



National Child Care Information Center

A service of the Child Care Bureau

NCCIC

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STARTING a CHILD CARE CENTER

Child care can be an exciting and rewarding field and a wonderful opportunity to have a positive impact on the lives of children and their families in your community. Caring for children is a tremendous responsibility, and each State has established regulations that govern child care settings. We hope the following information will help you prepare to open a quality child care program.

Developing a child care program involves exploration of a variety of issues. Here are some topics to consider when starting a child care program:

- The child care needs of the community;
- Licensing and professional requirements and standards;
- Legal requirements such as zoning and insurance;
- Development of a business plan for starting and operating a small business;
- Costs of center start-up and operations;
- Facility design, including appropriate use of indoor and outdoor spaces;
- Policy and procedures for staff and families;
- Health and safety issues, including accident and illness prevention and emergency procedures;
- Development of a curriculum and schedule of activities that meet the needs of the children;
- Appropriate equipment and materials;
- Staff recruitment, training, and compensation; and
- Linkages with other community services and organizations.

Resources in Your State and Community

■ The State Profiles section of NCCIC's Web site gives a summary of key information about child care in your State. This information is available on the Web at <http://nccic.org/statedata/statepro/index.html>. On each State Profile you will find:

- Contact information for the State **Child Care Licensing Agency**. Contact this agency for a copy of your **State's regulations** and other requirements for caring for children, including procedures for becoming registered or licensed, and guidelines for keeping children safe and healthy while they are in your care.
- A portion of your State's requirements regarding child care. It includes the **Maximum Staff/Child Ratios**. The staff/child ratio indicates the number of

caregivers per maximum number of children. (For example, 1:3 is 1 caregiver to 3 children.)

- Contact information for the **Child and Adult Care Food Program Administrator**. The Child and Adult Care Food Program may reimburse programs for the cost of healthy meals and snacks. Contact this office for information on how to participate in the program.
- A link to the **State Child Care Homepage**. These pages often have information about the child care subsidy program, training opportunities, child care quality initiatives, and grant programs.

■ Individual States' Child Care Licensure Regulations, compiled by the National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care, are available on the Web at <http://nrc.uchsc.edu/STATES/states.htm>.

■ Child Care Resource and Referral agencies (CCR&Rs) can provide information about current rates that providers in your community charge and can link you with training opportunities and other resources. Once you are established, the CCR&R will also be valuable in letting families know about your services. To locate your local CCR&R agency, contact Child Care Aware, a national nonprofit initiative committed to helping parents find the best information on locating quality child care and child care resources in their community. Contact Child Care Aware at 800-424-2246 or on the Web at <http://www.childcareaware.org>.

Publications with Child Care Program Start-up Information

■ *Child Care Center Facility Development Checklists* (2004), by the Building Child Care in California Project, breaks down the process of expanding, renovating, building, or purchasing a child care center, into four stages: planning, predevelopment, development, and start-up. The checklists represent a number of the activities involved in a facilities development project. These checklists are available on the Web at <http://www.buildingchildcare.org/checklists.htm>.

■ *Child Care Center Design Guide* (July 2003), published by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA), contains criteria for planning and designing child care centers in GSA-owned or controlled spaces. It includes planning for space and location; site design; interior space design; furnishings and equipment; interior finishes; and technical criteria. This resource is available on the Web at http://www.gsa.gov/gsa/cm_attachments/GSA_DOCUMENT/Design%20Guide_R2FD38_0Z5RDZ-i34K-pR.pdf.

■ *Making a Place for Children: Child Care Facility Planning Manual for Washington State* (2003), by Jan Gleason and Sally Knodell, for the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, is a resource for the development of a quality center serving children from infancy through school age. It offers a description of the steps to take in designing a facility, references to the published requirements, and design considerations for indoor and outdoor

elements of the facility. It also offers a general overview of program considerations. This resource is available on the Web at <http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/esa/dccel/facmanual.shtml>.

■ *The Business Side of Child Care: A Reference Manual for Child Care Advocates and Lenders* (2002), by Self-Help, is a reference manual that provides a consideration of business aspects of planning for and operating a child care program and includes model budgets for centers of varying sizes and locations (rural, urban); construction issues, including use of design professionals; regulations; and quality assessments. This resource is available on the Web at <http://www.self-help.org/pdfs/childcare%20manual.pdf>.

