consultation services in Maryland lead to improved classroom and child outcomes (Latta et al., 2021; 2022; 2023). Additionally, formally identified preschool expulsions rates have been low among children receiving this service: 3-5% in 2018–2020 (Andujar et al., 2019; Latta et al., 2021; Wasserman & Candelaria, 2020). However, these data only cover children who are formally identified as suspended or expelled after an IECMH consultation case is opened and do not indicate how many children are suspended or expelled before IECMH consultation is sought out.

Equity efforts in Maryland's Early Childhood Education Programs and IECMH consultation

At the state level, there is legislation prohibiting suspension and/or expulsion for children in publicly funded pre-kindergarten through 2nd grade (Code of Maryland Regulations, 2017). Also, MSDE has enacted policies advising against suspension and expulsion in child care (Maryland State Department of Education, 2017); however, there is no formal prohibition or tracking of these disciplinary practices in child care.

Regarding Maryland's IECMH consultation network, efforts have been made to increase consultants' capacity to address racial inequity in early learning settings. The UMB SSW PIEC team contracted with the Indigo Cultural Center[1] to support increasing Maryland's equity efforts (Candelaria et al., 2021). This includes providing a framework for IECMH consultation staff that highlights pathways to disrupt systemic racism in early childhood.

Given that IECMH consultation can help address suspension and expulsion, and knowing there is inherent bias in these practices, we thought it would be useful to explore where IECMH consultation has taken place across the state and see if it is reaching populations most at risk. Moreover, this research can serve as an initial contribution towards a more in-depth evaluation of Maryland's distribution of IECMH consultation services.

What is in this report?

The aim of this report was to identify where IECMH consultation services were delivered across all of Maryland in the context of where child care programs and families in need were from July 3, 2017, through December 31, 2020. This builds on our previous work, where we created maps for each Maryland IECMH consultation program separately that illustrated the demographic characteristics of the child population living in their service area, as well as the number of consultation cases they undertook at the time.

Similarly, in this report we illustrate with maps how many children under the age of five were in Maryland by race/ethnicity (i.e., White, Black, Hispanic/Latino); the number of child care programs (i.e., centers and family-based providers); and the proportion of

[1] https://indigoculturalcenter.org/about/

families in poverty by county/jurisdiction. Our final interactive dashboard[2] overlays where IECMH consultation services were provided in the context of these demographic data for the entire state. IECMH consultation programs can use this dashboard, for example, to explore in more depth the data for those zip codes that fall within their jurisdiction.

Ultimately, our intention with this report is to prompt discussions about equity in Maryland's IECMH consultation services and inform decisions about programmatic changes wherever needed. Whether you are an IECMH consultant, program director, researcher, or policymaker, we encourage you to use this report, along with your own experiences and expertise, to promote meaningful advances towards an equitable IECMH consultation services network.

Questions for consideration when reviewing the maps in this report

In viewing the maps in this report and our interactive dashboard, consider the following questions about the equitable distribution of IECMH consultation services throughout Maryland.

Distribution

- What areas have higher densities of children under five?
- What areas have higher densities of child care centers and family child care providers?
- What areas have higher concentrations of families living in poverty?
- How does the racial makeup correlate to IECMH consultation services received by children in each jurisdiction?
- What areas with accepted referrals (see Map 10, p. 24) are aligned/misaligned with number of children/programs/race/poverty?
- Are there other racial or ethnic populations that are/are not being served?
- What areas are being served inequitably (underserved or overrepresented)?
- What do these maps tell us about who has access to IECMH consultation services?

[2] https://public.tableau.com/views/Dashboard_16799443166140/Dashboard1?:language=en-US&publish=yes&:display_count=n&:origin=viz_share_link

Root causes

- What are possible root causes that could be perpetuating existing inequities?
- What larger systems could be contributing to inequities?

Looking ahead

- What can programs do to address an inequitable distribution of IECMH consultation services in their district?
- What recommendations could be made to lawmakers/stakeholders for IECMH consultation services?
- What important questions do the maps fail to answer? What are the next steps needed?

ABOUT THE DATA

Before going any further, please read the following important information about the data we used in this report.

- 2016 – 2020 American Community Survey[3] (**ACS**) 5-year estimates were used to display data about the **child population under five** and **rates of families in poverty** in Maryland by county/jurisdiction and zip code tabulation area[4] (ZCTA). These 5-year estimates depict demographic information about Maryland from January 1, 2016, through December 31, 2020.
    - ACS estimates are approximations of real-world values. Because of this, they have a degree of uncertainty associated with them. The magnitude of this uncertainty depends, in part, on the size of the survey sample used to calculate the estimate. Generally, the more people you survey from a specific population, the less you have to infer about them, which increases certainty.
    - Since rural communities tend to have smaller survey samples than large cities in the ACS, estimates for these areas will likely have more uncertainty associated with them. Also, because we used ACS estimates to focus on a very small subpopulation by zip code (i.e., children under five years old), this uncertainty further increases. Therefore, **when it comes to maps/statistics focusing on ACS child estimates by ZCTA, we highly recommend for rural areas that you use these only to stimulate conversations and point towards areas for further inquiries.**
    - ACS estimates used for White children cover all White children under five (e.g., White American, White European, etc.), including those ethnically Hispanic/Latino. Similarly, ACS estimates used for Black children cover all Black children under five (e.g., Black American, Black African, etc.), including those ethnically Hispanic/Latino. Estimates used for Hispanic/Latino cover children under five of any race.
- The data on **number of child care programs** – which includes family child care providers (FCCPs) and child care centers (CCs) – were provided by Maryland Family Network[5] (as of May 2022).

[3] https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/about.html

[4] https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/geography/guidance/geo-areas/zctas.html

[5] https://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/about

- The data on **number of consultation referrals** came from the IECMH Consultation Project – Outcomes Monitoring System (**OMS**). These data represent consultation cases that Maryland IECMH consultation programs accepted from July 3, 2017, through December 31, 2020. Please note that during this time there were 11 IECMH consultation programs in the state.[6]
    - We selected OMS data from July 2017 onwards to make it consistent with previous equity mapping efforts. Furthermore, we focused on data going up to December 31, 2020, as this period overlayed best with the ACS 5-year estimates available at the time we conducted the analysis for this report (i.e., from January 1, 2016, through December 31, 2020).
- **Data on child care programs and consultation referrals represent counts as reported in/collected by the sources mentioned above, and not estimates.**

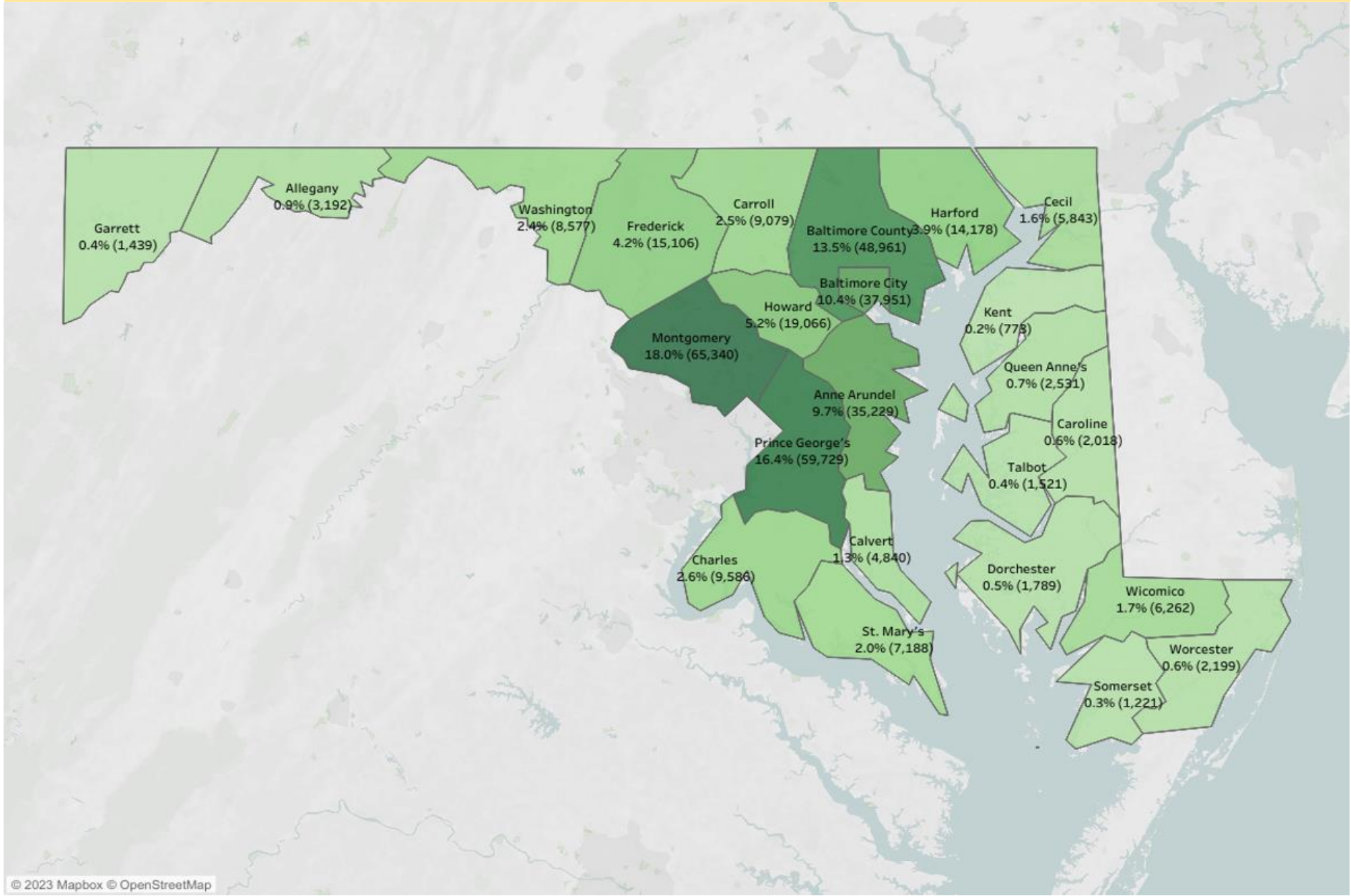
[6] The number of IECMH consultation programs in Maryland dropped to 10 on July 1, 2022.

CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

According to the 2016 – 2020 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates:

- There were **363,618** children under the age of five in Maryland.
- Over two thirds of these children lived in just five counties/jurisdictions: Montgomery County (**18%**; 65,340), Prince George's County (**16.4%**; 59,729), Baltimore County (**13.5%**; 48,961), Baltimore City (**10.4%**; 37,951), and Anne Arundel County (**9.7%**; 35,229).

Map 1. Percentage of children under five years old based on the total in Maryland by county/jurisdiction



Data source: 2016 – 2020 ACS 5-year estimates (Table S0101)

CHILD RACE/ETHNICITY

Of the five counties/jurisdictions with the most children under five (i.e., Montgomery County, Prince George's County, Baltimore County, Baltimore City, and Anne Arundel County) – based on 2016-2020 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates:

- Prince George's County and Montgomery County had the highest percentage of Hispanic/Latino children under five in the state (**31%** and **28%**, respectively).[7]
- Baltimore City and Prince George's County were majority-Black for this age group (**62%** and **52%**, respectively).[8]
- Only Anne Arundel County had a majority-White population of children under five (**62%**).[9]

When it comes to the remaining 19 counties/jurisdictions in Maryland:

- Fifteen had a majority-White population of children under five years old. Dorchester, Somerset, Howard, and Charles were the four counties/jurisdictions that were not majority-White for this age group.

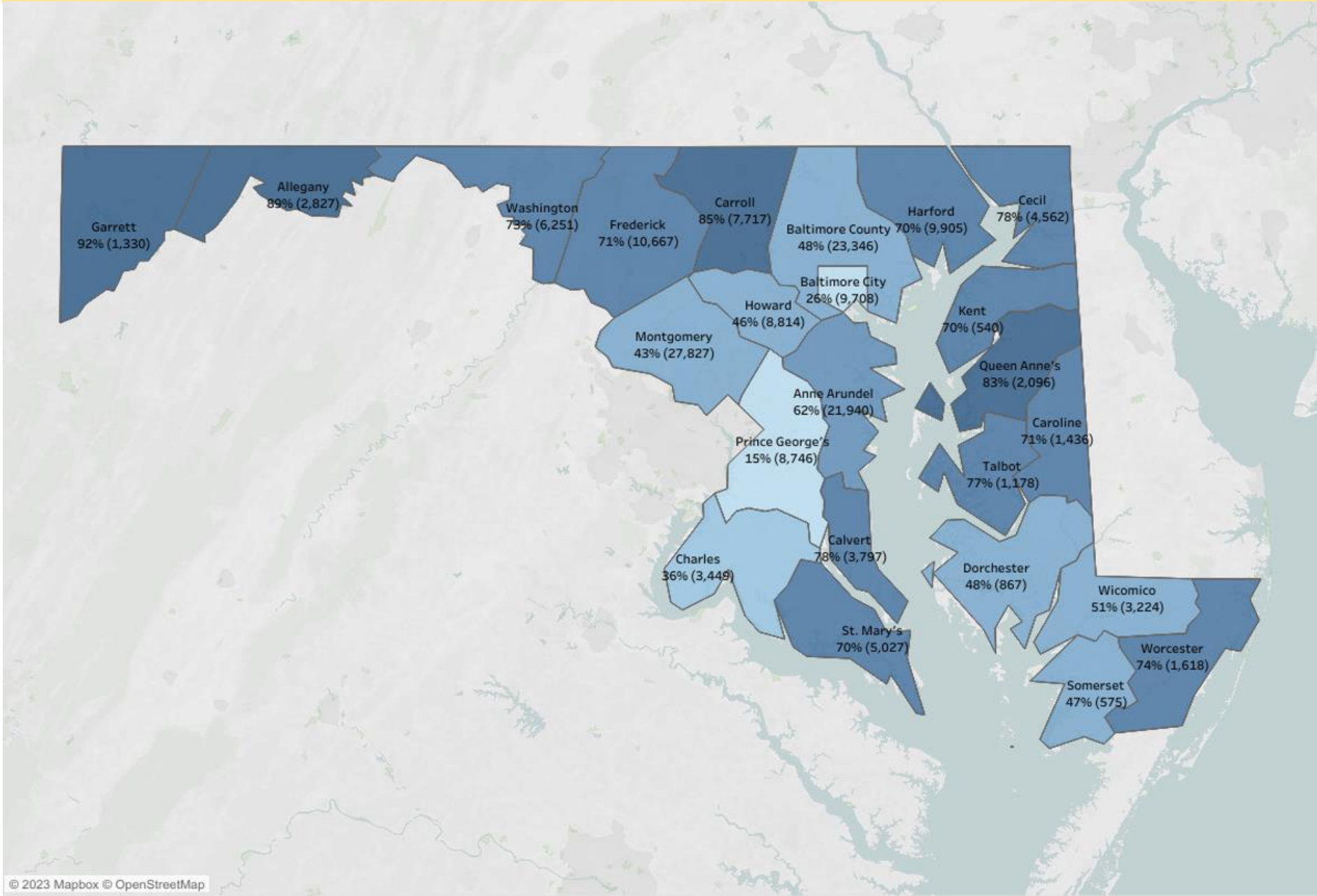
This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY

[7] Hispanic/Latino ethnicity covers people of any race.

[8] The estimates used for Black children cover all Black children under five (e.g., Black American, Black African, etc.), including those ethnically Hispanic/Latino.

[9] The estimates used for White children cover all White children under five (e.g., White American, White European, etc.), including those ethnically Hispanic/Latino.

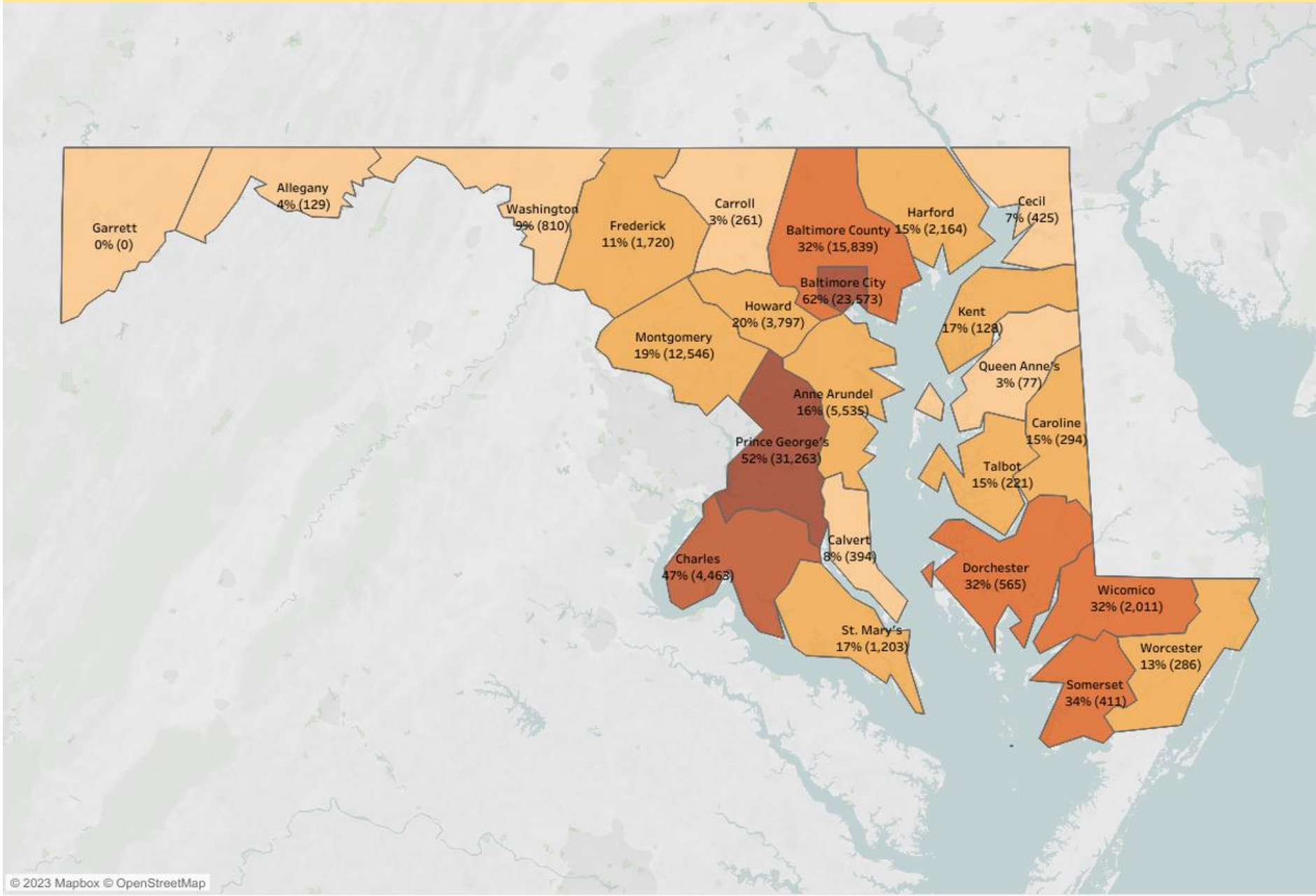
Map 2. Percentage of children under five years old that were White by county/jurisdiction



Data source: 2016 – 2020 ACS 5-year estimates (Tables B01001A; S0101)

Note: The estimates used for White children cover all White children under five (e.g., White American, White European, etc.), including those ethnically Hispanic/Latino.

