

The Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) has an online **statewide database** of all OCFS-licensed or registered child care programs. Local Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&R) can give parents hands-on assistance.

All licensed or registered child care programs are listed on the OCFS website.

### Licensed/Registered Child Care Programs Must:

- Comply with OCFS regulations at all times
- Have at least one caregiver on site certified in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and first aid
- Have an appropriately stocked first aid kit
- Have an emergency plan in case of fire and medical emergencies
- Have appropriately placed fire extinguishers, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors
- Have fencing or sturdy barriers to keep children away from pools or ponds.
- Have homes that meet health and safety requirements
- Restrict staff and caregivers from smoking in areas being used by children
- Comply with health and infection control regulations, share the program's health care plan with parents, receive training if they administer medications to children, and work with a health care consultant
- Adhere to regulations regarding firearms in the home
- Have daily activity plans for the children
- Participate in ongoing training

Once you have narrowed your choices, the OCFS website and your local Child Care Resource and Referral Agency provide the following information: program name; license/registration number; address; school district; county; type of care provided; hours of operation; compliance history over a two year period; whether they are approved to administer medication; and contact information should you have additional questions.

#### OCFS Child Care Search Database:

[ocfs.ny.gov/main/childcare/ccfs\\_template.asp](http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/childcare/ccfs_template.asp)

#### Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies:

[ocfs.ny.gov/main/childcare/referralagencies.asp](http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/childcare/referralagencies.asp)

CCR&Rs are also listed under "child care" in local directories.

Help in paying for child care:

You may be eligible for child care assistance. To obtain more information, contact your local Department of Social Services [ocfs.ny.gov/main/childcare/localdss.asp](http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/childcare/localdss.asp).

Finally, if you have concerns about a child care provider, call the **Child Care Complaint line** at 1-800-732-5207 or in New York City at (646) 632-6101.

Capital View Office Park  
52 Washington Street  
Rensselaer, New York 12144  
[ocfs.ny.gov](http://ocfs.ny.gov)  
Pub - 5169 (4/2015)

# Home-Based Child Care: Q&A for Parents

Selecting child care is an important decision that requires time, effort and consideration. Here are many types of child care programs - day care centers or home-based programs, both large and small. You are the best judge of the needs of your child and family, yet searching for the right program can seem overwhelming. Keep in mind, there are resources to help parents make an informed decision and assistance is available to help pay for child care. If you are thinking about a home-based program, this brochure can help guide your choices.



Office of Children  
and Family Services

## There are many types of child care settings to choose from. Parents should consider asking these questions:

### Do you have a license or registration to care for children?

Licensed or registered home-based child care programs care for children ages six weeks through 12 years and operate for more than three hours a day on a regular basis. Some also offer non-traditional hours, including nights and weekends. The number of children they care for is specified on their license/registration. More information can be found on the OCFS website.

### If you don't have a license or registration, why not?

There are a few exemptions from licensing or registration in New York State. Unlicensed/unregistered caregivers, like a relative or neighbor, can operate legally as long as they:

- care for only one or two children at a time, in addition to any of their own children; or
- care for three or more non-relative children for less than three hours per day per child;
- do not care for subsidized children.

### How many children do you care for, and what are their ages?

There's a big difference between caring for four infants and caring for four 5-year-olds. Infants require more attention. Caregivers should be able to meet the needs of all the children they watch.

### Background checks

All caregivers working in licensed and registered programs and anyone over 18 years old living in the home are required to be fingerprinted and undergo New York State criminal history and child abuse and maltreatment background checks, and newer caregivers are also subject to an additional layer of background checks.

If you are choosing a program that is not licensed or registered, the following databases can help you research the background of the caregiver and other adults living in the home:

- **New York State Public Registry of Sex Offenders:**  
[criminaljustice.ny.gov/nsor](http://criminaljustice.ny.gov/nsor)
- **New York State Department of Corrections & Community Supervision:**  
[nysdoccslookup.doccs.ny.gov](http://nysdoccslookup.doccs.ny.gov)
- **New York State Police Wanted Persons:**  
[troopers.ny.gov](http://troopers.ny.gov)
- **FBI Wanted Persons:**  
[fbi.gov/newyork](http://fbi.gov/newyork)

### Is the home childproofed?

Look around the home to make sure it has been child-proofed. Poisonous and harmful items, like cleaners and medicines, should be secured out of reach. Electrical sockets should be covered, cabinets containing unsafe items should have childproof locks, safety gates should be on stairs, and hanging cords from blinds should be secured out of reach. Licensed and registered child care programs are required to comply with OCFS regulations regarding these and other safety measures and are monitored for compliance.

### How do you put infants down for a nap?

All infants should be placed on their backs to sleep, and never on their stomachs unless a doctor instructs otherwise. Safe sleep guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics help reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Many licensed/registered programs have training on the subject of safe sleep.

### What kind of sleeping environment do you provide for infants?

Cribs and bedding used by licensed and registered child care programs must meet all federal and state safety standards. Cribs, bassinets and other sleeping areas for infants must **not** have bumper pads, toys, large stuffed animals, heavy blankets, pillows, wedges or other infant positioners unless medically required. In addition, propping bottles is prohibited.

### Will my child be driven in a car?

Licensed/registered child care programs must provide parents with a schedule of outings, obtain written parental permission, and ensure children have proper child safety seats.

### Additional things to consider:

Parents may also want to ask potential caregivers about:

- Their qualifications and training;
- The daily schedule and activities;
- What types of meals/snacks are provided; and
- How/when children are disciplined.
- Fees for child care services