■ *Operating on Federal Property: Director's Desk Guide* (2002), by the Child Care Operations Center of Expertise, U.S. General Services Administration (GSA), presents guidance, procedures, and sample documents to assist directors operating child care centers on Federal property. A model contract between a board of directors and a child care provider defines the responsibilities of the Board of Directors and the company contracted to provide child care services. "Section G: Board of Directors" in "2000 Survey for Child Care Centers in GSA-Controlled Space" reviews important questions about board structure and responsibilities. This resource is available on the Web at http://www.gsa.gov/gsa/cm_attachments/GSA_DOCUMENT/Directorsdeskguide_R2E-c11-i_0Z5RDZ-i34K-pR.pdf.

■ *Starting a Child Development Center* (2002), by the General Services Administration (GSA), Child Care Operations Center of Expertise, has an overview of the start-up process for quality care for young children in child care centers located in GSA-managed space. This resource is available on the Web at http://www.gsa.gov/gsa/cm_attachments/GSA_DOCUMENT/startwebB_R2F-cM3_0Z5RDZ-i34K-pR.doc

■ *Start-Up Manual for Faith-Based Child Care Programs* (2002), by Debra Lawrence, published by Child Care Connections, is a procedural manual for helping faith-based communities decide whether licensed child care fits within their ministry. For additional information, contact Child Care Connections in Colorado at 719-638-2070 or on the Web at <http://www.childcareconnections.net>.

■ *Child Care Module* (August 2001), by the Small Business Administration (SBA), Women's Business Center Online, has helpful information for both centers and for family child care programs. It is designed to assist with planning, preparing, and operating a successful child care business. The module explains the step-by-step process of starting the business, from assessing the need for child care services to selecting the service, setting up the business, and preparing for opening day. It also includes information from women who have owned or now operate their own child care businesses. This resource is available on the Web at <http://www.onlinewbc.gov/docs/ChildCare/ccm1.htm>.

■ *Creating a Child Care Facility at Post* (2001), 2nd Edition, prepared by the Family Liaison Office, U.S. Department of State, serves as a guide to setting up a child care program under the auspices of a Mission Employee Association. The guide reviews the necessary steps,

from establishing the leadership at post, funding the program, finding the site, purchasing equipment, hiring staff, to developing the program and eligibility criteria. It is intended for use by Administrative Officers, Community Liaison Office (CLO) Coordinators, and Employee Associations, as well as interested community members. Chapter V “Show Me The Money” discusses financial affairs. The introduction and table of contents are available on the Web at <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/11556.pdf>. For a copy of the full publication, *Creating a Child Care Facility at Post*, e-mail the Family Liaison Office at flo@state.gov.

■ *The ABC's of Early Childhood Programs and Facility Development* (April 2000), by Community Investment Collaborative for Kids (CICK), looks at various types of early childhood programs, subsidies, finding an appropriate child care partner, needs assessment, finding a location, space/design considerations, and financing. This resource is available on the Web at http://www.lisc.org/resources/assets/asset_upload_file419_253.pdf.

■ *Board of Directors Child Care Resource Book* (July 1999), by the General Services Administration (GSA), Child Care Operations Center of Expertise, is a guide for developing a nonprofit board that contracts for child care services. Specific steps and procedures are outlined and sample documents are provided to assist agencies starting boards and opening centers. This resource is available on the Web at http://www.gsa.gov/gsa/cm_attachments/GSA_DOCUMENT/ResourceBook_R2E-c-oN_0Z5RDZ-i34K-pR.pdf.

Additional Resources

■ *Recommended Books on Group Day Care Center Start-Up and Administration* (January 2003), by the Wisconsin Child Care Information Center, lists books with information on the topics of space and furnishings, leading and supervising, health and safety, financial management, forms, preschool curriculum, infant and toddler programs, and school-age care programs. This resource is available on the Web at <http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/ccic/ccicrgdc.html>.

■ *Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care Programs: Second Edition* (2002), prepared by the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Public Health Association, and the National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care, is a comprehensive set of health and safety standards for providing quality child care. This resource is available on the Web at <http://nrc.uchsc.edu/CFOC/PDFVersio0/National%20Health%20and%20Safety%20Performance%20Standards.pdf>.

■ *Child Development Program Forms* (2002), prepared by the Navy Morale, Welfare and Recreation Division (MWR), has samples of a wide variety of both official and unofficial forms for use by Navy child development centers. These forms are available on the Web at <http://mwr.navy.mil/mwrprgms/cdcforms.htm>.

