



## Licensed Family Child Care

is usually care by a non-relative outside the child's home. Like center-based care, licensed family child care programs are run like businesses and are regulated by the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood. The Office checks each home for health and safety and makes unannounced visits to programs. Licensed family child care is one of the types of child care available to parents.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:



**ALL OUR KIN, INC.**  
PO Box 8477  
New Haven, CT 06530  
[www.allourkin.org](http://www.allourkin.org)  
203-772-2294

### Connecticut Office of Early Childhood

[www.ct.gov/oec](http://www.ct.gov/oec)  
860-713-6410

### Child Care Aware

[www.childcareaware.org](http://www.childcareaware.org)  
800-424-2246

### 2-1-1 Child Care

[www.211childcare.org](http://www.211childcare.org), 2-1-1

### Care4Kids

*(help paying for child care)*  
[www.ctcare4kids.com](http://www.ctcare4kids.com)  
888-214-5437

### National Association for Family Child Care

[www.nafcc.org](http://www.nafcc.org)  
800-359-3817



Office of Child Care

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WHAT IS  
**Family  
Child  
Care?**

## Why choose family child care?

### INTIMATE SETTING

A family child care provider can provide full-time care for up to six children. Unless she has an approved assistant, only two children can be younger than two years old. This low number allows the provider to get to know each child well and provide individualized care for every child, including those with special needs.



### FAMILY-LIKE

Family child care programs can be intimate, loving, and warm environments. You can seek out a provider whose language, culture, values, and beliefs are close to your own. If you have more than one child, the same provider may be able to provide care to all of your children.

### NOT JUST NINE TO FIVE CARE

Family child care providers often provide flexible care during non-traditional hours, sometimes from six or seven in the morning to six or seven at night. Some providers offer weekend and night care, and many are located in residential neighborhoods, cutting down on travel time and cost.

### AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE

Family child care homes can be found in many different neighborhoods and areas, close to home or work or somewhere in between. Licensed family child care often costs less than center-based care.

### MIXED-AGE GROUP

Family child care providers can care for children through age five. They can also care for three school age children enrolled in a full-day program before or after school. This means that siblings can be cared for by the same provider. Also, since providers can care for children of different ages, a child can stay with a provider from the time she is born and continue even after she starts school. This continuous, caring and nurturing relationship is a hallmark of family child care and the heart of quality early childhood education.



## What does good quality family child care look like?

Good quality child care can look different for each family. Here are some basic things to look for:

- Only six children in full-time care of one provider, with no more than two children under age two (unless the provider has an approved assistant). A provider can also provide care for three additional school age children before or after school if they are enrolled in a full-day program.
- The provider should be warm and welcoming.
- The provider should give each child lots of touch and physical comfort, just like you would at home.
- The provider should talk happily to the children during routines (eating, toileting, diapering) and during play.
- There should be different areas for learning and play: books, blocks, puzzles, dramatic play, drawing or art, as well as toys that babies play with.
- The provider should read picture books to the children and have books that children can reach, touch, and explore.



- Screens (television and computer) should be kept off or only allowed on for a small part of the day. If used at all, technology should be used intentionally to give children engaging, hands-on experiences to learn and develop.
- The provider should offer a space for babies to explore on their bellies as they crawl around and learn.
- Children should go outdoors every day and be able to run around during part of the day in a safe space.

You and the provider should feel comfortable talking to each other about anything that has to do with your child. You are your child's first teacher. You should be able to visit the provider's home at any time.

## How do I find child care?

As part of the licensing process, the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood visits and checks the health and safety of family child care homes, makes unannounced visits to homes, investigates complaints against providers, and conducts criminal background checks on providers and any other people who live in the house.

**TO FIND A CHILD CARE PROGRAM** near you, dial 2-1-1 Infoline (or go online to [www.211childcare.org](http://www.211childcare.org)) to find the best child care fit for your family and to get a listing of nearby licensed family child care homes. Infoline can also help you learn more about subsidies such as Care-4-Kids that can help you pay for care.

**BEFORE YOU VISIT**, contact the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood to see if there are any complaints against the child care provider by calling 860-509-8045 or visiting [www.elicense.ct.gov](http://www.elicense.ct.gov).

**ARRANGE A VISIT** to meet with the provider and observe her program and her interactions with children. If there aren't any children, arrange for a time to have you and your child meet her. Ask for references of current families or past families. Even after enrolling your child in a program, visit the provider's home to see how happy your child is and how the provider cares for your child.

**QUESTION THE PROVIDER** about her education and experience and her training in child development. Before putting your child in a family child care home, the provider should give you a written agreement that goes over the provider's policies—fees, sick children, others in contact with the children, and so on. Ask the provider for these documents if they are not mentioned.