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Choosing Child Care
A Guide
For Students at
City College of San Francisco

WHAT DOES QUALITY CHILD CARE LOOK LIKE?

Quality child care may not be like your memories of “school”. Schools and child care programs have changed as we have learned more about how children’s brains develop and how children learn and grow. Techniques for teaching children have also changed. Few programs for very young children use memorization, drills, desk work and large group instruction. We now know that young children are sensory motor learners. They learn with their whole bodies and use all of their senses. They learn by running, twirling, pouring, digging, tasting, jumping, running, clapping, talking, smelling, rolling and screaming. Children learn through play and they learn through play when they are young infants and toddlers all the way up into elementary school. Some would argue that even adults learn through play! When you are excited and involved and engaged, learning is easier than when you are bored or forced to learn! Quality child care is relaxed, fun, based on the child’s needs and interests, offers choices, provides sensory learning opportunities and is playful!

People who work with children must do so because they choose to be with children, not because they are doing someone a favor or because they cannot find another job. When children are young the most important thing that they need to feel is trust. If a child trusts their families and their teachers or providers, they can grow and learn. One of the most important things you can look for is a person that is warm, safe, trustworthy and wants to be with children. The relationship your child has with this person is the most important thing to assess. People who work with children should be committed to learning new techniques and strategies. People who work with children should be patient, tolerant, respectful and professional. People who work with children set the stage for learning. They plan the curriculum, hold conversations, model behavior. They are people your child will copy, learn from, hug, listen to, sing with, question, play with and care for. They become a part of your child’s life and your child will remember them for a long time.

It is very important to make sure that this person can continue working in the field. Teachers and providers must be paid for their work and must have support. There is a strong correlation between the quality of a program and the salaries of the teachers. Ask the teachers what their salary ranges are. Ask them what the benefits and turnover rates are. All of these things add up to quality. If the person caring for your child is only doing you a favor, has no training, earns low wages, has no benefits and is only doing the job until something better comes along you will have low quality. Guaranteed. The person who pays the consequences is your child. Low quality equals discipline problems, developmental problems, safety issues, health concerns and behavioral issues. Every child has the right to a high quality environment. It is your job as a parent to fight for that right!
WHO MONITORS AND REGULATES CHILD CARE?

Child care centers and family day care homes in California are licensed and regulated by the Community Care Licensing (CCL) Division of the State Department of Social Services. Community Care Licensing (CCL) oversees child care center and family child care compliance with the regulations and guidelines specified in Title 22 of the California Administrative Code, which is based on the Health and Safety Code. Licensed programs must meet health and safety standards, standards for staff qualifications, standards for ratios and environment and physical plant requirements. Title 22 has minimal standards though, for curriculum and adult-child interaction. For instance, licensing prohibits corporal punishment and maintains a child’s right to a positive environment, however, specific quality standards for curriculum, teacher-child interactions and business practices are vague. Several forms of child care are not subject to licensing at all. These include:

- Care in the child’s own home
- Family child care programs which care for the children of only one family other than the provider’s
- Informal care arrangements such as coops, shares, exchanges, and playgroups where no money changes hands
- Certain school age child care programs: recreation programs, many summer programs, private school programs, summer camps, drop-in youth clubs and youth centers, playground programs
- Military child care programs
- Programs where parents remain on-site: health club child care, some employer programs

The local CCL district office for San Francisco County is located in San Bruno at:

**Dept. of Social Services, Community Care Licensing**  
851 Traeger Avenue, San Bruno, CA 94066  
(650) 266-8843.

Parents and others can direct concerns or complaints about a child care program to CCL, who will make a site visit and, if the complaint is serious, conduct an investigation. Complaints may be made anonymously. Individuals interested in filing a complaint or obtaining information about substantiated violations and complaints for a particular child care program can call CCL. A child care program’s licensing history is also available at the program/facility itself and you may ask programs directly for this information. Typically, licensing only visits programs when they receive their license, when there are complaints and if they schedule an annual review. The licensing office in San Bruno typically has between 2-4 analysts assigned to the whole city of San Francisco. It is important that parents ask questions, observe and be informed consumers. If a program is exempt from licensure the only agency that may be able to help you with serious violations is the police department. Financial complaints are usually resolved in Small Claims Court.

