

FINDING QUALITY CHILD CARE



changing tides
family services

There are different types of child care available: some are licensed by the State of California and must follow health and safety regulations; some child care arrangements do not require a license and are known as license-exempt child care.

Licensed Child Care

Community Care Licensing- Community Care Licensing (CCL) is the California state agency responsible for the inspection and monitoring of licensed child care programs. Their goal is to protect the health and safety of children in child care.

The two different types of child care that are licensed by CCL are:

Family Child Care Home- Child care is offered in the home of the provider

Child Care Center- Child care is offered in a non-home facility

The complaint history of a licensed child care facility is available by calling Community Care Licensing at 1-844-538-8766

See page 2 for a closer look at licensed child care

License-exempt Child Care

There are a variety of providers who are considered exempt from licensing:

- Care by family, friends & neighbors, in their homes (a license is not required if they care for children from only one other family)
- A person hired by a parent to provide child care in the parent's home
- Some school-based child care programs
- Some youth recreation programs and day camps

Types of Child Care— Choices to be Made

Parents should consider which type of child care might best suits their needs:

- A home-style atmosphere
- An educational program
- Mixed age group
- Small or large group of children

MAKING A DECISION

Here are some questions parents might ask a potential provider

- What training, education and experience do you and/or your staff have?
- What is a typical day like in your program?
- What are your practices regarding discipline?
- What if my child cries all day?
- How do you handle napping and toilet training?
- How would you support my preschooler to become ready for school?
- Do you provide nutritious meals and snacks?
- Can you provide care for my infant as well as my school-age child?
- Can you accommodate a flexible schedule?

Here are some observations parents might consider when visiting a potential provider

- Does the provider and/or staff appear to enjoy the children?
- Is the environment warm and inviting?
- Does the provider engage the infants and toddlers in nurturing physical contact?
- Is there enough space for the children to play on the floor?
- Are the children engaged in activities that encourage them to develop their coordination and physical skills?
- Are there enough toys and books in good repair?
- Is the television on?

Resource and Referral staff can provide additional information re: how to select child care services that will meet the needs of families

Contact Changing Tides Family Services' Resource & Referral at (707) 444-8293 or (800) 795-3554 or info@changingtidesfs.org

Licensed Family Child Care

Some families choose the licensed family child care home setting because of the “family” atmosphere and the knowledge that Community Care Licensing requirements must be met. These requirements include:

- The licensed family child care provider and all adults living in the home must pass a criminal background check and be free of tuberculosis
- The licensed family child care provider must have 16 hours of preventative health and safety training
- The home must be free of defects or conditions which might endanger a child

In a small licensed family child care home, one adult may care for:

- 4 infants (an infant is a child 0-24 months) ; or
- 6 children with no more than three infants; or
- 8 children with no more than two infants, when at least one child is six or older and one at least attending kindergarten are present

Licensed family child care providers are not required to take college courses in child development; however, some providers voluntarily do so.

In a large licensed family child care home one adult plus an assistant may care for:

- 12 children with no more than four infants; or
- 14 children with no more than three infants, when at least one child is six or older and one at least attending kindergarten are present

Licensed homes and centers are regulated by Title 22 of the California Health & Safety Code

These ratios must include the provider's and/or assistant's children (under age 10) in care

Licensed Child Care Centers

Some families choose licensed child care centers because they often provide a more structured atmosphere and a larger number of staff and children than some other types of child care. Staff must pass a background check and have a tuberculosis clearance. In addition:

- At least one person on site must have 16 hours of health and safety training
- Teachers are required to take college courses in child development
- Child care centers must meet building, fire and zoning codes

The purpose of Head Start and Title 5 early education programs is to prepare children for success in school

For a licensed child care center regulated by Title 5 the staff-to-child ratio is:

- **Infant** (0-18 months): One adult for every three infants
- **Toddler** (18 months to 36 months): One adult for every four toddlers
- **Preschool** (three to five years): One adult to every 8 children
- **School-age** (kindergarten to 14 years): One adult for every 14 children

In addition to Title 22 requirements, Title 5 child centers must meet more stringent requirements in the areas of:

Staff qualifications	Staff development
Parental involvement	Individual child assessments
Providing nutritious meals/snacks	

Program content must:

- Be developmentally, linguistically and culturally appropriate
- Include a health and social services component

For a licensed child care center, the staff-to-child ratio is:

- **Infant** (birth to two years):
One adult for every four infants
- **Toddler** (18 months to 30 months):
One adult for every six toddlers
- **Preschool** (two to five years):
One adult for every 12 children
- **School-age** (kindergarten to 12 years):
One adult for every 14 children

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