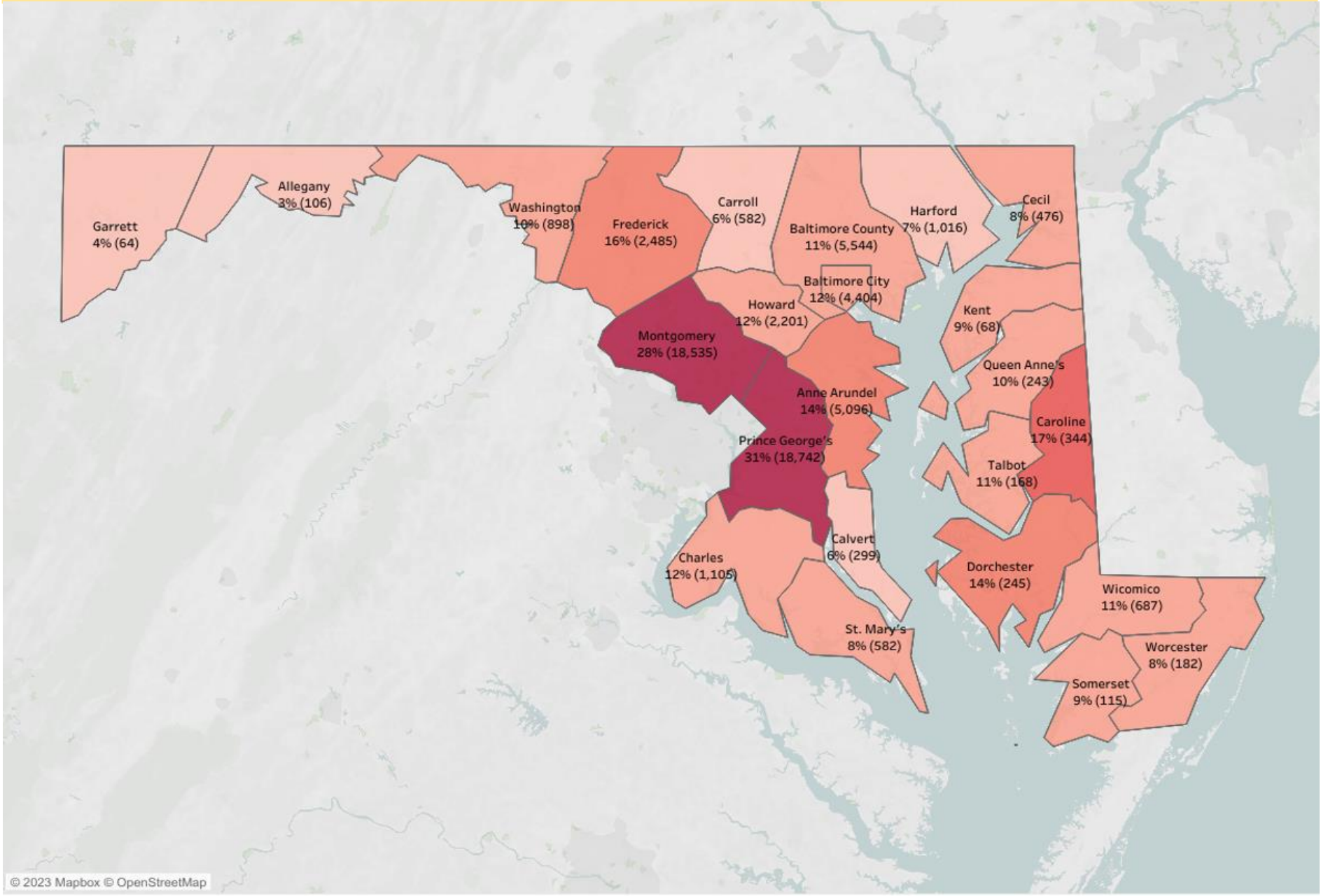
Map 3. Percentage of children under five years old that were Black by county/jurisdiction



Data source: 2016 – 2020 ACS 5-year estimates (Tables B01001B; S0101)

Note: The estimates used for Black children cover all Black children under five (e.g., Black American, Black African, etc.), including those ethnically Hispanic/Latino.

Map 4. Percentage of children under five years old that were Hispanic/Latino by county/jurisdiction



Data source: 2016 – 2020 ACS 5-year estimates (Tables B01001I; S0101)

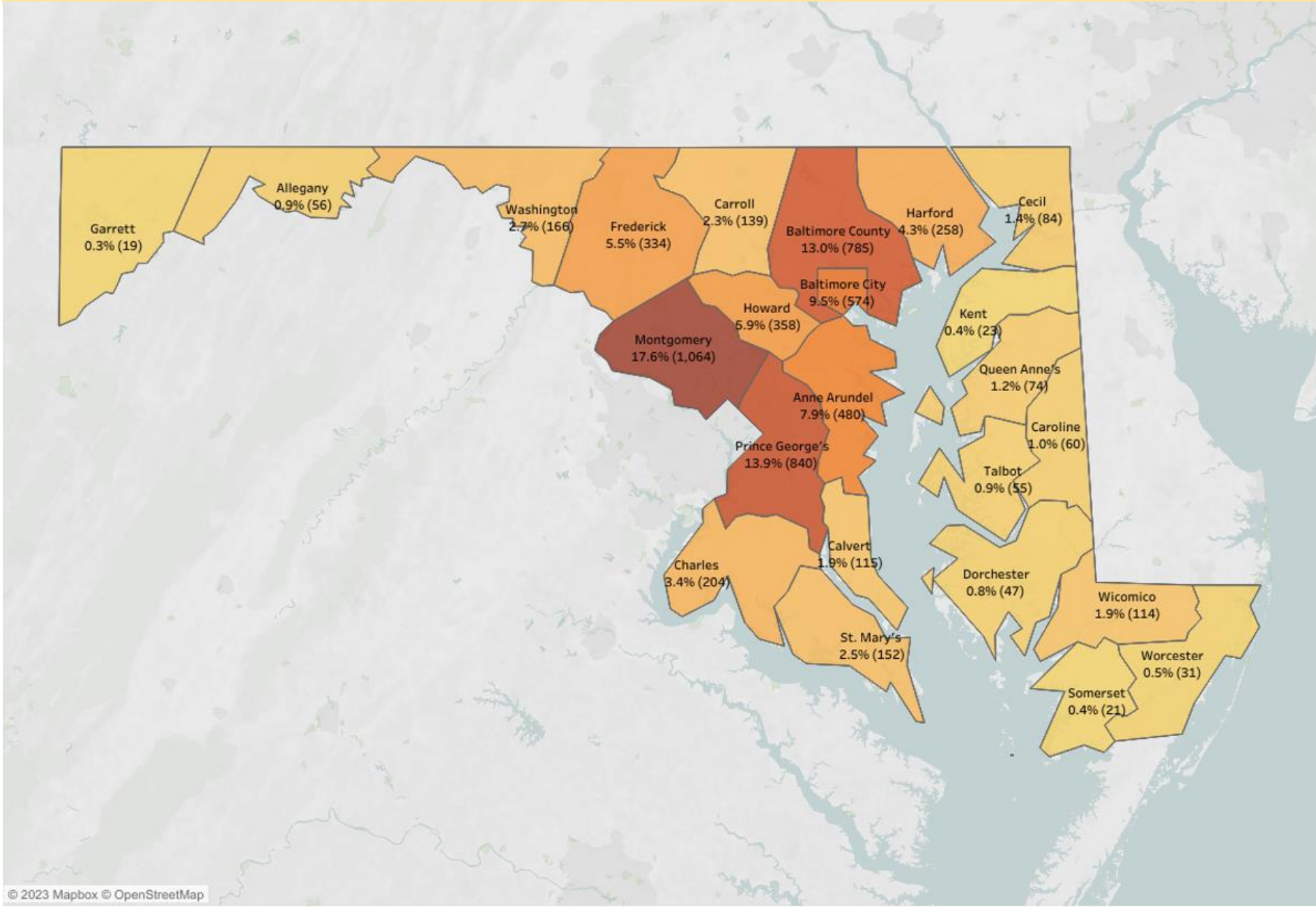
Note: The estimates used for the Hispanic/Latino group cover children under five of any race (e.g., Black, White, etc.).

CHILD CARE PROGRAMS

According to Maryland Family Network data, as of May 2022:

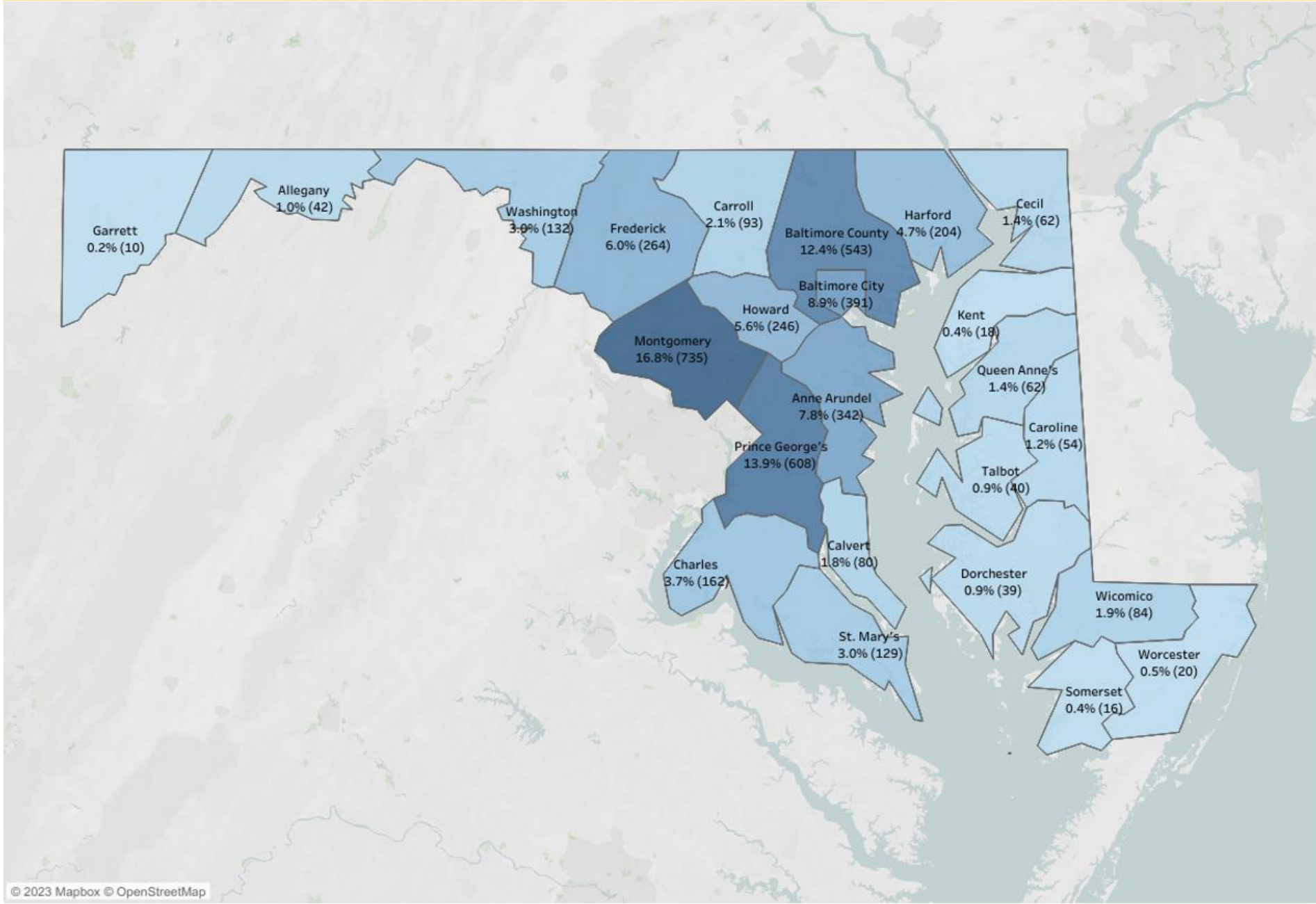
- There were **6,053** licensed child care programs in Maryland: **4,376 family child care providers** (FCCPs) and **1,677 child care centers** (CCs). In general, the counties/jurisdictions with more children under five had more child care programs (see Figure 1).