WHAT TYPES OF CHILD CARE ARE THERE?

**Child Care Centers:** Centers can be referred to as day care, nursery schools, preschools or center-based programs. Centers that are licensed by Community Care Licensing are sometimes referred to as Title 22 programs, referring to the Section in the Health & Safety Code that governs them. Centers that receive money for subsidized child care are also governed by Title 5 in the Education Code. Title 5
requirements are more stringent in the areas of staff qualifications, curriculum, ratios, parent involvement and administration. Title 5 programs are also monitored by the State Department of Education.

Center philosophies vary but their goals usually center around meeting a child’s physical, cognitive and developmental needs. Social and self-help skills are usually emphasized and programs are often designed to promote school readiness. Centers are generally licensed to operate in facilities (commercial buildings, churches, private schools), rather than homes, and can be private or subsidized. Families who meet low income guidelines are sometimes eligible for subsidized child care programs where the fees are on a sliding scale based on income, but subsidized centers tend to have long waiting lists, so it is best to apply as early in advance as possible. Some private centers may also have scholarships for low income parents. Most centers require that children are toilet-trained, but there are a few centers in San Francisco that accept infants and toddlers. Infant/toddler centers tend to be very expensive and may have long waiting lists. Centers often have fixed hours of availability, commonly 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Some centers will care for children on odd schedules, weekends or on a drop-in basis. Many centers in San Francisco offer before and after school care for children in elementary school. School-age centers are often regulated by Community Care Licensing as well. Exceptions include, some school-age programs run by private schools, some summer camps and public recreation programs. Licensed school-age centers are not drop-in programs where children can come and go. They require that children sign-in and be signed out when picked up by an adult.

**Family Child Care Homes:** These are programs operated in the care giver’s own home and in California, are licensed. In San Francisco, family child care homes are licensed in apartments, houses, townhouses, condominiums and flats. As long as the licensee is living in the home it may be eligible to be licensed, as long as the environment can pass the health and safety inspection. Family child care homes are generally not subsidized, but are sometimes flexible regarding fees, hours, drop-in care, accepting a sick child or caring for a child over the weekend. A common misconception of family child care is that children are simply cared for and do not engage in age appropriate activities; this is not necessarily the case. Some family child care providers have an informal home setting, while others run their program in a very structured manner, similar in style to child care centers. Family child care tends to be one of the most readily available child care options. Family child care homes are licensed in California for children from ages birth to twelve years, but some prefer to care for specific age groups (i.e. toddlers only, or school age only). Typically family child care homes are licensed in California for six or eight children, including the provider’s own children with no more than three children under the age of two. If a family child care provider cares for infants only, then their license will be for four children, including their own, birth to two years old. Some family child care homes are licensed for twelve to fourteen children depending on their ages and must have a full-time assistant.

**License Exempt Providers:** Are child care providers who choose to care for the children of only one family other than their own in the care giver’s own home. They are exempt from licensing in California. If they care for children from more than one family, they are required to be licensed by the State as a Family Day Care Home.
License Exempt In-Home Providers: Are providers who come into your home to provide care. They are often referred to as babysitters, aupairs or nannies. This is often a very convenient although expensive (minimum wage laws do apply) alternative for unusual schedules or needs. In-home providers can be found through referrals, advertisements, postings, etc. There are also companies available that specialize in matching caregivers to families and will help with legal requirements. However, in-home providers are the employees of the parent and therefore the parent is legally responsible as the employer to pay appropriate taxes, social security and any other payments required to state and federal agencies in addition to the salary of the provider. If this alternative is chosen, be very careful to make sure all legal requirements of an employer-employee relationship are maintained.

