



Child Care Resource & Referral, Inc.

Your Guide



to Choosing



Child Care

1165 Appleton Road, Suite A ▪ Menasha, WI 54952
920-886-1211 or 1-800-749-KIDS ▪ fax 920-886-1331
Serving Calumet, Outagamie & Waupaca Counties
www.getconnectedforkids.org

Understanding Child Care Regulations

State Law Chapter 48.65, WI Statutes:

No person shall for compensation provide care and supervision for four or more children under the age of seven for less than 24 hours a day unless that person obtains a license to operate a day care center from the Department of Health and Family Services.

When this Law applies:

The law applies when there are four or more children under the age of seven at any one time and:

- ◆ ◆ the care takes place outside of the child's home
- ◆ ◆ the caregiver is a non-relative and non-guardian
- ◆ ◆ the parents are OFF the premises
- ◆ ◆ the caregiver is paid or reimbursed for services
- ◆ ◆ the child care is less than 24 hours per day

Types of Child Care:

- ◆ ◆ **GROUP CHILD CARE CENTERS** (nine or more children). A lead teacher at a group child care center is required to complete 80 hours of early childhood education. When caring for children under the age of 2, they are required to complete an infant/toddler course. All staff are required to complete 25 hours of continuing education each year.
- ◆ ◆ **FAMILY CHILD CARE** (four to eight children). A family child care provider is required to complete 40 hours of early childhood education. When caring for children under the age of 2, they are required to complete an infant/toddler course. They are required to complete 15 hours of continuing education each year.

- ◆ ◆ **CERTIFIED CHILD CARE** (up to 6 children): There are two levels of certification to choose from, provisional and regular. A provisional certified provider is not required to have any training in early childhood education. A regular certified provider is required to complete between 15-20 hours of training in early childhood education.
- ◆ ◆ **UNREGULATED CHILD CARE:** Anyone caring for 1 to 3 children in the caregiver's own home and not county certified or state licensed.
- ◆ ◆ **ILLEGAL CHILD CARE:** anyone caring for more than 3 children in the caregiver's own home without obtaining a license from the State.

In all of these instances, the child care **IS** tax deductible. Anyone caring for children and receiving payment **MUST** claim the income on their taxes. Also, you may be eligible for a child care tax credit. If you are planning on claiming child care on your taxes, ask for a receipt of payment. For information on filing taxes, contact the Internal Revenue Service toll-free at 1-800-829-3676 or visit the IRS website: www.irs.gov

You may contact the county certifier or state licenser for the history of the program and to find out if they've been cited for any violations or if any complaints have been filed:

STATE LICENSING
920-448-5312

CALUMET COUNTY CERTIFIER
920-849-1400 ▪ Appleton area 920-989-2700

OUTAGAMIE COUNTY CERTIFIER
920-886-1211

WAUPACA COUNTY CERTIFIER
920-886-1211

You may also conduct an internet background check using the following websites:

<http://wcca.wicourts.gov/index.xsl> and <http://offender.doc.state.wi.us/public/>
These are not complete background checks, but a starting point to investigate a potential caregiver.

For Your Information

The following charts detail how many children regulated providers may care for at any one time.

COUNTY CERTIFIED HOME PROVIDERS

Related Children Under 7 years of Age	Additional Children Under 7 years of Age	Additional Children Ages 7 to 11	Maximum Number of Children*
0	3	Additional children ages 7 to 11 may be cared for as long as the maximum total number of children is not exceeded	6
1	3		6
2	3		6
3	3		6
4	2		6
5	1		6
6	0		6
Number of Children Under 2 years of Age		Maximum Number of Children*	
0		6	
1		6	
2		6	
3		5	
4		4	

**The maximum number of children does not include the provider's natural, adopted or foster children 7 years of age & older.*

STATE LICENSED HOME PROVIDERS

Children Under 2 years of Age	Children 2 years of age and older	School Age Children for fewer than 3 hours a day	Maximum Number of Children Per Provider
0	8	0	8
1	7	0	8
2	5	1	8
3	2	3	8
4	0	2	6

CAREGIVER TO CHILD MAXIMUM RATIO IN A GROUP CENTER

Birth to 2 years	1 Caregiver	4 Children	Maximum Group Size: 8
2 to 2 1/2 years	1 Caregiver	6 Children	Maximum Group Size: 12
2 1/2 to 3 years	1 Caregiver	8 Children	Maximum Group Size: 16
3 to 4 years	1 Caregiver	10 Children	Maximum Group Size: 20
4 to 5 years	1 Caregiver	13 Children	Maximum Group Size: 24
5 to 6 years	1 Caregiver	17 Children	Maximum Group Size: 32
6 years and older	1 Caregiver	18 Children	Maximum Group Size: 32