Map 5. Percentage of licensed child care programs (FCCPs + CCs) based on the total number in Maryland by county/jurisdiction



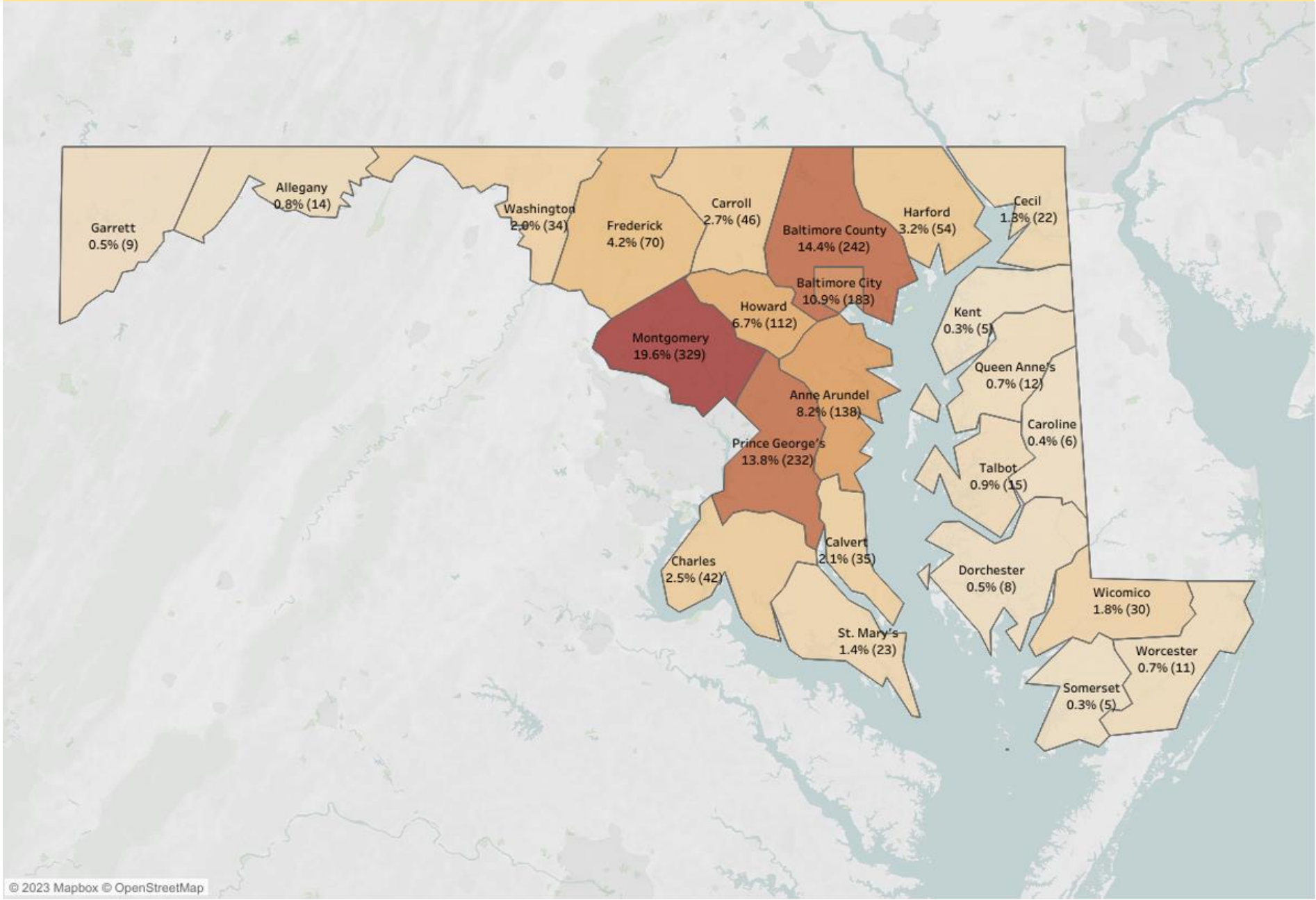
Data source: Maryland Family Network (as of May 2022)

Map 6. Percentage of licensed family child care providers (FCCPs) based on the total number in Maryland by county/jurisdiction



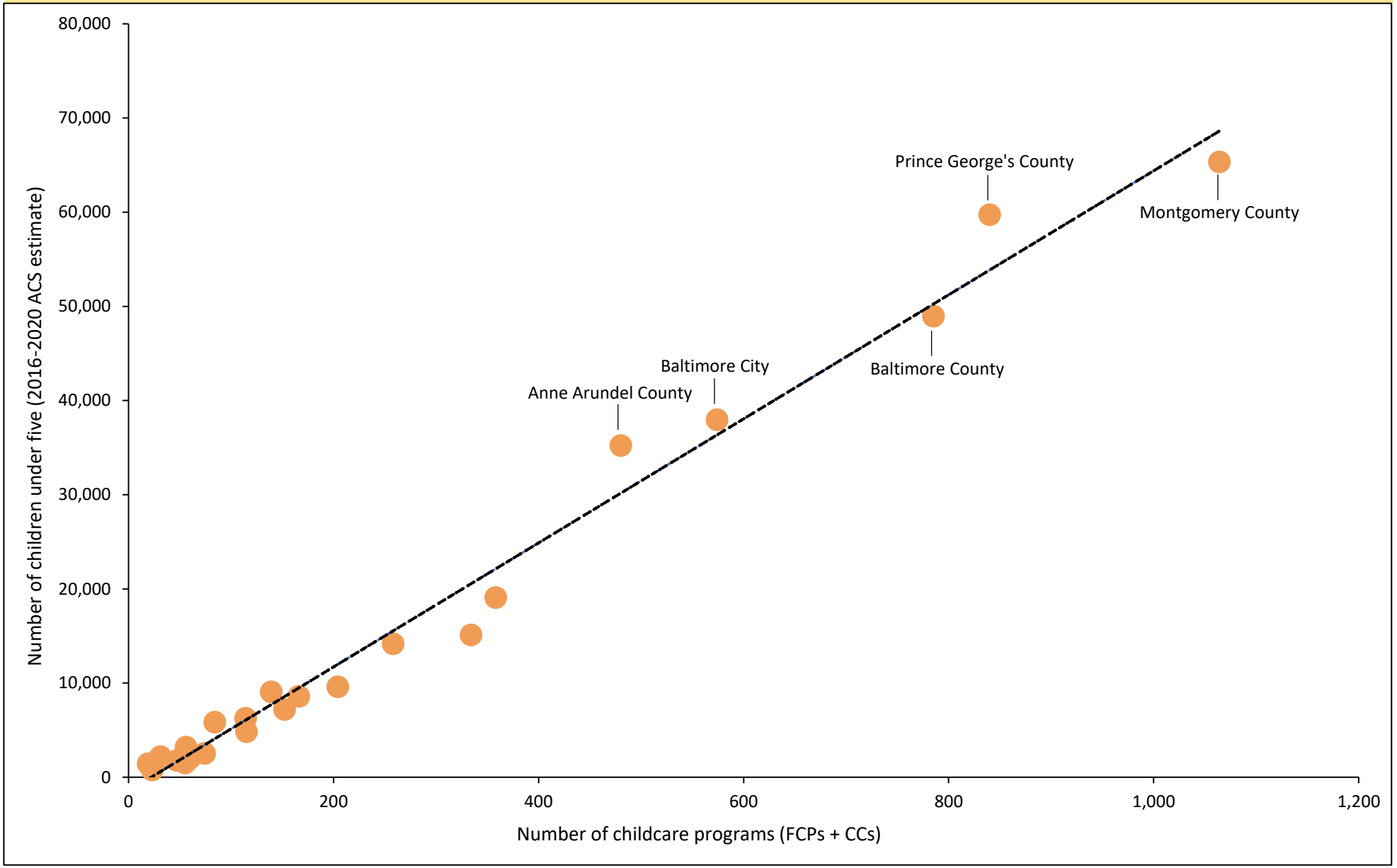
Data source: Maryland Family Network (as of May 2022)

Map 7. Percentage of licensed child care centers (CCs) based on the total number in Maryland by county/jurisdiction



Data source: Maryland Family Network (as of May 2022)