What are the differences between school and child care?
Elementary, middle and high schools in California (K-12) are regulated differently than child care. Schools must comply with guidelines for compulsory education found in the Education Code. Public schools are governed by elected school boards and monitored by the California Department of Education. Public schools may be accredited by WASC, Western Association of Schools and Colleges and are accredited for specific periods of time. Teachers in public schools hold specific teaching credentials for the ages and subjects they teach. Additionally, teachers may hold degrees allowing them to work with specific groups of children: children with limited English skills, children with special needs, children with specific requirements. Teachers in California’s public schools hold BA degrees in addition to credentials, although some teachers can be hired under emergency provisions if there are shortages or a lack of qualified candidates. Private schools may also be accredited by WASC and may be governed by a Board of Directors or may be owned privately. Many private schools are religious-based and are governed by a religious body. Some private schools are privately owned. Teachers in private schools usually have both credentials and BA degrees, although requirements for teachers differ and private schools may allow non-credentialed individuals to teach or may have more stringent standards. Private schools may accept and reject students based on their own standards.

Charter schools are actually public schools that receive money from their local school district but operate independently under a specific “charter”. Charter schools operate like small businesses within their school district. Parents and staff often hire staff, perform maintenance and secretarial duties, develop policies and deal directly with administering the program. Home schools are usually operated by parents instructing their own children. There are no specific educational requirements for parents who choose to home school. Home schools must be registered with their local school district and there are some home school organizations that provide support to parents as they home school their children. Parents are often confused about the differences between various types of schools and child care programs. It is important to ask about the structure, governance and accreditation or licensure of any place your child attends. Know who makes the rules, who enforces them, what the philosophy and curriculum of the program is. Know who governs the program and know where you can go to complain. Do not confuse cost or tuition amounts with quality. Many free programs are of high quality and expensive programs are sometimes of low quality. This is true for child care, schools and even colleges! When you have children you will be making many decisions, including what child care programs and schools to send your child to. These are some of the most important decisions you can make!
WHAT MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS DO CHILD CARE PROFESSIONALS NEED TO MEET?

CHILD CARE CENTER STAFF

Teacher’s Aides must be at least 18 years old or enrolled in a Regional Occupation Program.

Teachers in Title 22 programs must have at least 12 college semester units in Early Childhood Education/Child Development (ECE/CD) and 6 months experience or a Child Development Teacher Permit. A teacher may be hired after completing only 6 units, but must complete at least 2 units per semester until all requirements are met. Many teachers in San Francisco work at programs governed by both Title 22 and Title 5. Title 5 programs receive state money and often provide free or reduced cost child care. Teachers in Title 5 programs must have an AA Degree in addition to child development units or over 50 college units. Many Title 5 teachers hold BA or MA degrees and Child Development Permits.

Directors are required to have 12 ECE/CD units, 4 years teaching experience, and 3 units of administration OR an AA degree, 12 ECE units, 2 years teaching experience, and 3 units of administration OR a BA degree, 12 ECE units, 1 year teaching experience, and 3 units of administration OR a Child Development Site Supervisor Permit. Directors at Title 5 programs usually have at least a BA degree in addition to a Supervisory Permit. All staff must clear a TB test and criminal and child abuse index checks. In addition, at least one director or teacher at any center must complete 15 hours of health and safety training, including training in Pediatric CPR/First Aid and preventive health practices.

Family Child Care Providers

Family Child Care Providers must be 18 years or older. The license-holder(s) and anyone 18 or older in the home must clear a TB test and criminal and child abuse index checks. The license-holder(s) must complete 15 hours of health and safety training, including training in Pediatric CPR/First Aid and preventive health practices. Family Child Care Assistants must be at least 14 years old and must work under the supervision of the family child care provider at all times. There are no specific requirements for college units in child development for family child care, however, many family child care providers in San Francisco participate in informal training, enroll in college courses or have college degrees.

HOW MANY CHILDREN CAN A PROVIDER CARE FOR?

