



Delaware Opportunities Inc
Child Care Resource & Referral
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Child Care 101: *Common Questions & Answers:*

There is no absolute guarantee of quality in child care programs. However, several factors help to assure high quality care in regulated programs:

Can I just drop in?

Parent Involvement: As a parent, you are a key to quality child care. You have the right to drop in at any time to observe the program or to see your child. You will probably see the provider often and have a good idea of how things are going in the program.

How many children can a provider care for?

Adult-Child Ratios: Regulated programs must limit the number of children each adult cares for based on standards set in the regulations. These standards help to make sure that children are properly supervised and get all the attention they need.

What is a background check?

Background check requirements in New York State for regulated or licensed child care providers, substitutes and assistants:

State Fingerprints	Federal Fingerprints	Criminal Records Check	Child Abuse Registry	Sex Offender Registry
Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No

Does a child care provider need training?

Training and Experience: Regulated child care providers must have prior experience caring for children and must receive 30 hours of training in areas such as First Aid/CPR, safety, nutrition, and child abuse prevention every two years.

Who needs to be registered or licensed?

Regulation and Oversight: Programs regulated by the State Office of Children and Family Services must be licensed or registered. With only a few exceptions, every program that cares for more than two children three hours or more per day must have a license or registration certificate. When you visit a regulated child care program, ask to see the license or registration certificate.

How often is a child care program inspected?

Inspections: Every licensed child care program must be inspected at least one before each license renewal. At least 50% of all registered providers are inspected annually.

What do I do if I want to make a complaint about a child care program?

Complaints: The State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) maintains a statewide, toll free Child Care Complaint line at 1-800-732-5207. Anyone can file a complaint if they think a child care provider is not following regulations by calling this number or calling Delaware Opportunities Inc. Child Care Resource & Referral at 1-877-746-2279.

What does Accreditation mean?

Accreditation is another way to judge the quality of a child care program. Family child care homes and child care centers can choose to get accredited by a child care accrediting organization. But, they have to meet higher standards than licensing rules. The program must offer the kind of care, attention, and educational activities parents look for in high-quality child care programs. It must offer activities and experiences that will aid in a child's growth and development and that will help them prepare for school.

Is there a program that will help with the cost of child care?

In general, families are eligible for financial assistance if they meet the state's low-income guidelines and need child care to work. You are guaranteed child care if you are on Temporary Assistance and need child care in order to meet any work participation requirements. You are also guaranteed assistance in paying for child care for one year after leaving Temporary Assistance if you left Temporary Assistance for a job and need child care to go to work. Your County Department of Social Services determines family eligibility based on income, reasons for needing day care, and your child's age and individual needs. In most cases, families receiving child care subsidy can choose any legal child care provider.

If you are interested in finding out if you are eligible for a child care subsidy, or if you would like to apply for subsidy for your child, contact Delaware Opportunities Inc. Child Care Subsidy Program at 607-746-1620 or toll free at 1-877-746-2279.

What is QUALITYstarsNY?

QUALITYstarsNY is a Quality Rating and Improvement System being developed by New York State for early care and education programs. The system, once implemented, will recognize, encourage and reward improving the quality of all settings in the state where children are learning every day. QUALITYstarsNY is still in the planning phase. For more information about QUALITYstarsNY visit www.qualitystarsny.org.

For more information, contact a day care specialist at Delaware Opportunities Inc. Child Care Resource & Referral at 607-746-1620 or toll free at 1-877-746-2279 or by email at daycare@delawareopportunities.org. Additional information can be found at our website www.delawareopportunities.org or the Office of Children and Family Services at www.ocfs.state.ny.us.