Figure 1. Relationship between number of children under five and number of child care programs (FCCPs + CCs) by county/jurisdiction



Data source: Maryland Family Network (as of May 2022); 2016 – 2020 ACS 5-year estimates (Table S0101)

FAMILY POVERTY

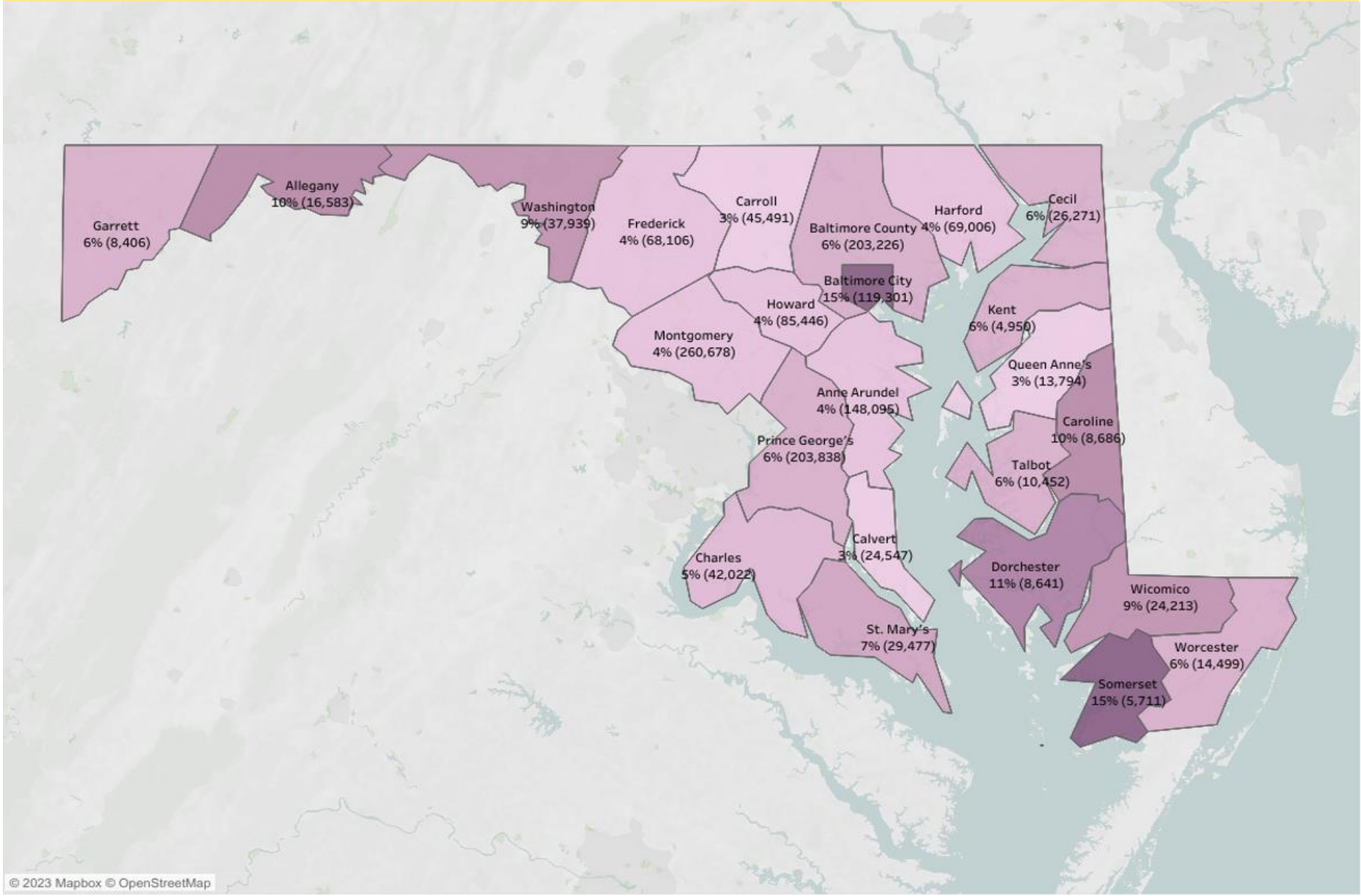
According to the 2016-2020 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates:

- **Six percent** of all families in Maryland were living below the poverty line.

Looking at the state's 24 counties/jurisdictions:

- Eight had a percentage of families in poverty of **7% or higher**. **Baltimore City** and **Somerset County** marked the top-end of this group with **15%**. However, Baltimore City had significantly more children under the age of five than Somerset County (specifically, 31-times more).

Map 8. Percentage of families below the poverty line by county/jurisdiction



Data source: 2016 – 2020 ACS 5-year estimates (Table S1702)

Note: Percentages include all families living below the poverty line, with or without related children under 18 years old.

FAMILY POVERTY

Focusing on Zip Code Tabulation Areas (ZCTAs) helps visualize where there were concentrations of families living under the poverty line in each county/jurisdiction. Using 2016-2020 ACS data, we found that:

- **Twenty-six percent** of Maryland's ZCTAs – or just over 1 in 4 – had a percentage of families in poverty of **7% or higher**. These ZCTAs where home to:
    - **Fifty-one percent** (55,464) of all Black children under the age of five in Maryland.[10]
    - **Forty-four percent** (28,428) of all Hispanic/Latino children under five in Maryland.[11]
    - **Twenty-nine percent** (48,544) of all White children under five in Maryland.[12]
- Of the ZCTAs with 7% of families or more living in poverty, those in Baltimore City, its periphery, and the periphery of Washington D.C. (in Prince George's County) had the biggest concentration of children under five. You can explore these data further using our interactive map[13].

[10] The estimates used for Black children cover all Black children under five (e.g., Black American, Black African, etc.), including those ethnically Hispanic/Latino.

[11] Hispanic/Latino ethnicity covers people of any race.

[12] The estimates used for White children cover all White children under five (e.g., White American, White European, etc.), including those ethnically Hispanic/Latino.

[13] https://public.tableau.com/views/ReportMaps_16808975691070/Dashboard4?:language=en-US&publish=yes&:display_count=n&:origin=viz_share_link

Table 1. ACS demographic data and MFN child care program data

State	Number of children under five	% of children under five that were White	% of children under five that were Black	% of children under five that were Hispanic/Latino	Number of licensed family child care providers	Number of licensed child care centers	% of families living below the poverty line
Maryland	363,618	46% (167,447)	30% (108,115)	18% (64,187)	4,376	1,677	6% (1,479,378)
County/Jurisdiction	**% of children under five from MD total**	**% of children under five that were White**	**% of children under five that were Black**	**% of children under five that were Hispanic/Latino**	**% of licensed family child care providers from MD total**	**% of licensed child care centers from MD total**	**% of families living under the poverty line**
Allegany	0.9% (3,192)	89% (2,827)	4% (129)	3% (106)	1.0% (42)	0.8% (14)	10% (16,583)
Anne Arundel	9.7% (35,229)	62% (21,940)	16% (5,535)	14% (5,096)	7.8% (342)	8.2% (138)	4% (148,095)
Baltimore City	10.4% (37,951)	26% (9,708)	62% (23,573)	12% (4,404)	8.9% (391)	10.9% (183)	15% (119,301)
Baltimore County	13.5% (48,961)	48% (23,346)	32% (15,839)	11% (5,544)	12.4% (543)	14.4% (242)	6% (203,226)
Calvert	1.3% (4,840)	78% (3,797)	8% (394)	6% (299)	1.8% (80)	2.1% (35)	3% (24,547)
Caroline	0.6% (2,018)	71% (1,436)	15% (294)	17% (344)	1.2% (54)	0.4% (6)	10% (8,686)
Carroll	2.5% (9,079)	85% (7,717)	3% (261)	6% (582)	2.1% (93)	2.7% (46)	3% (45,491)
Cecil	1.6% (5,843)	78% (4,562)	7% (425)	8% (476)	1.4% (62)	1.3% (22)	6% (26,271)
Charles	2.6% (9,586)	36% (3,449)	47% (4,463)	12% (1,105)	3.7% (162)	2.5% (42)	5% (42,022)
Dorchester	0.5% (1,789)	48% (867)	32% (565)	14% (245)	0.9% (39)	0.5% (8)	11% (8,641)
Frederick	4.2% (15,106)	71% (10,667)	11% (1,720)	16% (2,485)	6.0% (264)	4.2% (70)	4% (68,106)
Garrett	0.4% (1,439)	92% (1,330)	0%	4% (64)	0.2% (10)	0.5% (9)	6% (8,406)
Harford	3.9% (14,178)	70% (9,905)	15% (2,164)	7% (1,016)	4.7% (204)	3.2% (54)	4% (69,006)
Howard	5.2% (19,066)	46% (8,814)	20% (3,797)	12% (2,201)	5.6 (246)	6.7% (112)	4% (85,446)
Kent	0.2% (773)	70% (540)	17% (128)	9% (68)	0.4% (18)	0.3% (5)	6% (4,950)
Montgomery	18.0% (65,340)	43% (27,827)	19% (12,546)	28% (18,535)	16.8% (735)	19.6% (329)	4% (260,678)
Prince George's	16.4% (59,729)	15% (8,746)	52% (31,263)	31% (18,742)	13.9% (608)	13.8% (232)	6% (203,838)
Queen Anne's	0.7% (2,531)	83% (2,096)	3% (77)	10% (243)	1.4% (62)	0.7% (12)	3% (13,794)
Somerset	0.3% (1,221)	47% (575)	34% (411)	9% (115)	0.4% (16)	0.3% (5)	15% (5,711)
St. Mary's	2.0% (7,188)	70% (5,027)	17% (1,203)	8% (582)	3.0% (129)	1.4% (23)	7% (29,477)
Talbot	0.4% (1,521)	77% (1,178)	15% (221)	11% (168)	0.9% (40)	0.9% (15)	6% (10,452)
Washington	2.4% (8,577)	73% (6,251)	9% (810)	10% (898)	3.0% (132)	2.0% (34)	9% (37,939)
Wicomico	1.7% (6,262)	51% (3,224)	32 (2,011)	11% (687)	1.9% (84)	1.8% (30)	9% (24,213)
Worcester	0.6% (2,199)	74% (1,618)	13% (286)	8% (182)	0.5% (20)	0.7% (11)	6% (14,499)
Data source	**2016 – 2020 ACS 5-year estimates (Table S0101)**	**2016 – 2020 ACS 5-year estimates (Tables B01001A; S0101)**	**2016 – 2020 ACS 5-year estimates (Tables B01001B; S0101)**	**2016 – 2020 ACS 5-year estimates (Tables B01001I; S0101)**	**MFN Data (as of May 2022)**	**MFN Data (as of May 2022)**	**2016 – 2020 ACS 5-year estimates (Table S1702)**