■ *Texas Workforce Commission, Texas Rising Star Provider Certification Guidelines* (October 2000), by the Texas Workforce Commission, describes the criteria and assessment processes for the Texas Rising Star Provider Certification system for licensed center, family

home, and group day home child care facilities. Certification criteria are divided into 11 areas: licensing compliance; director qualifications; caregiver staff qualifications; staff orientation; staff training; group size; curriculum/activities; caregiver-child interaction; physical environment; nutrition/ meal time; and parental involvement. This guide contains certification assessment forms, assessment suggestions, scoring summaries for certification criteria, classroom schedule and floor plan examples, competencies for the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential and the Child Care Licensing Director qualifications, and Web site addresses for national accreditation organizations. This resource is available on the Web at <http://www.mrgwb.org/Texas%20Rising%20Star%20Guidelines.pdf>.

Links to NCCIC Information on the Web

■ The Child Care Workforce topic is available on the Web at <http://nccic.org/poptopics/index.html#workforce>. It includes the following publications:

- *Careers in Early Childhood Education* is available on the Web at <http://nccic.org/poptopics/careers.html>;
- *Child Care Workforce Qualifications* is available on the Web at <http://nccic.org/poptopics/qualifications.html>;
- *Distance Learning in Early Childhood Education* is available on the Web at <http://nccic.org/poptopics/distancelearning.html>;
- *Early Childhood Workforce Salaries* is available on the Web at <http://nccic.org/poptopics/salaries.html>;
- *Employment Opportunities in the Early Childhood Field* is available on the Web at <http://nccic.org/poptopics/employment.html>;
- *The Early Childhood Workforce and Its Impact on Children and High-Quality Child Care* is available on the Web at <http://nccic.org/poptopics/workforceimpact.html>;
- *Financial Assistance for Early Childhood Educators* is available on the Web at <http://nccic.org/poptopics/financialassist.html>;
- *Impact of Education and Training of Child Care Workers on Program Quality* is available on the Web at <http://www.nccic.org/poptopics/traingimpact.html>;
- *Resources on Men in the Child Care Field* is available on the Web at <http://nccic.org/poptopics/men.html>; and
- *Size of the Early Childhood Workforce* is available on the Web at <http://nccic.org/poptopics/sizeworkforce.html>.

■ The Child Care as a Business topic is available on the Web at <http://nccic.org/poptopics/index.html#ccbusiness>. It includes the following publications:

- *Funding Opportunities for Child Care* is available on the Web at <http://nccic.org/poptopics/funding-opportunities.html>;
- *Fundraising* is available on the Web at <http://nccic.org/poptopics/fundraising.html>.
- *Grants and Grant Writing* is available on the Web at <http://nccic.org/poptopics/grantwriting.html>;
- *Liability Insurance for Family Child Care Homes and Centers* is available on the Web at <http://nccic.org/poptopics/liability.html>;

- *Starting a Family Child Care Program* is available on the Web at <http://nccic.org/poptopics/starfund.html>; and
- *Empezando y Fundando un Centro Familiar de Cuidado de Niños* is available on the Web at <http://nccic.org/spanish/starfund-sp.html>.

■ The Internet Links section of the NCCIC Web site, which links to major national organizations related to child care and early education, is available on the Web at <http://nccic.org/links.html>.

Federal Agency and National Organizations

The following Federal agency and national organizations provide information on child care issues, including start-up costs, budgeting, program development, regulations and standards, funding, and staffing.

■ **U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)**

800-827-5722

World Wide Web: <http://www.sba.gov>

The mission of the SBA is to maintain and strengthen the nation's economy by aiding, counseling, assisting, and protecting the interests of small businesses and by helping families and businesses recover from national disasters. Information about starting a small business is available on the Web at http://www.sba.gov/starting_business/index.html. Information about financing a small business is available on the Web at <http://www.sba.gov/financing/index.html>. SBA's Online Women's Business Center is available on the Web at <http://www.onlinewbc.gov/>.

■ **Child Care Law Center (CCLC)**

221 Pine Street, Third Floor

San Francisco 94104

415-394-7144

World Wide Web: <http://www.childcarelaw.org>

CCLC is a national nonprofit legal services organization. Its primary objective is to use legal tools to foster the development of high-quality, affordable child care—for every child, every parent, and every community. CCLC works to expand child care options, particularly for low-income families, and to ensure that children are safe and nurtured in care outside the home.