Child Care Center Staffing Ratios (minimum)

😊 For Infants (Birth to 2 years old): 1 staff to every 4 children

😊 For Toddlers (18 months 30 months): 1 staff to every 6 children

😊 For Preschoolers (2 years Kindergarten): 1 staff to every 12 children

😊 For School - agers (Kindergarten and above): 1 staff to every 14 children
SMALL FAMILY CHILD CARE HOME (6-8 CHILDREN MAXIMUM, NO ASSISTANT REQUIRED)

One adult to 6 children when:
- ☺ No more than 3 children are under 2 years with a maximum of 3 other children
- ☺ There are 4 children under 2 years of age and no other children
- OR-

One adult to 8 children when:
- ☺ No more than 2 children are under 2 years, 4 children are over 2 years,
- ☺ and 2 children are 6 years or older
- ☺ All children are school-age (with at least 2 children 6 years or older)
- ☺ 2 children are 6 years or older and 6 children 2-5 years old

LARGE FAMILY CHILD CARE HOME (12-14 CHILDREN MAXIMUM, WITH AN ASSISTANT)

Two adults for 7 to 12 children when:
- ☺ No more than 4 children are under 2 years and a maximum of 8 other children
- OR

Two adults to 8 children when:
- ☺ No more than 3 children are under 2 years, 3 children are over 2 years, and
- ☺ 2 children are 6 years or older
- OR

One adult to 8 children when:
- ☺ No more than 2 children are under 2 years, 4 children are over 2 years, and at least 2 children are 6 years or older
- OR

Two adults to 14 children when:
- ☺ No more than 3 children are under 2 years, 9 children are over 2 years, and 2 children are 6 years or older
- ☺ 12 children are over the age of 2 years, and 2 children are 6 years or older
- ☺ All children are school-age (with at least 2 children are 6 years or older)

WHAT SHOULD I ASK WHEN INTERVIEWING A CHILD CARE PROVIDER?

Having some specific questions ready to ask each child care provider at the site visit can help you in making your final selection. Ask questions that require more than simple “yes” or “no” answers. One long answer might reveal more about a person or program than many short ones. Look for answers that are compatible with your own philosophy and feelings about child-rearing. At a center talk to staff as well as the director. It helps to take notes so you don’t forget what has been said. Don’t commit yourself immediately after the interview is over. In most cases, you will not have observed or done reference checks yet, and it is better to give yourself time to reflect upon your choice. Here are some examples of the kinds of questions to ask:

- ☺ What do you (or your center) do to help a child adjust to their first day?
- ☺ What do you do when a child cries?
- ☺ What experiences have prepared you for working with babies/children? In centers, ask this of the staff as well as the director.
- ☺ How do you structure your day? How do you accommodate the changing schedules of an infant? Is there a daily plan or schedule?
How do you deal with discipline? How would you react if you saw my child bite another child? How would I find out if you were having problems with my child?

How do you meet the individual needs of each child, including children with special needs or disabilities?

How stable will the arrangement be? Ask staff in a center how long have they worked in this program. Ask family child care providers how long they have been licensed. Ask any in-home provider how long she/he intends to continue to provide child care and what training she/he has had. Ask about substitutes and emergency back-up plans.

What is your procedure for handling an emergency? How have you dealt with an emergency in the past?

Do children have choices throughout the day? Are they respected as individuals?

How do you involve parents? Are there opportunities to share family experiences?

What hours do you provide care? Are the hours flexible? Is there a late pick-up fee?

Are the social needs of school-age children considered? What about time for homework?

In your interview, determine the provider’s policy on such topics as: toilet training, plans for provider vacation or illness, fee payment, weaning and accommodating breastfeeding mothers, food services and feeding practices, use of television and videos, safety, napping schedules, who provides diapers, field trips, care of sick children, discipline, the provision of time to play, transporting children.

Observing the provider and the program is very important. How does it “feel” when you walk in? How does the caregiver interact with the children? Is he/she respectful, caring and patient? Do the children seem genuinely attached to her or him? Do the other children seem relaxed, happy and busy interacting with the environment?

Find out how open and frequent communication is maintained, and how information about your child’s emotional and physical “special happenings” are reported to you each day. You and your provider should consider yourselves partners who share responsibility for you child’s welfare. Remember that child care is a “people” job. The person caring for your child is the most important ingredient to consider when making child care choices.