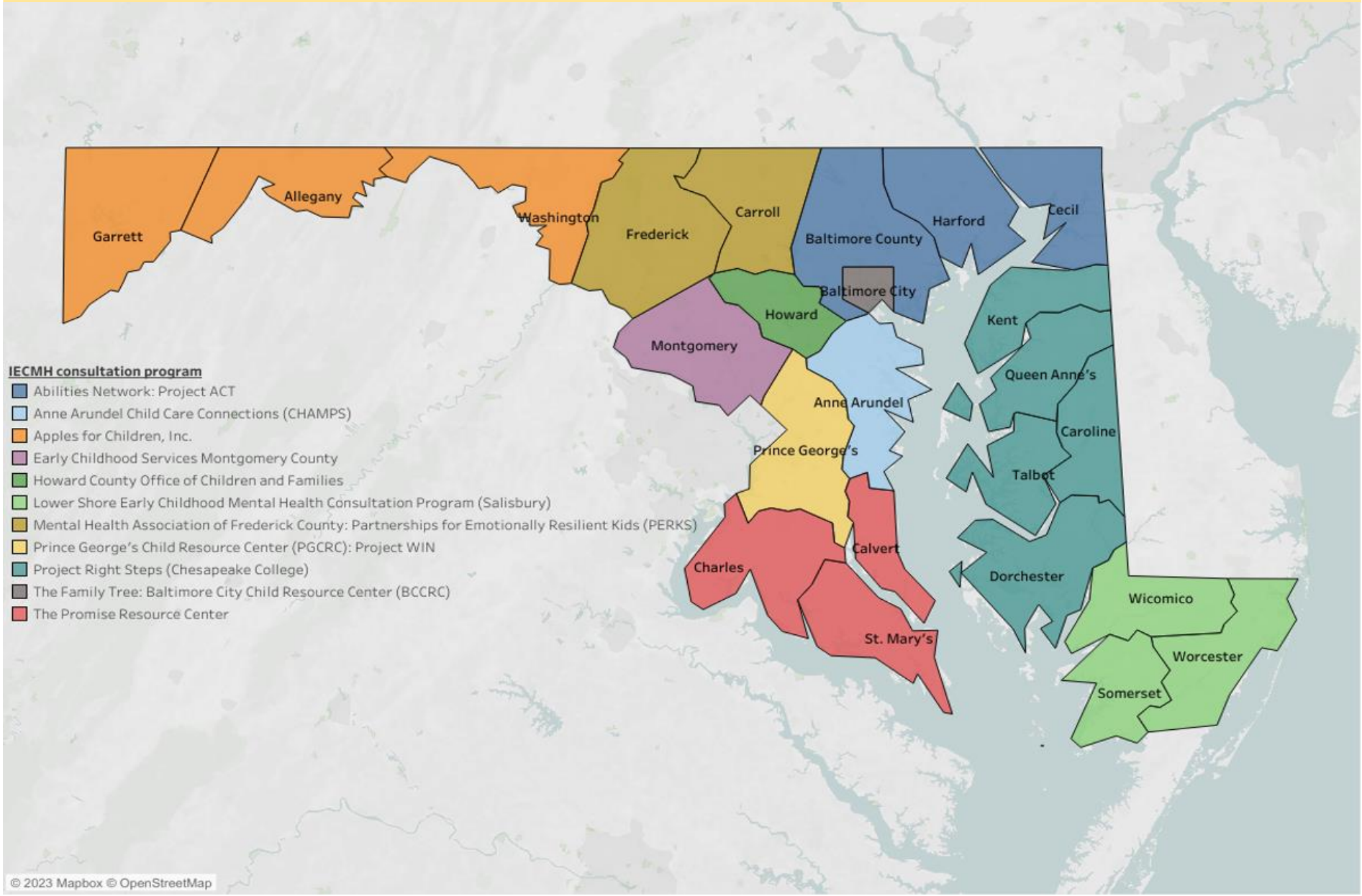
CONSULTATION REFERRALS

From July 3, 2017, through December 31, 2020, there were 11 Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH) consultation programs in Maryland (Map 9 displays the program locations for reference).[14] According to the data in the Outcomes Monitoring System (OMS), for this time period:

- **1,706** consultation referrals were accepted across all IECMH consultation programs. By type of service requested:
    - **Ninety percent** of cases (1,534) were for child specific consultation.
    - **Ten percent** (172) were for program focused/classroom wide consultation.

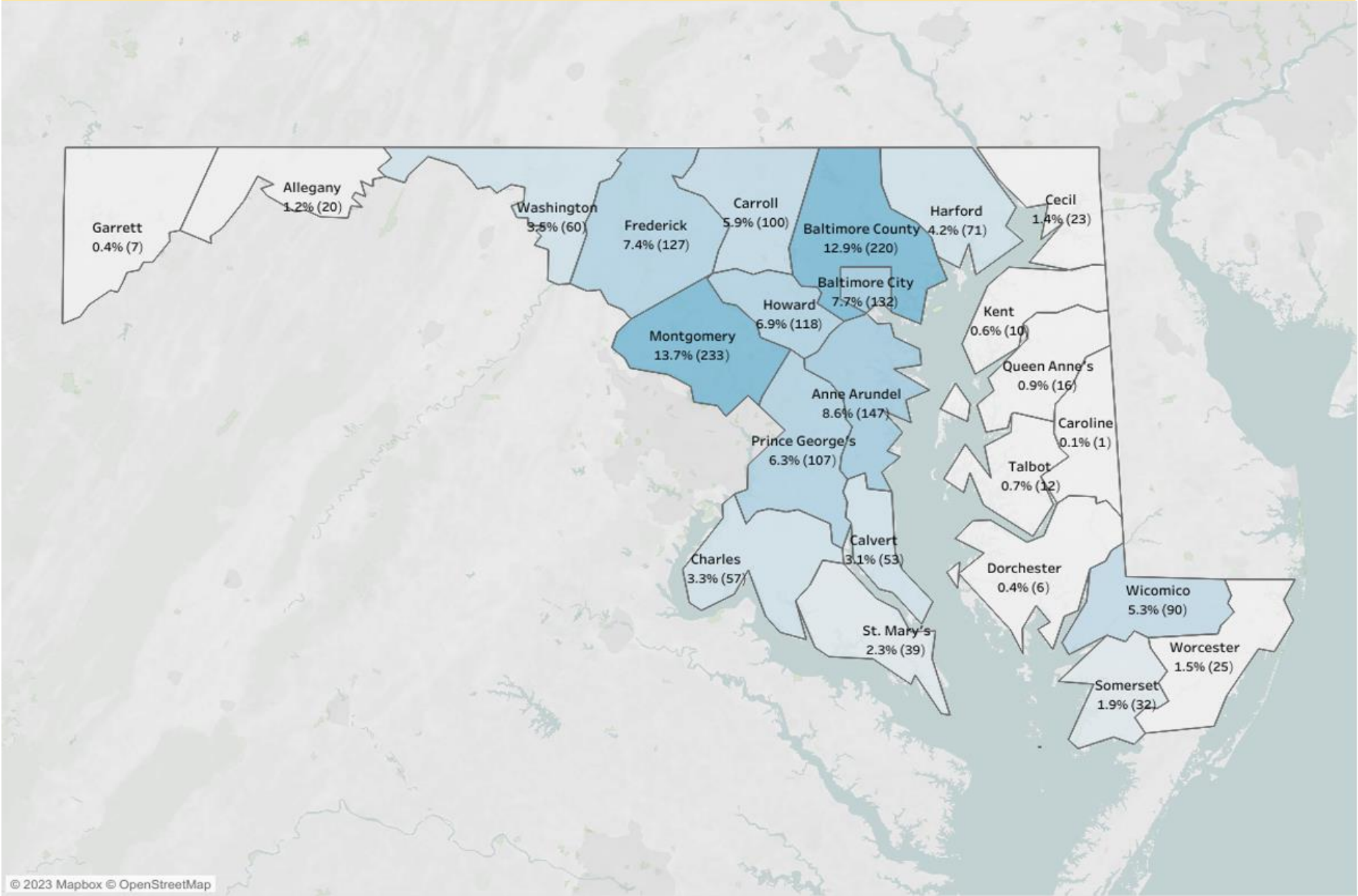
[14] The number of IECMH consultation programs in Maryland dropped to 10 on July 1, 2022.

Map 9. Program locations for each Maryland IECMH consultation program from July 3, 2017, through December 31, 2020



Note: On July 1, 2022, Anne Arundel Child Care Connections (CHAMPS) became part of Prince George's Child Resource Center (PGCRC): Project WIN – this dropped the total number of IECMH consultation programs in Maryland from 11 to 10. As of July 1, 2022, PGCRC serves both Prince George's County and Anne Arundel County.

Map 10. Distribution of accepted IECMH consultation referrals in Maryland from July 3, 2017, through December 31, 2020, by county/jurisdiction



Data source: Outcomes Monitoring System (OMS)

Note: There were 1,706 consultation referrals accepted in Maryland from July 3, 2017, through December 31, 2020.