■ **National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)**

1509 16th Street NW

Washington, DC 20036

800-424-2460

World Wide Web: <http://naeyc.org>

NAEYC is a nonprofit professional organization of more than 103,000 members dedicated to improving the quality of care and education provided to our nation's young children. NAEYC administers the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs, a voluntary, national accreditation system for high-quality early childhood programs, and the National Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development, which provides resources and services to improve professional preparation and development of early childhood educators.

■ **National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA)**

1319 F Street NW, Suite 810

Washington, DC 20004

202-393-5501

World Wide Web: <http://www.naccrra.org>

NACCRRA is a national membership organization of over 400 community child care resource and referral agencies (CCR&Rs) in all 50 States. NACCRRA's mission is to promote the growth and development of high-quality resource and referral services and to exercise leadership to build a diverse, high-quality child care system with parental choice and equal access for all families.

■ **The National Economic Development and Law Center (NEDLC)**

2201 Broadway, Suite 815

Oakland, CA 94612

510-251-2600

World Wide Web: <http://www.nedlc.org>

NEDLC is a nonprofit organization that specialized in community economic development. They view child care as a key contributor to building sustainable local economies. NEDLC's Child Care Program is implemented at the neighborhood, community, county, and State levels to enhance the supply of quality, affordable child care and early childhood programs and services in poor communities. Information about the child care program is available on the Web at http://www.nedlc.org/divisions_cyf_childcare.htm. NEDLC collaborates to support the Building Child Care (BCC) Project, which exists to provide a centralized clearinghouse of information and services designed to improve child care providers' access to financial resources for facilities development projects in California. Many of their resources are also appropriate for those in other States. Information about this project is available on the Web at <http://www.buildingchildcare.org/index.htm>.

■ **National Institute on Out-of-School Time (NIOST)**

Wellesley Centers for Women

106 Central Street

Wellesley, MA 02481

781-283-2547

World Wide Web: <http://www.niost.org>

NIOST works to improve the quantity and quality of out-of-school time programs throughout the country. NIOST focuses on education and training, community development, consultation, research, and public awareness and policy. NIOST serves children, parents, out-of-school time program staff, school principals and supervisors, community leaders, and government officials committed to improving out-of-school time options for children and youth.

■ **National Network for Child Care (NNCC)**

World Wide Web: <http://www.nncc.org>

NNCC unites the expertise of many of the nation's leading universities through the outreach system of Cooperative Extension. Cooperative Extension has an 80-year history of working in the areas of child care and early childhood development. NNCC offers an Internet source of over

1000 publications and resources related to child care. Links to articles on Child Care Business Management and on Child Care Center Design are available on the Web at http://cyfernet.ces.ncsu.edu/cyfdb/browse_2pageAnncc.php?subcat=Child+Care+Business+Management&search=NNCC&search_type=browse.

Publishers

■ **Child Care Information Exchange (CCIE)**

P.O. Box 3249
Redmond, WA 98073-3249
800-221-2864

World Wide Web: <http://www.ccie.com>

Child Care Information Exchange is a bi-monthly magazine for administrators of early childhood programs that features many articles on business management, financing strategies, marketing, public relations, and related topics in addition to program and curriculum development ideas. Reprints of pertinent articles are available, as are collections of articles on particular topics.

■ **Redleaf Press**

10 Yorkton Court
St. Paul, MN 55117-1065
800-423-8309

World Wide Web: <http://www.redleafpress.org>

Redleaf Press was established in 1973 and is a leading nonprofit publisher of curriculum, management, and business resources for the early childhood profession. Combined with books they publish and books from other publishers, Redleaf Press distributes approximately 500 high-quality titles at any given time. Redleaf Press is a division of Resources for Child Caring, a nationally recognized nonprofit organization specializing in issues related to child care.

■ **School-Age *NOTES***

P.O. Box 40205
Nashville, TN 37204
615-279-0700 or 800-410-8780

World Wide Web: <http://www.schoolagenotes.com>

This newsletter provides monthly ideas, strategies, and curriculum activities for working with school-agers. A quarterly resource catalog has materials on discipline, science, health, administration, activities and games for school-age programs and descriptions of models programs with contacts.

The National Child Care Information Center has additional resources on topics such as curriculum development, child development, and serving children with special needs. We do not endorse any organization, publication, or resource. If we can provide you with additional information, please feel free to contact us.

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