You can prepare your infant or toddler for child care by beginning the transition from breast feeding to cup or bottle and by noting your child’s feeding, napping and play schedule to share with their teacher. You can schedule a check up with your pediatrician and make sure that your child has current immunizations. Most child care programs require health forms to be completed. If your child is older, talk to them about child care. Describe the program and take your child for a visit before you leave her or him. Reassure your child that you will return and make sure you are on time to pick her or him up. Older children like to know which friends will be attending their program. Make sure they know the address and phone number of the program and pick up and drop off information. School-age children need to know how to get to the program and what to bring.
HOW MUCH DOES CHILD CARE COST?

Child care costs in San Francisco County are among the highest in the state. The average county-wide rates for full-time care for infants and preschoolers and part-time care for school-agers range as follows (based on the 2005 San Francisco County Child Care Needs Assessment):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Type</th>
<th>Rate (Month)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Center</td>
<td>Family Child Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infants (0-2 years)</td>
<td>$1330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool (2-5 years)</td>
<td>$974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-Age (5 years +)</td>
<td>$774</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WHAT SERVICES FOR STUDENT/PARENTS ARE AVAILABLE AT CITY COLLEGE?

Students at City College of San Francisco have many resources available to them. The Child Development & Family Studies Department provides credit instruction in Child Development for the child care field in San Francisco. Hundreds of teachers get their start at CCSF and participate in professional growth opportunities. Parents can find credit courses in child development topics, as well as a host of services available for those interested in understanding the needs of young children. The Department is committed to providing the San Francisco community with child development instruction and a variety of support services. The Department also operates preschool sites convenient for students and individuals entering CCSF. Generally there are no or low costs involved. Parent participation is encouraged and low-income status must be verified. Low income children with language, health, nutritional and special needs are eligible. Income status, proof of birth date (children must be between 3-5 yrs.), and immunization records are needed.

The Orfalea Family Center at the John Adams Campus serves toddlers and preschoolers

To add your child to the eligibility list, please call (415) 561-1895.

CCSF Child Care Centers are at the following locations:

- Main Campus–Orfalea Child Development Center
- John Adams Campus–Orfalea Family Center NAEYC Approved – Toddlers also.
- Mission CCC State Preschool
- Grace Child Development Center
- Oceanview State Preschool
- Bernal Heights State Preschool
- Rocky Mountain Parent Coop

CHILD DEVELOPMENT & FAMILY STUDIES DEPARTMENT—CREDIT COURSES

Parents and family members can enroll in credit-bearing courses related to understanding how children learn and grow. Course information can be found at www.ccsf.edu or at 239-3172, or by visiting Batmale room 211.

Career advising, counseling, ECE-grade 12 teacher preparation permits and certificate information can be obtained by visiting Bungalow 213 or calling 452-5605 for the ECE Professional Development Project or 239-3890 for the Teacher Prep Center.
CCSF Parent/Infant and Parent/Child Classes are available at 22 community sites throughout San Francisco. These adult education, non-credit sites are designed for parents and children to take together. Child development, parent support and child care information topics are covered. For enrollment information call - (415) 561-1921 or (415) 239-3172.

The CCSF Family Resource Center offers support to student parents. Information, support services and drop-in child care (parent must remain on site) are available as well as share care. A web site that provides information to parents and parenting groups are available at the FRC, located in the Student Union. For information, call - (415) 239-3109.

CCSF EOPS - (CARE Program)
The EOPS Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (CARE) is one of the special services provided to EOPS students who have been determined to be eligible. Eligibility for the CARE program is determined by EOPS and CARE criteria. In order for a student to eligible for CARE services, she/he must also be eligible for EOPS and meet all of the following current CARE criteria:

- ☺ Must be an EOPS student
- ☺ Must be a single head of household who has been determined by the State Social Services Agency to lack marketable employment skills
- ☺ Must be receiving TANF/CALWORKS (formerly AFDC)
- ☺ Must be at least 18 years of age
- ☺ Must have at least one dependent under 14 years of age

The CARE program provides MUNI fast passes and child care services to eligible CARE students. For more information about CARE, please contact CARE Coordinator, at (415) 239-3214.