Child Care Checklist

Instructions: Using a scale from 1 to 5, rate the sites for each aspect. Compare at least 3 facilities:

	1	2	3
CAREGIVER			
How many children do you care for? What are their ages? Are they full and/or part time?			
Who else will have contact with my child while in your care? <i>(Spouses, children, friends, etc.)</i>			
Are you trained in CPR/First Aid?			
What kind of experiences do you have caring for children? Can you share with me why you chose this career?			
How long have your teachers been with this group center? How many teachers left in the last 6 months?			
How do you insure that each child receives individual attention?			
How do you soothe a child who is crying or upset?			
How will you communicate with me about my child's progress or difficulties?			
Can you describe your daily routine?			
Are parents welcome to visit anytime they wish?			
INFANTS AND TODDLERS <i>Because infants need loving, responsive care, it is important to find caregivers who truly understand their needs. Infants need cuddling, holding, and attention. Positive relationships with caring adults will actually allow your child's brain to grow and develop in the best possible way.</i>			
Is the environment baby-proofed with gates on stairways, caps on electrical outlets and safe cribs?			
Do you change diapers on an easily cleanable and disinfected surface. Do you wash your hands after each diaper change?			
Do you cuddle, hold and provide individual attention; talk and sing to the children while feeding and diapering			

	1	2	3
ENVIRONMENT			
Is the child care license or certificate posted?			
Is the place clean, with good lighting and a comfortable temperature?			
Are there working smoke detectors and are monthly fire drills conducted?			
Are the toys & books in good shape?			
Is some of the play area carpeted with the toys stored in reach of the children?			
Is the children's artwork posted at their eye level?			
Are there first aid supplies for emergencies?			
Are the cleaning supplies, medicines, etc. locked and out of reach?			
Where will the children nap? Is it quiet and dark? <i>(The provider may ask you to provide a sleeping bag or blanket and pillow for naptime).</i>			
POLICIES			
What are your policies on toilet training?			
What are your policies on pacifiers and bottles?			
Are children allowed to have blankets and other personal security objects?			
What are your discipline policies? <i>(NO ONE is allowed to correct behavior by hitting or spanking. Child care providers must know how to correct behavior in other ways such as re-direction when under 3 or time-outs if over 3).</i>			
What do you do if a child becomes sick during the day? If you become sick or go on vacation? Do you have a backup or do I have to find someone?			

	1	2	3
ACTIVITIES			
What does the child care setting sound like: listen for children who sound happy and involved and for caregivers who sound cheerful and patient. Be aware of the noise level - a high noise level is harmful to language development.			
Are there stimulating, fun activities? Are there activities for children of all ages?			
Are the children free to choose activities? Are there developmentally appropriate activities planned?			
Are there blocks and puzzles available? Are there riding toys and climbing equipment available?			
Are there dramatic play and art activities available?			
Do the children watch TV? If so, how often and what kinds of programs?			
How often do the children go outside? <i>(They should go outside once a day, weather permitting).</i>			
Is there an outdoor play area with shady and sunny areas, safe play equipment, and children can be seen at all times?			
Do you include activities where you take the children off-site? If yes, do you have car seats, valid drivers license, auto insurance; and what kind of vehicles are used and what condition are they in?			
Are you allowed to bring food or toys to the home or center? <i>(Usually this is not allowed because of nutrition guidelines they must follow and toys tend to break or fighting occurs).</i>			
MEALS			
Are nutritious meals and snacks provided?			
Is there a menu of meals and snacks posted?			

Reference Questions

**MAKE SURE YOU CONTACT AT LEAST THREE REFERENCES.
QUESTIONS TO ASK:**

	1	2	3
How long has your child been with this family provider or group center?			
Does the provider organize activities for children? Please describe some of those activities.			
What do you like about the provider?			
Are there aspects of this care that make you unhappy?			
How easy is it to approach the provider about problems?			
Does the provider also care for her own children? How does that work out?			
With what you know now, would you choose this provider again?			

You could also ask yourself, "Would I want to spend my day at this place?"

If possible, it is best to make the first visit without your child/ren. Once you have found a place that seems like a real possibility, it is important to bring your child/ren on a get acquainted visit, then visit with your child/ren several times before they spend the day on their own.

Background check websites are listed below.
These are **NOT** complete background checks, but a starting point to investigate a potential caregiver:

<http://wcca.wicourts.gov/index.xsl>

<http://offender.doc.state.wi.us/public/>