

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Parent's Rights/Responsibilities	2
Eight Step Child Care Search	3-4
What is Quality Child Care	5
Telephone Check List	6
On-Site Check List.....	7-8
Asking for References	9-10
Special Age Considerations	11-13
Creating a Child Care Partnership	14
Separation Process	15



Dear Parent,

Thank you for contacting Child Care Resource & Referral. Among our services, we have a current list of licensed child care providers and also those who have a residential certificate. We can use this list to help you in your child care search.

Because we do not visit the child care providers on our data base system, **we cannot guarantee quality or recommend one provider over another and we accept no responsibility nor liability for them.**

One of our most important jobs is to inform you on how to choose quality child care. Our parent counselors are available to answer questions during your child care search and while your child remains in child care, but **parents are in the best position to observe and select the site that best meets the needs of their child.**

We hope you will find this brochure helpful. Please feel free to contact us for further assistance.

Sincerely,

Child Care Resource and Referral
Western Region



CHILD CARE RESOURCE & REFERRAL WESTERN REGION

88 E. Fiddlers Canyon Rd., Suite H
Cedar City, UT 84720

Child Care Referrals: 1-888-344-4896
Training Information: 1-800-543-7527

<http://childcarehelp.org/>

AS A PARENT YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

- ✓ Check references.
- ✓ Visit your child unannounced during child care hours.
- ✓ Call to see how your child is doing.
- ✓ Assume your child will be treated with respect and affection.
- ✓ Expect your child's provider to use a positive discipline style with your child.
- ✓ Talk to your child's care giver daily to receive updates on behaviors and habits.
- ✓ Express concern for your child.



AS A PARENT YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- ✓ Making the final decision on your child's care.
- ✓ Checking to see if the program is licensed.
- ✓ Listening to the care givers point of view.
- ✓ Talking to your care giver every day about your child and how he/she is doing in the child care setting.
- ✓ Discussing your child's illness with the child care provider if your child gets sick.
- ✓ Monitoring your child's program on a continual basis.

YOUR EIGHT-STEP CHILD CARE SEARCH

Looking for child care is hard work. No one else can do it for you. Give yourself lots of time to search, make a decision and evaluate the program.

1. **Read material on how to choose quality child care.**
2. **Decide what your child care needs are:**
 - ✓ What days and hours do you need child care?
 - ✓ What location is most convenient?
 - ✓ What can you afford to spend on child care?

3. **Call Child Care Resource & Referral**
St. George: 628-4843
Other areas toll free: 1-888-344-4896

A parent counselor will discuss your child care needs and give you a list of providers over the phone to call and visit. It's always a good idea to call friends, family, community and church contacts to receive as many child care provider names as possible in your area.

4. **Do a telephone interview with each of the names you collect.**
(See page six for suggestions.)

Set up an appointment with only the providers who meet your needs.

5. **Visit at least three providers.**
(See pages seven and eight for things to look for during your visit.)

6. **Ask for references and call them.**
(See page nine for suggestions.)

7. **Call the Bureau of Licensing.**
You can see if the child care provider has had any complaints made against their license by calling the toll-free number below. Ask for the phone number for the licenser that works in your county (due to the frequent changes in licenser contact information, we are unable to list individual licenser contact information here).

Toll-free licensing: 1-800-894-2588

8. **Select care.**
Then do a drop in visit (an unannounced visit) and observe the care the children are receiving. Continue to observe care daily and occasionally do other drop in visits.

If you can't find care you are happy with the first time through, you can call us for additional numbers. Don't be afraid to start your search again. Quality child care is the best investment you can make for your child.



WHAT IS QUALITY CHILD CARE?

Quality child care can make a big difference in the future of your child. You can give your child a good start on a strong and healthy mind, body and spirit. Although quality child care can mean different things to different people, many experts agree that quality care includes the following:

✓ Affection and Attention

Is the provider interested in your child as an individual? Do they talk and listen at the child's level? Do they comfort the children when they need it? The provider should be warm, energetic and caring with children.

✓ Group Size

Small groups are best.

✓ Training and Background of the Child Care Provider

Ask what training in child development the person has. How long have they been doing child care?

✓ Low Staff Turnover

It is important to your child to have the same caregiver for as long as possible—hopefully, a year or longer.

✓ Parent/Provider Communication

This is important for a good partnership and the child's positive experience in care.

✓ Developmental Growth

Do the program's child rearing goals match your own? Is a daily list of activities posted?

✓ A Healthy Environment

Are emergency numbers and policies posted? Locks on cabinets? Clean and safe places for children to crawl? Healthy food? Separate areas for eating, diapering, resting and playing?