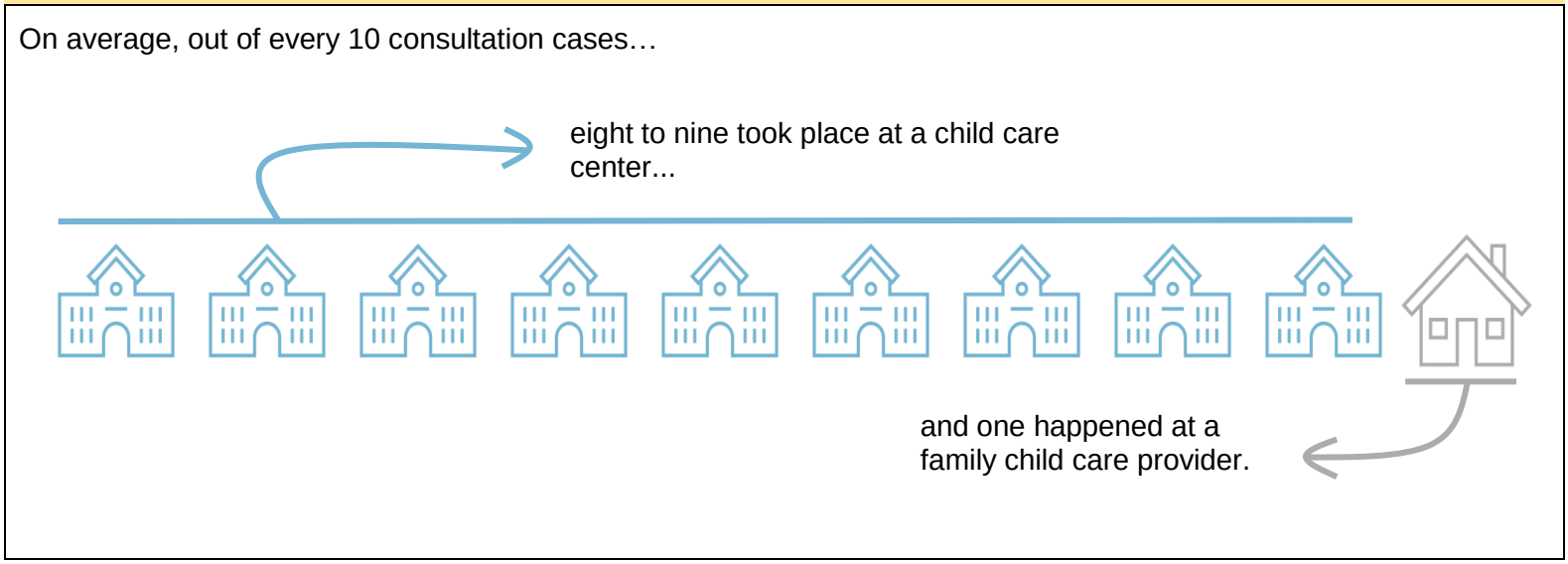
CONSULTATION REFERRALS

Of the 1,706 consultation referrals that were accepted across all IECMH consultation programs, **81%** (1,379) of cases had information about where consultation took place.[15]

We found that, irrespective of the type of IECMH consultation service provided, most consultation happened at child care centers. In fact:

- Child care centers where the primary consultation setting in **86%** of referral cases, despite only accounting for roughly **28%**[16] of licensed child care programs in Maryland.
- In turn, family child care providers were the primary consultation setting in **6%** of cases, even though they made up around **72%**[16] of licensed child care programs in the state.

Figure 2†. Most consultation cases took place at child care centers



Data source: Outcomes Monitoring System (OMS)

† Statistics are derived from the total number of consultation cases for which we have this data (81%; 1,379).

[15] For child specific consultation cases, the OMS is only used to collect case-related information when the child's parents/caregivers' consent to have such data entered in the system. These data include information about the primary consultation setting.

[16] Percentage based on Maryland Family Network data as of May 2022.

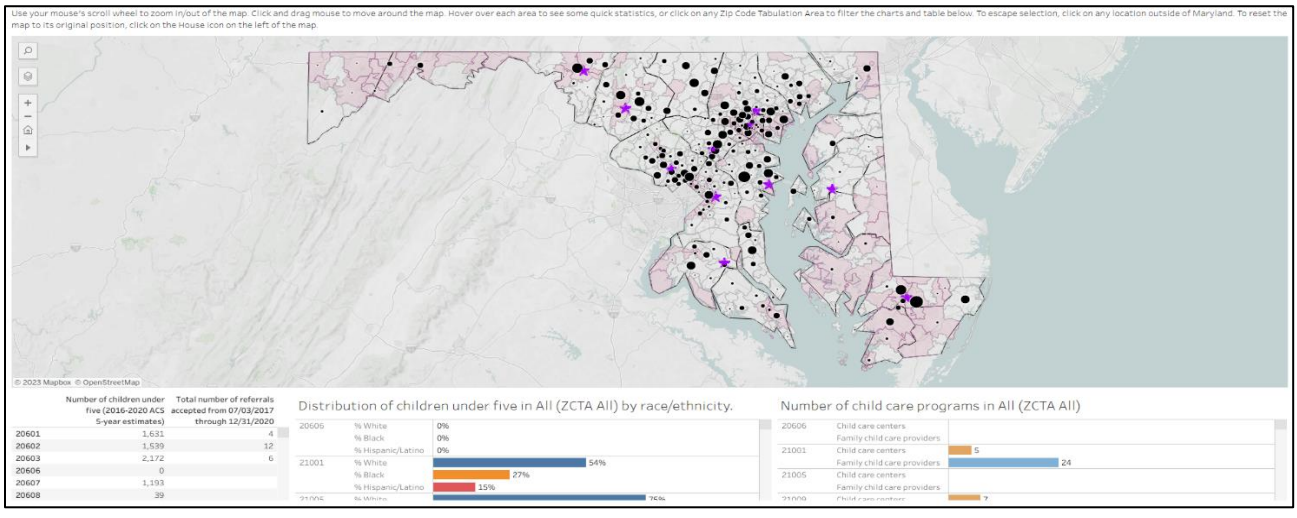
CONSULTATION REFERRALS

It is interesting to note that some Zip Code Tabulation Areas (ZCTAs), despite having ample child care programs and children under five, did not have any reported referrals during the 3 ½ year period covered in this report. For example,

- ZCTA 21223 in West Baltimore – includes neighborhoods like Shipley Hill, Franklin Square, and Booth-Boyd.
- ZCTA 21225, which covers Baltimore City and Anne Arundel – includes neighborhoods like Cherry Hill, Brooklyn, and Brooklyn Park.
- ZCTA 20745 in Prince George's – covers Oxon Hill and Forest Heights.

Furthermore, looking at OMS data going up to December 2022, we found that these three ZCTAs also have not had any referrals since December 31, 2020. For ZCTA 21223, the last referral was in March 2017; for ZCTA 21225 it was in February 2017; and for ZCTA 20745 it was in March 2015.

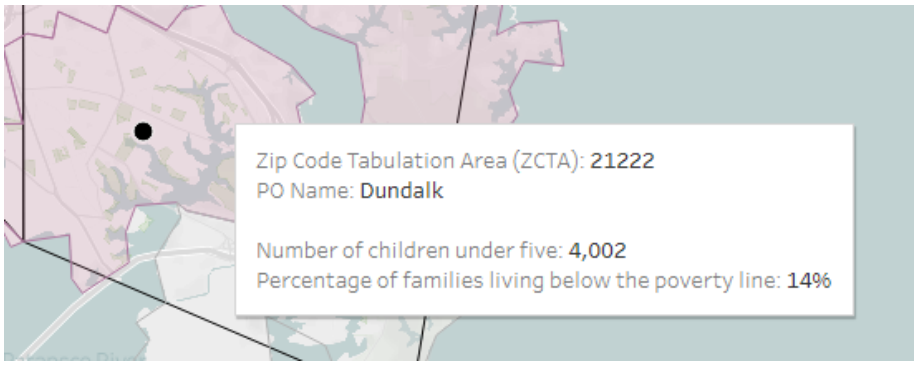
Use our [interactive dashboard](https://public.tableau.com/views/Dashboard_16799443166140/Dashboard1?:language=en-US&publish=yes&:display_count=n&:origin=viz_share_link)[17] to keep learning about IECMH consultation services in Maryland. Check the following pages of this report for a quick how-to guide.

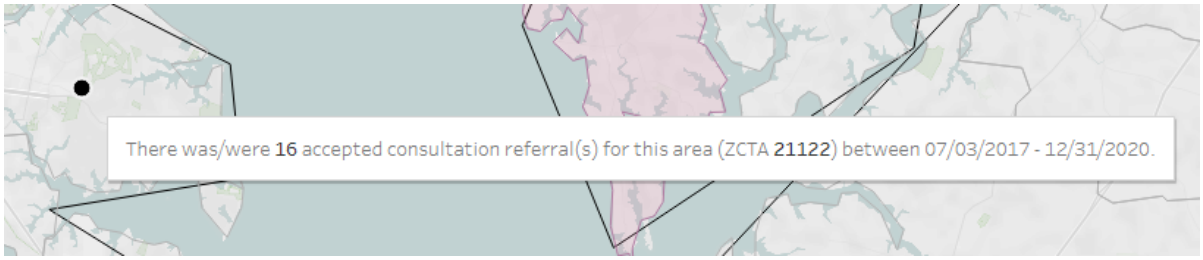


[17] https://public.tableau.com/views/Dashboard_16799443166140/Dashboard1?:language=en-US&publish=yes&:display_count=n&:origin=viz_share_link

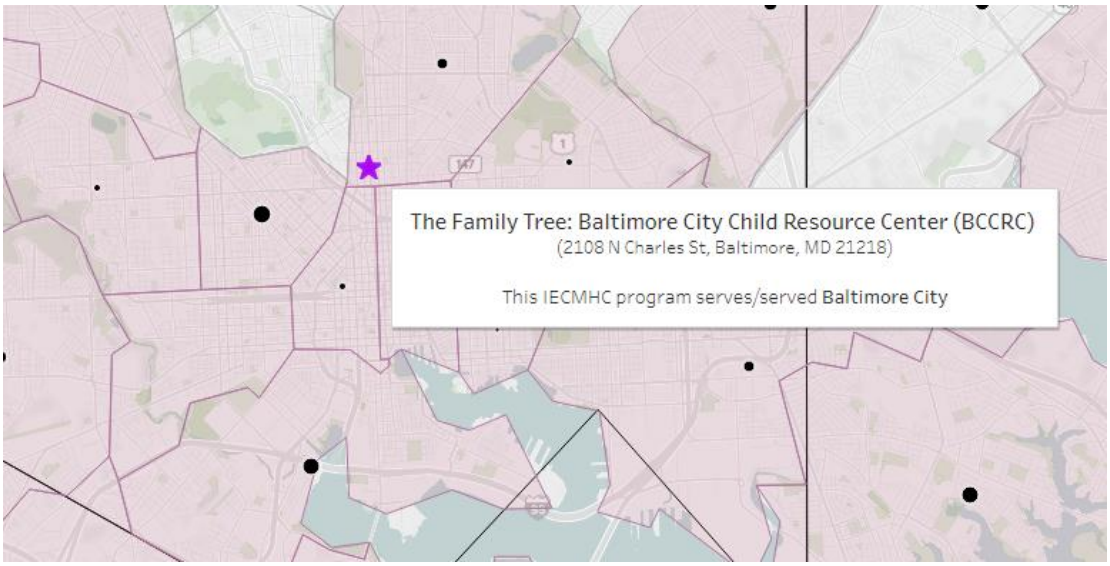
How to use our interactive dashboard:

- Access the dashboard by clicking on this link, or copying and pasting the URL onto your web browser.
- Hover over each ZCTA to see some quick statistics, and over each black circle to see how many IECMH consultation referrals were accepted for that area.

