

Ohio Family Child Care Work Group



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The Ohio Family Child Care Workgroup recommends:

Spring '08 "Top Ten" Tips for Parents

choosing child care. This list is intended to inform parents of Ohio regulations and resources about the child care industry.

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The Parents' Role: As a parent seeking a professional in a family child care home business, it is your shared responsibility with the provider to see that children are cared for in safe, engaging, and nurturing care. Did you know that more families choose child care home businesses over any other type of child care setting? Here are the top 10 things you will need to know to help you make a choice that is best for your child and family.

1. Start Early In Your Child Care Search: Child Care providers recommend at least 3 months before your need for care arises to properly plan, meet with providers, and interview your final choices. There is more demand than openings and you should not be surprised with possible waiting lists.

2. Know Who To Turn To: Do you know what your resources are? Familiarize yourself with the role of local Childcare Resource & Referral Agency's in your area. http://www.occra.org/contact_agencies.htm. Also familiarize yourself with the roles, resources, and responsibilities of your county and state Department of Job & Family Services. <http://jfs.ohio.gov/CDC/childcare.stm>

3. Know what questions to ask the Provider? For example: What is their training and credentials in the child care field? CPR Certified? How would you handle an emergency? How many children will you care for at one time and what are their ages? Has there ever been an injury requiring a 24hr hospital stay or death in their care? Some other guidelines are in the following links. <http://www.odjfs.state.oh.us/forms/file.asp?id=41927> http://www.occra.org/choosing_care.htm

4. Know how to recognize Health and Safety Risks: Much work has been done lately to identify the nature and cause of instances where children's safety may be at risk. The experiences can be lumped into Supervision, Environment, and Transportation. http://www.ifs.ohio.gov/cdc/docs/rules_bullet_format.pdf

5. Know the Types of Care that are available to you: Ohio Law defines "child day care" as administering to the needs to the needs of children outside of school hours by persons other than their parents or guardians on a less than twenty four hour basis. Some types of child care must be regulated in Ohio; other types of child care may operate without a license. Familiarize yourself with the different choices. <http://ifs.ohio.gov/cdc/page2.stm>

6. You have responsibilities too: Caring for your child involves teamwork and a partnership between you and your provider, so keep providers aware of things that impact your child's life. Do your part as part of the team. Try your best to pick up your child on time and pay on time. Refrain from sending your child to provider knowing they are sick.

7. Licensing: According to Ohio's Child Care Resource & Referral Association, the majority of parents using referral services believe that child care providers in Ohio *are already* licensed and monitored for healthy, safe child care practices. But, in fact, MOST Ohio providers are UNregulated. Approximately 9,000 providers are currently regulated but an estimated 20,000 unregulated providers exist in our neighborhoods. As it stands now, any provider caring for six or fewer children at one time in their home is not required to be regulated or monitored by any agency. This provides a false sense of security for parents seeking care services. Consumers need to be informed of care that provides children a safe early learning environment.

8. Proposed Legislation: Legislation was recently introduced in Ohio toward licensing Family Child Care Home Businesses (House Bill 342, introduced by Representative Jon Peterson, and Senate Bill 232, introduced by Senator Steve Stivers). For more information, please contact OCCRRA at 1-877-547-6978

9. What can parents do now to encourage quality in care? Parents can encourage their provider to learn and grow in their profession, and to seek regulation for support and education. Did you know that any Certified Type B Provider now has the opportunity to earn a Child Development Associate credential (C.D.A.) with a scholarship to help with the application fee? The CDA is a nationally recognized certificate of authenticity that the provider has undertaken coursework and experiences that enhance the quality of care and education they provide to children. For more information contact Elaine Fencl at 1-877-547-6978 ext. 304 or efencl@occrra.org

10. Help Is Available to Make that Child Care Choice: Families needing information about how to recognize quality and choose the setting that best fits their family's needs can contact their local child care resource & referral agency for FREE referrals and information through www.occrra.org or at (614) 396-5959 or Toll Free at 1-877-547-6978

Now you are "In the Know"

OCCRRA the Ohio Child Care Resource & Referral Association
6660 Doubletree Avenue, Suite #11
Columbus, Ohio 43229
(614) 396-5959
Email us at contact@occrra.org
Call Us Toll Free at 877-547-6978
Or contact your local CCR&R agency

