



For more information about child care

- Call 311 and ask for the Day-Care Borough Office that serves you.
- Visit nyc.gov/health. Click on Health Topics A-Z in the left column, then on Day Care. To find a child-care facility, go to Info for Parents, in the right column, and look for the type that interests you.
- To see if you qualify for subsidized day care, call 311 or visit nyc.gov/acs
- For more information about State-regulated day-care programs, visit www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/beccs
- For Child-Care Resources and Referral Agencies call 888-469-5999.

To report any site that you think is unsafe, unhealthy, or operating illegally, call 311 and ask for Day Care

Before you enroll your child, visit the site one more time

Make sure:

- ✓ It is licensed, and the license is on the wall.
- ✓ You have reviewed the last inspection.
- ✓ It has window guards, soap and paper towels for washing, and refrigeration for foods.
- ✓ There are enough staff to care for the children.

Ask yourself:

- ✓ Will my child learn and be happy here?
- ✓ Am I comfortable leaving my child here?

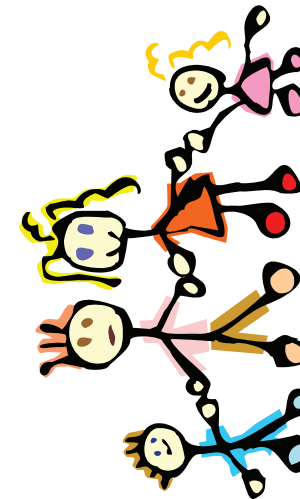


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 THE NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT of HEALTH and MENTAL HYGIENE
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Choosing Child Care in New York City

What Every Parent Needs to Know And What the Law Requires

A Safe and Nurturing Place to Learn

Good child care is more than babysitting. It encourages children to play and learn in a stimulating and nurturing environment.

To keep children safe and healthy while they are in a provider's care, the government licenses and regulates child-care facilities and inspects them regularly.

This booklet guides parents through the agencies and laws that protect children in child care. It also helps them find the care that fits their families' needs.

When seeking child care, take your time and ask for help

If you can, give yourself at least 3 months:

- Ask relatives, friends, and neighbors to recommend places or tell you which to avoid.
- Call 311 or visit nyc.gov/health for names of licensed sites in your neighborhood.
- Compare the types of child care (*see chart*).

See for yourself

Visit every site, especially the rooms your child will be in:

- Is the staff warm and friendly? Do they talk to children with affection and respect and listen to them with interest? Do they treat children well – never shouting, grabbing, or being mean?
- Do the children look happy?
- Are they supervised at all times, indoors and out?
- Are there plenty of toys and equipment (blocks, puzzles, books, clay, musical instruments) and activities to help children develop and learn?

Ask questions

- What languages are spoken?
- What are the hours? Are weekends available?
- Can you walk in any time? (*The answer should be "yes"!*)
- Do you need to bring diapers or other supplies?
- What are the fees? Lower-income families may be eligible for free or low-cost child care or an income tax credit (*call 311 to see if you qualify*).



What the Law Requires

The site must be properly licensed and inspected

- The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) and the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) license and regulate most child-care settings. The DOHMH inspects and issues permits, licenses, and registrations for these sites in New York City.
- The provider must post a current license on the wall where you can see it.
- Review the last site inspection. Reports are available at nyc.gov/health or by calling 311.

Everyone who works or lives at the site must be cleared to be with children

- Staff, volunteers, and household members of in-home sites who are 18 or older must undergo a criminal and child abuse/maltreatment background check.
- Staff must be in good health (*certified by a health care provider*) and get a medical checkup.

Safety regulations require that all child-care sites:

- Have more than one exit door and an emergency evacuation plan.
- Have adequate toilet and sink facilities.
- Cover radiators and pipes in rooms where children may be. No portable heaters may be used in these rooms.
- Above the first floor, install barriers to keep children from falling out of windows.
- Install barriers to keep children from swimming pools or other bodies of water. (*You must give written permission for your child to use the pool.*)
- Have a working telephone, with emergency phone numbers posted next to it.

Health regulations require that all sites:

- Have an approved health care plan to protect and promote the health of children.
- Be approved by the state to give medication to children. Otherwise, only over-the-counter ointments can be given.
- Get written consent from a parent (when the child first comes to the center) to get emergency medical care, if and when it is needed.
- Keep a first-aid kit accessible.
- Prohibit staff from smoking cigarettes or consuming alcohol or drugs during child-care hours.



Types of Child Care and What the Law Requires

Type of Child Care	School-Age Program	Family Day Care	Group Family Day Care	Group Day Care
Where Located	Non-home site	In a home	In a home	Non-home site (e.g., day-care center)
Age Group	Kindergarten age to 12 yrs	6 wks to 12 yrs	6 wks to 12 yrs	Birth to 6 yrs
Maximum Number of Children	<i>In any group, no more than:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 children under 13 yrs • 30 children ages 10 to 12 	No more than: 6 children, if no infants	No more than: 12 children, if no infants	<i>In any group, no more than:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 children under 1 yr • 10 1- and 2-yr-olds • 15 3-yr-olds • 20 4-yr-olds • 25 5-yr-olds
Number of Staff	1 staff member for every: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 children younger than 10 yrs • 15 children ages 10 to 12 	1 staff member for every 6 children, unless infants are present	1 staff member for every 6 children, unless infants are present	1 staff member for every: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 children under 1 year • 5 children ages 1 to 2 • 10 children age 3 • 12 children age 4 • 15 children age 5
Must Be Inspected	Every 2 years	Every 2 years	Every year	Every year
Other Facts	Also called "after-school program"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible hours • May be good choice for those new to child care 	Must have provider and assistant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom setting • Must have at least 30 square feet of space per child • Director and teachers must be specially trained in child care