TELEPHONE CHECK-LIST

A good telephone interview can save you time and energy in your search for child care. Only set up interviews with the providers who you feel good about over the phone.

- ✓ How many children are you licensed for?
- ✓ How many children will be in my child's group?
- ✓ How long have you been in business?
- ✓ Do you have any training in early childhood education?
- ✓ What are some of the classes you have taken?
- ✓ What is your daily schedule for the children?
- ✓ What fees do you charge?
- ✓ What do the fees include? Lunches? Snacks? Field trips?
- ✓ What is your policy for sick children?
- ✓ What are your days and hours of operation?
- ✓ Do you hire a substitute when you are on vacation?
- ✓ What holidays are you closed for?
- ✓ Tell me how much and what television programs the children are allowed to watch.
- ✓ Do you have a current CPR/First Aid certificate?
- ✓ Can you provide references?

If you like what you hear after talking to the provider on the telephone, set up a time during business hours to observe on-site. Let the provider know you would like to come and see where your child would be spending their day. This will help you feel at ease as you tour the child care facility.



ON-SITE CHECKLIST

Providers

- ✓ Does the provider seem to really like children?
- ✓ Does the provider get down on each child's level?
- ✓ Are the children greeted when they arrive?
- ✓ Are children's needs met quickly even when things get busy?
- ✓ Will the provider tell you what your child will be doing every day?
- ✓ Are parents' ideas welcomed? Are there ways for you to get involved?
- ✓ Does there seem to be more children than the provider can adequately care for?
- ✓ Do the provider and the children seem to enjoy being together?
- ✓ Has the provider met or exceeded required training? Where do they get their training?
- ✓ Ask for references and previous experience.
- ✓ Are your expectations for a healthy and safe environment met?

Setting

- ✓ Is the atmosphere bright and pleasant?
- ✓ Is there a fenced outdoor play area with a variety of safe toys and equipment?
- ✓ Can the provider see the entire play area at all times?
- ✓ Do adults supervise outdoor play?
- ✓ Are there different areas for resting, quiet play and active play? Is there enough space for the children in all of these areas?
- ✓ Are there individual beds or mattresses to sleep on?
- ✓ Do children have a place for their own belongings?

ON-SITE CHECKLIST

Activities

- ✓ Is there a daily balance of play time, story time, activity time, and nap time?
- ✓ Are the activities right for each age group?
- ✓ Are there enough toys and learning materials for the number of children?
- ✓ Are toys clean, safe and within reach of the children?
- ✓ If a television is used, is it limited to short periods of time? What kind of viewing is allowed?



In General

- ✓ Do you agree with the discipline practices?
- ✓ Do you hear the sounds of happy children?
- ✓ Is the program operating legally?
- ✓ Are children comforted when needed?
- ✓ How is the program regulated?
- ✓ Are surprise or drop-in visits by parents encouraged?
- ✓ Was your first reaction to the program positive?
- ✓ Will your child be happy here?
- ✓ Does this seem to be a healthy and safe environment?
- ✓ Does the provider have a written contract or agreement so all expectations are clear?
(Sample contracts are available from Child Care Resource & Referral.)

ASKING FOR REFERENCES

It is not always comfortable or easy to call strangers and ask their personal opinions. Here are some suggestions to help you get the most out of calling child care references.

1. Say to the Provider, **“Could you give me the names of some other parents I could call as a reference?”** Make it very clear that you want to call parents who have had children in their care. Friends or relatives can vouch for the person’s reputation but can’t tell you much about the actual care.
2. Try to get names of current users of their program as well as former users. Former users of their care may be more inclined to talk to you honestly because their child is no longer enrolled there. Current users can give you a better picture of what the care is like right now.
3. Ask for at least six or seven names. References are sometimes hard to track down. It is always better to ask for more names than you will actually need. If you are uneasy about the responses you get from the first few you call, it is nice to have others to fall back on.
4. Write down the questions that you want to ask before you call. Ask specific questions that require more than yes and no answers. Asking, **“What do you like best about Mrs. Smith’s service?”** will get you more information than if you ask, **“Are you happy with Mrs. Smith?”**



Here are some suggestions for questions you could ask, but you will probably also want to ask questions that speak to your individual concerns:

