

In order to become licensed, the caregiver must meet all the provincial regulations for Licensed Family Child Care. A Licensing Officer interviews the caregiver, checks references from a physician and others, ensures that the caregiver and others in the home have a clear criminal record, and approves the space where the child care will take place. The caregiver is required to hold a valid first aid certificate. An introductory family child care training course is recommended.

You are responsible for learning about the caregiver's background, experience and policies in order to choose the person who you think will provide the best care for your children. Open communication helps parents and caregivers understand and trust each other. Ongoing visits by Licensing Officers to licensed family child care providers often helps parents feel they have help in monitoring the care provided by the caregiver.

Group Child Care

Group Child Care is provided in licensed child care centres where children are grouped according to age. Some centres provide care for infants, some for toddlers and others for children aged 3 years to school age. Group care facilities, equipment, staff qualifications, and child-staff ratios meet or surpass (exceed) the minimum standards set by the Provincial Child Care Regulation. Most children in group care programs attend for several hours every day from Monday through Friday.

While there are similarities amongst licensed group child care programs, each

centre has its own approach to caring for children and its own policies. When you visit several group care programs, you may see differences in the way centres provide care for children and organize their programs. You are responsible for choosing the licensed group care program that best suits your child and your family situation. As with other types of child care, you will need to continue to monitor the care your child receives at the centre you choose.

Licensed Preschools

Preschools are licensed part-time programs that children aged 30 months to school age may attend two to five times a week, mornings or afternoons for two to four hours. Some preschools offer separate programs for 3 and 4 year olds, while others have mixed age groupings. Preschool staff qualification requirements meet or surpass (exceed) minimum standards set by the Provincial Child Care Regulation. Some preschools require that parents participate in the program some of the time.

It's a good idea to visit several different preschools before deciding which one offers the programs best suited to your child. Observe how your child adjusts to the preschool and talk openly with staff about any concerns you have.

Licensed School Age Child Care Programs

Licensed School Age Child Care Programs offer care to school-aged children outside of regular school hours. Some programs

offer care before and after school while others provide care only after school. Full-day care is offered during school holidays and on other days that school is not in session.

School age programs are staffed by responsible adults at least 19 years of age. Although there are no formal training requirements for staff in school age programs, many staff have related education and experience working with children and families.

You will want to meet the staff of the school age program so that you can feel confident about the care provided to your child. You are responsible for open communication with program staff about your child's care.

Need More Information?

For more information about choosing a quality child care arrangement, please ask for the following pamphlets:

- *Choosing Child Care*
- *Selecting an In-Home Caregiver*
- *A Parent's Guide to Selecting Child Care*

www.healthservices.gov.bc.ca/ccf/child/publicat/comm/com014.pdf

- *Or call Enquiry BC to find your local Child Care Resource & Referral*
1.800.663.7867 or 604.660.2421

This brochure is available in:

Chinese, English, Farsi, French, Punjabi,
Spanish and Vietnamese

KNOWING ABOUT CHILD CARE CHOICES



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Parents often have several different choices when they are looking for child care while they are at work or at school. The type of care you choose depends on a number of factors:

- ☺ the number of children and their age
- ☺ the days of the week and the hours of the day that care is needed
- ☺ your family's lifestyle, culture, schedule, religion or language
- ☺ the kind of child care that exists in the community
- ☺ what your family can afford to pay
- ☺ what you know about the range of child care choices

The more you know about the various child care choices that may be available, the better able you will be to find a child care arrangement that meets your family's needs.

Child care may be provided in your own home, in a caregiver's home or in a child care centre. Many types of child care are licensed, some are monitored by an agency or support network, and a few are supervised entirely by the parents themselves. In all cases, parents are responsible for selecting a safe, healthy, nurturing child care arrangement that best suits their family situation and their children's needs.

THE CHOICES

It is often confusing for parents when they first hear about all the various kinds of child care they have to choose from. These brief descriptions of some of the child care choices may make it easier for you to decide what is best for your child and your family. Daycare subsidy is available to eligible families to help with the cost of all of these child care choices.

In-Home Child Care

Some parents prefer to have a caregiver come into the family home to look after the children. An in-home caregiver might live with the family or she might live elsewhere and come to the family home only when care is needed.

An in-home caregiver may be called a nanny, au pair or a babysitter. Supervision of the in-home caregiver's work is the full responsibility of the parent. The caregiver may or may not have had some formal child care training or previous child care experience. It is essential that you take some time to learn about the caregiver's background and approach to caring for children. References and a criminal record check are a good idea. You will need to feel comfortable that the caregiver will take good care of your children while you are away.

A written agreement between you and the caregiver is recommended. This agreement describes the days and hours of work, the caregiver's specific terms of employment and the parent's responsibilities as an employer. For more

information about writing an agreement, ask for the pamphlet *Writing a Parent-Caregiver Agreement for In-home Child Care*.

License-Not-Required Family Child Care

Family Child Care is care provided in the caregiver's own home. In B.C., no license is required if the caregiver looks after only one or two children. This is called license-not required, unlicensed or informal child care. License-not-required caregivers often care for one or two children aged 0 - 12 years along with their own children. They may or may not have had formal child care training or previous child care experience.

Some of these caregivers are registered with the Child Care Resource and Referral Program in their community. This means they have met several registry requirements. These usually include:

- A criminal record check
- References
- A home setting review
- A physician's report
- First aid training
- Caregiver liability insurance
- Participation in child care training courses or workshops

Although parents are responsible for monitoring their child's care, parents often feel more confident when they select a caregiver who is registered with a Child Care Resource and Referral Program because of the support CCRRPs provide

to caregivers. It is important for you to meet with several registered caregivers and talk about their approach to child care before making your selection. You can ask caregivers to provide proof that they are registered with the local Child Care Resource and Referral Program.

If a caregiver is not registered with a Child Care Resource and Referral Program, monitoring of the caregiver and the care she provides is the full responsibility of the parent. You need to know as much as possible about the caregiver's background and her approach to caring for children. Ask if the caregiver has had some child care training or previous child care experience and check references. Taking time to learn about the caregiver will help you feel sure that your child will be well cared for.

Licensed Family Child Care

A license from Community Care Facilities Licensing is required when a caregiver looks after three or more children unrelated to her. Provincial regulations allow the caregiver to care for a maximum of 7 children including her own who are under 13 years of age. Children in a Licensed Family Child Care home may be of various ages from birth to 12 years. Not more than 5 children can be preschool age, not more than three of these children can be under 3 years of age, and only one of them can be under 12 months.