CCSF Financial Aid services are available to eligible, low income students. Financial aid funds may be used to pay for child care to enable the student to attend school. Students should complete a FAFSA to determine financial aid eligibility. Grants, loans and many scholarships use the FAFSA to establish financial eligibility. The CCSF Financial Aid office can be reached at - (415) 239-3575.

CCSF Office of Workforce Education at the Ocean Campus can assist CALWORKS recipients as they plan their educational program. CALWORKS students can receive assistance in planning for school, completing a SIP (self-initiated program), obtaining vocational training and understanding benefits, including child care. For information call - (415) 452-5700 or 452-5705.

HOW CAN I GET HELP PAYING FOR CHILD CARE?

Many families in San Francisco find it difficult to pay for the child care they need. There are several types of programs, including Alternative Payment Programs, that provide subsidized child care services at no or very small cost to qualifying low-income families. Families with the lowest incomes have priority, so many struggling families are told they make “too much” to qualify. Most of the subsidy money in San Francisco comes from the State of California through the Dept. of Education and the Department of Social Services. Some of the money is targeted for specific populations: CALWORKS recipients, homeless
families, teen parents, children at risk of abuse or neglect. Low to middle income families often have difficulty paying for child care and the fewest resources are available to them. The need for assistance with child care payment far exceeds the availability of these subsidized spaces in San Francisco. As a result, most programs have long eligibility lists. To discuss which programs you may be eligible for, to obtain an informational guide to these programs, and to get on eligibility/waiting lists for assistance, please call the following agencies for subsidy information:

😊 Children’s Council of San Francisco, 445 Church Street, San Francisco, CA 94114, Subsidy Eligibility List and Referrals - (415) 343-3300

😊 Wu Yee Children’s Services, 888 Clay St., San Francisco, CA 94108, Subsidy Eligibility List and Referrals - (415) 391-4956

😊 PACE - APP - Subsidized child care services and eligibility list - (800) 541-9922

**CALWORKS** - If you are currently receiving CALWORKS/TANF (formerly AFDC) assistance in San Francisco or have recently received aid, and have children under the age of 13, you may be eligible for immediate child care assistance. Call your own CALWORKS/TANF eligibility worker for information. Child care services are an entitlement to those receiving aid. You are entitled to choose quality child care that you are comfortable with for your child up to the age of 12 years. Parents with new babies are entitled to an infant exemption. CALWORKS recipients may receive information from the following agencies:

Department of Human Services Agency, San Francisco CalWORKs (415) 557-5725

California Office of Fair Hearings (for hearings on your child care) (800) 952-5253

San Francisco Neighborhood Legal Assistance Foundation/ Bay Area Legal Aid - (legal help) - (415) 982-1300

Additionally, some child care centers have their own subsidy contracts. Some of the larger programs in San Francisco that maintain eligibility lists include:

😊 City College of San Francisco Child Development Centers (7 sites) ages 3-5 - (415) 561-1895

😊 San Francisco Unified School District’s Children’s Centers - 36 full-day centers at elementary schools throughout San Francisco - (Ages 3-10) - (415) 750-8500 or (415) 750-8507

😊 San Francisco Unified School District’s Title I Preschool Programs 12 part-day centers throughout San Francisco (Ages 3-5) - (415) 750-8500

😊 Kai Ming Headstart Sites - (4 sites) - (415) 982-4777

😊 SFSU Headstart Sites - (10 sites) - (415) 405-0500

😊 Tenderloin Child Care Center - (415) 776-4010

😊 Wu Yee Children’s Centers (8 sites) - (415) 391-8993

😊 South of Market Child Care Center - (415) 487-0389

😊 Cleo Wallace Child Growth & Development Center - (415) 282-6300

😊 Chinatown Community Children’s Center (415) 986-2528

😊 EOC Chinatown North Beach Child Care Center - (415) 771-4869

😊 Cross Cultural Child Care Centers - (5 sites) - (415) 921-7019

😊 Florence Crittendon Services Infant Day Care - (415) 567-2357

😊 Nihonmachi Little Friends Preschools - (415) 922-8898

😊 Wah Mei State Preschool - (415) 665-4212

😊 EOC Martin Luther King Child Care Center - (415) 821-7000
WHAT IF I WANT SOMEONE TO COME INTO MY HOME AND PROVIDE CARE FOR MY CHILD?