- ✓ *How long has it been since your child was in Mrs. Smith’s care?*
- ✓ *How old was your child when he/she started care?*
- ✓ *What three things do you like best about the child care?*
- ✓ *What things do you like the least?*
- ✓ *What happens when the provider is sick?*
- ✓ *What happens when your child gets sick?*
- ✓ *What other adults have contact with the children?*
- ✓ *How does Mrs. Smith discipline?*
- ✓ *How does your child feel about the child care? Is he/she generally happy to go there?*
- ✓ *I am worried about this specific problem my child has (name the problem). Do you think that Mrs. Smith can handle it?*
- ✓ *Do you have any reservations about recommending this child care program?*
- ✓ *Would you select this care for another child of yours?*

Even though the provider gives you the references, don’t assume that all you will hear is praise. Even people who love their child care provider may tell you something that will help you decide whether the program will work for you and your child. Listen to what is said and what’s left unsaid. Silence and hesitation can speak volumes. You are the one who is responsible for choosing the quality program your child will attend. Calling references can be one of the many tools you use to determine the quality of the program you are checking. It is one piece of the quality child care puzzle.

SPECIAL AGE CONSIDERATIONS

Infants and Toddlers

- Are there toys and infant equipment available so when the baby is awake they can be out of the crib?
- Is there floor space for babies to crawl on?
- Are safe toys on low shelves within reach of children?
- How often will your child be checked for wet diapers?
- Can the diaper changing surface be easily cleaned?
- Does the provider wash her hands before and after each diaper change?
- Is each child's food and bottle labeled and stored appropriately?
- Are young infants held for bottle feeding?
- Do providers hold, "coo," and nurture infants?
- Where will your child sleep?
- What plans are made for clean sheets and blankets?
- Are you provided a daily record of your baby's activities?



Two Year Olds

- Is there a schedule for the day?
- Do the providers have costumes/clothes and other props for pretend play?
- Are there times during the day for singing and dance/movement?
- Are small climbing toys provided?
- Are there lots of toys available?
- Are low swings, small slides and low climbing toys available?
- What is the provider's policy on toilet training?
- Does the provider use positive discipline techniques which encourage high self-esteem in the children?
- Are rules for the child's behavior clear?
- Are children encouraged to do things by themselves such as feeding, dressing, and choosing toys and activities?



Preschool Children: Three and Four Year Olds

- Are there props, costumes, musical instruments, blocks of all sizes, art supplies and toys for imagination play?
- Can the children choose their own activities for at least part of the day?
- Does the provider take the children on field trips?
- Are limits set for children to help them work out problems and make choices on their own?
- Does the provider help make the children feel good about themselves by being attentive and accepting?
- Are children read to often?
- Are children allowed to finish a project before going on to something else?



School-Age Children

- Are there other children close to your child's age?
- Does the provider have craft projects, sports equipment, drama activities and table games for the children's individual interests?
- Can the children relax, talk with friends, do homework or read a book during unstructured time?
- Does the provider give supervision, but also understand the older child's need for independence?
- Do providers understand the concerns older school-age children have about identity and pressure to conform?

YOUR CHILD CARE PROVIDER: PARTNERS FROM THE START

- ✓ **Establish** a warm, trustworthy relationship with your child's provider.
- ✓ **Look** at the provider as a professional.
- ✓ **Agree on Goals**
Discuss important issues with your provider.
- ✓ **Be Responsible**
Be on time to pick up and drop off your child. Pay on time in advance of service.
- ✓ **Inform Your Provider**
Give your provider advance notice about vacations or changes in your child's day care routine.
- ✓ **Voice Your Concerns**
If you have a concern or a problem discuss it with your provider. Give specific examples and be sure to keep children and other parents out of your dispute.
- ✓ **Share Serious Problems**
Problems at home, like separation or divorce, can have a strong impact on a child. It may be helpful to share changes like these. Your provider can then understand new behavior and support your child through tough times.
- ✓ **Show Your Appreciation**
Let your provider know you appreciate the work he/she does. Give specific examples of what the caregiver has done for your child.

EASING THE SEPARATION PROCESS



Things A Parent Can Do

- ✓ Come to terms with feeling good about being at work while your child is being cared for by someone else.
- ✓ Be comfortable with your child care decision.
- ✓ Good feelings are contagious—your child will feel good about the care if you do.

Ways To Help Your Child

- ✓ Take the child to visit the new child care provider.
- ✓ Talk on the way about the new child care arrangements.
- ✓ Bring a familiar object like a teddy bear or a picture of your family to help him/her feel comfortable.
- ✓ Stay with your child the first day or until your child is comfortable.
- ✓ **Never** leave without saying “good-bye.”
- ✓ Tell your child when you will be back and follow through.
- ✓ Always say good-bye with a kiss, a hug and a wave.
- ✓ Be firm yet friendly about leaving.

