



**Work Life Services Newsletter September 2022**

**Call our toll-free number 1-800-364-6352 for assistance**

## **Child Care: Finding the Right Provider**

As a parent, choosing a childcare provider can be one of the most difficult decisions you have to face. Not only does the provider have to have the skills and resources to provide effective care, the provider also has to “feel right” to you. This is especially important since the provider will be caring for your children and contributing physical and emotional support in your absence.

Choosing the right provider starts by looking at your needs, deciding on what kind of care you want your children to receive, and researching the options by visiting locations, meeting with staff, and getting a real sense of what your children will experience. Where your child will receive care is one important piece, but who your child will receive care from is just as important, if not more. Remember to always follow your gut feelings. If your instincts tell you that something is wrong, something’s probably wrong.

Below are some helpful resources to help you navigate this decision and find a provider that is right for you and your child.

A live-in care provider, nanny, or au pair:

- Can provide full-time or part-time care
- Provides care services in your home
- May live with you to provide round-the-clock service
- May take on additional household responsibilities

An at-home day care:

- Provides care in another’s home
- May be run by a mother with her own children present
- Licensed: Required to meet stringent safety regulations and provide care to only a limited number of children
- Unlicensed: Might have safety issues, too many children, or not enough supervision

An organizational/group care center:

- Licensed by the state and required to meet safety and care regulations
- Routinely inspected by state regulatory officials for compliance
- Usually cares for more children than an at-home day care provider
- Adult-to-child ratio is mandated by state regulations

Sample Questions for Your Child Care Provider Meetings:

- What is your experience providing child care and can you provide references?
- What steps do you take when a child has become upset?
- What are your disciplinary procedures for when a child acts out or gets in trouble?
- What are the feeding schedules, meals, and options for special dietary needs?
- How long does the average child stay with the provider each day? Week? Month?
- Can I contact my child during the day?
- Can I make unexpected visits as needed?
- What are your emergency procedures for responding to accidents or incidents?