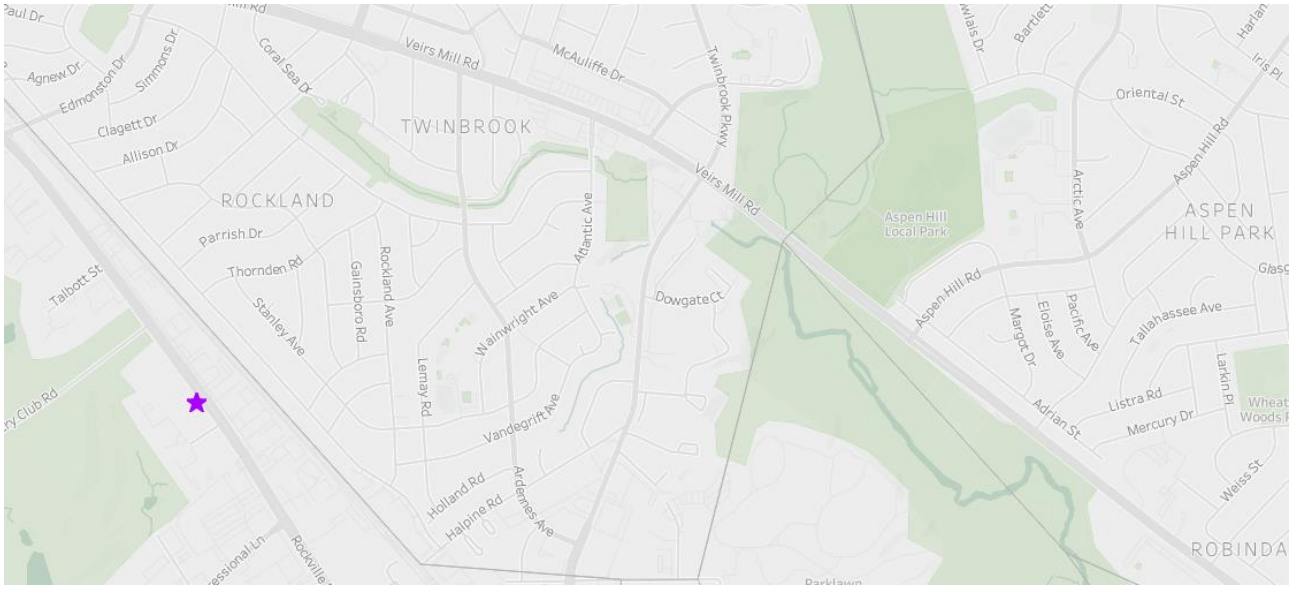




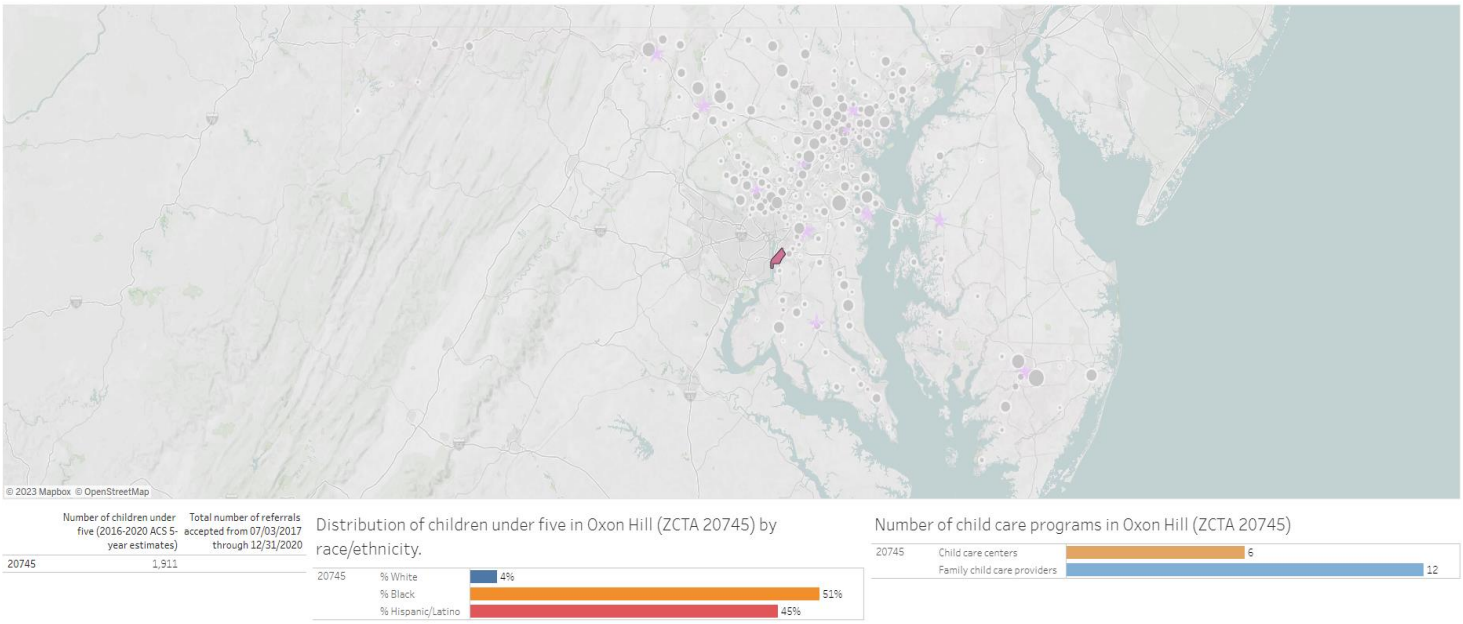
- The purple stars mark the location of each Maryland IECMH consultation program. Hover over them to see their details.



- Use your mouse's scroll wheel to zoom in/out of the map. When zooming in, you'll be able to see neighborhood names and street details.



- Click on a ZCTA to activate the filter in the table and bar charts below the interactive map. These will then display statistics for that area. To escape your selection, click on another ZCTA or on any location outside of Maryland (the latter will reset the table and bar charts).



CONCLUSION

Our statewide maps and interactive dashboard can be useful tools for Maryland IECMH consultation program staff, funders, legislators and community leaders to identify where else IECMH consultation services could have been provided in the context of racial/ethnic, socio-economic factors, and type of child care available. Furthermore, these maps can help initiate and facilitate collective discussions that explore the potential reasons behind IECMH consultation service gaps – like funding, community outreach efforts, delivery of IECMH consultation, and cultural/linguistic appropriateness.

Also, these statewide maps could have implications on how IECMH consultation funding and services are distributed. For example, the maps in this report can be used to leverage funding for historically underserved areas, which in turn could be used to help improve the equity in their IECMH consultation service distribution. Ultimately, though, greater efforts are needed to increase funding overall in Maryland and for each IECMH consultation program, with the goal to expand services statewide that aim to decrease the racial disparity in suspensions and expulsions and reach all children in need.

For densely populated communities with large numbers of child care programs and high rates of Black, Hispanic/Latino people, and families in poverty, it is important to ensure that IECMH consultation services are appropriately promoted and readily accessible to those child care programs with the least resources. Research suggests that large, well-established child care programs are more likely to know of, have access to, and seek out IECMH consultation compared to smaller programs (e.g., see Rodriguez-Jenkins et al., 2022). So, Maryland's IECMH consultation network could be exacerbating existing inequities if it prioritizes a *first come, first served* system over one that is grounded on equity principles.

Particularly in sparsely populated White rural communities with few child care programs and high rates of families in poverty, we must make sure that IECMH consultation outreach efforts go beyond child care centers. As the analysis in this report revealed, the services provided by IECMH consultation programs in Maryland focused almost exclusively on children attending child care centers. However, this practice may lead IECMH consultation programs to miss vulnerable children in impoverished rural areas – where there are likely few or no child care centers/programs.

Lastly, IECMH consultation providers need to make sure that they can offer services that are culturally and/or linguistically fitting for their target population. For example, the majority of Maryland counties do not have an established Spanish-speaking IECMH consultation provider that could reach out to Hispanic/Latino communities comprised primarily (or solely) of Spanish speakers.

All in all, the contents of this report are only one piece of the puzzle towards equity in the landscape of services for young children, their families, and their early childhood education providers. There are a confluence of factors and people that make up the other pieces. Using the interactive dashboard[18] along with the question guide (pp. 3 – 4), IECMH consultation programs can review where they have/have not provided services and collectively determine solutions to disrupt patterns of historically embedded inequities.

[18] https://public.tableau.com/views/Dashboard_16799443166140/Dashboard1?:language=en-US&publish=yes&:display_count=n&:origin=viz_share_link

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