The Provider

- ✓ Divert the child's attention.
- ✓ Snuggle the child.
- ✓ Use the Buddy System to get child involved with the other children.
- ✓ Provide emotionally safe and soothing activities such as sitting on someone's lap, books, tapes, playdough, sand play, listening to music, etc.



The Mission of Child Care Resource and Referral, Western Region:

To improve the quality of life for the children in Southern Utah who are enrolled in child care programs and provide support for their families and child care providers.



CHILD CARE
Resource & Referral
Western Region

CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL

Bridgerland Region

Box Elder, Cache & Rich counties
Utah State University
6510 Old Main Hill, Logan, Utah 84322-6510
800-670-1552, Fax: 435-797-8047
<http://www.usuchild.usu.edu/>

Eastern Region

Daggett, Duchesne, Uintah, Carbon,
Emery, Grand & San Juan counties
College of Eastern Utah
451 East 400 North, Price, Utah 84501
888-637-4786, Fax: 435-613-5815
<http://www.ceu.edu/childcare/>

Metro Region

Salt Lake & Tooele counties
Children's Service Society
124 South 400 East #400, Salt Lake City, Utah 84111
800-839-7444, Fax: 801-355-7453
<http://www.cssutah.org/>

Mountainland Region

Utah, Wasatch & Summit counties
Utah Valley State College - 163
800 West University Parkway, Orem, Utah 84058
800-952-8220, Fax: 801-863-7904
<http://www.uvsc.edu/ccrr/>

Northern Region

Weber, Morgan & Davis counties
Weber State University
1309 University Circle, Ogden, Utah 84408-1309
888-970-0101, Fax: 801-626-7668
<http://www.weber.edu/ccrr/>

Western Region

Beaver, Garfield, Iron, Juab, Kane, Millard, Piute,
Sanpete, Sevier, Washington & Wayne counties
Five County Association of Governments
88 E. Fiddlers Cyn. Rd. Ste. H, Cedar City, UT 84720
Training Information: 800-543-7527
Referrals & Updates: 888-344-4896
Fax: 435-865-6902
<http://childcarehelp.org/>

Funding provided by the
Department of Workforce Services
Office of Work and Family Life



Please remember to take the time for your child care search

- Know the child care regulations for each setting.
- Observe several settings.
- Check references.
- Ask questions about the provider and the program.
- Trust your instincts.
- Call Licensing to check on complaints.






It is your right and responsibility to make the best choice of provider for your child and your family. The provider you choose will become your partner in the care and education of your child.



For more information,
call your local resource and referral agency.

Tools for Becoming a Wise Child Care Consumer

When you are choosing the most appropriate child care setting for your child, it is very important you understand the types of care in Utah. Take the time to visit several providers before making your important decision. Quality of care provided will vary from provider to provider regardless of regulation. This chart is designed to help you become a more informed child care consumer. The columns are listed from left to right, by degree of state regulation required (the left-most column being no regulation, and the right-most column being the most amount of regulation.)

 Legally Licensed Exempt	 Residential Certificate	 Licensed Family	 Licensed Family Group	 Licenced Center Child Care
<p>Care for up to 4 non-related children with 1 caregiver.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ No criminal background check ✓ No annual training ✓ No limit on the number of infants in care ✓ No home visits by licensing to check for minimum health 	<p>Care for up to 8 children, including own children under age 4, with 1 caregiver. Only 2 can be under age 2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Yearly criminal background check ✓ Initial 5 hours of training ✓ Annual home visit by licensing ✓ Voluntary compliance with rules 	<p>Care for up to 8 children, including own children under age 4, with 1 caregiver. Only 2 can be under age 2 or 1:6 ratio with 3 under age 2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Yearly criminal background check ✓ 20 hours of annual training in health, safety, and child development ✓ Annual home visit by licensing ✓ Initial fire inspection ✓ Meet all zoning regulations for their area ✓ Enforcement of health and safety regulations 	<p>Care for up to 16 children, including own children under age 4, with 2 caregivers. Only 4 can be under age 2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Yearly criminal background check on both caregivers ✓ 20 hours of annual training in health, safety, and child development ✓ Annual home visit by licensing ✓ Initial fire inspection ✓ Meet all zoning regulations for their area ✓ Enforcement of health and safety regulations 	<p>Care for more than 5 children in a center setting. Ratios vary for each age group. Contact the Office of Child Care Licensing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Yearly criminal background check on each caregiver ✓ 20 hours of annual training for each caregiver ✓ Annual visits ✓ Annual health inspections ✓ Planned and posted activities for children ✓ Enforcement of health and safety regulations ✓ Directors have a CDA, Director's Endorsement, or BA/AA in Early Childhood Development