Child care in your own home can offer several advantages. The child has a consistent provider in their own home. Unusual or unpredictable schedules may be more easily accommodated. Siblings with different schedules and needs can be care for together. Special arrangements for sick child care may not be necessary, and transportation to and from school and other social activities may be handled more easily.

While there may be some advantages to an in-home provider, it is important for parents to consider other factors which may affect their comfort level with this type of care. In-home care is typically the most expensive type of care. Most in-home providers must be paid minimum wage and families who employ in-home providers are required to take on financial responsibilities beyond salary, including Social Security, unemployment taxes, worker’s compensation, and disability insurance. In-home care is unregulated and unlicensed at this time, so parents must take extra care in the selection, screening and monitoring of an in-home provider. There is also a high rate of turnover in home provider positions, which can be disruptive and frustrating for parents and children alike. In-home providers may not have training or education in child development. It may be harder for you to know exactly what happens throughout the day and the provider may become frustrated from being home alone with small children.

Currently, in-home providers can be fingerprinted and screened for criminal backgrounds through the Trustline Registry. TrustLine was created by the California Legislature to give parents an important tool to use when considering a license-exempt care giver for their children. All child care providers listed in the TrustLine registry have submitted their fingerprints to the California Department of Justice and have no disqualifying child abuse reports or disqualifying criminal convictions in California. In addition, some but not all child care providers listed with TrustLine have also received a clearance from a FBI criminal record check. TrustLine also assists providers. By registering with TrustLine, caregivers reassure parents and demonstrate that they are serious about their profession as child care providers. Once listed with TrustLine, a caregiver remains on the registry for life (unless removed because of a subsequent disqualifying conviction or substantiated child abuse report). A child care provider listed on the TrustLine registry can offer the TrustLine registry as a reference for future employers.

For more information about TrustLine, call 1-800-822-8490 (within California)
Sometimes parents believe that relatives and friends provide the best care. This is not necessarily always true. Child rearing philosophies and practices differ, even between family members. Not all friends and relatives know about children’s health, development and needs. Sometimes tensions occur because family conflicts get in the way. Whether it is a relative, friend or child care provider caring for your child it is equally important that they enjoy children, know how to facilitate play and understand the importance of developing a trusting relationship with that child.

WHO CAN HELP ME FIND CHILD CARE?

THE CALIFORNIA CHILD CARE RESOURCE & REFERRAL NETWORK

The California Child Care Resource & Referral Network is a nonprofit statewide membership organization which seeks to improve child care services and to expand child care availability to all families, regardless of income or family structure. The Network provides consumer education and support to the general public, and promotes access to local resource and referral programs. If you need information on where to call for child care help anywhere in California, the Network can provide referrals to agencies that can help.

111 New Montgomery St., 7th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105
(415) 882-0234
Email: info@rrnetwork.org

The Children’s Council of San Francisco
445 Church Street, San Francisco, CA 94114
(415) 343-3300

Mission: The Children’s Council offers child care referrals and is a resource for anyone interested in child care, parenting and family issues in San Francisco. They give referrals for current openings in the area of the city you are interested in. Looking for care near your home, work, transportation or school? Need a provider who speaks Spanish or French or Russian? Need care for unusual schedules or situations? The staff can help you with referrals that are tailored to your specifications. The phone line is available Monday to Thursday, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm and on Friday from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm. All referral services are FREE and available to anyone who calls! They have counselors who speak English and Spanish. Parent Classes - The Children’s Council also offers a two hour class about learning how to choose appropriate child care for your child. Contact them at (415) 343-3300 and ask for the “Choosing Child Care Workshop”.

Wu Yee’s Children’s Services
888 Clay Street, San Francisco, CA 94108
or 706 Mission St. San Francisco, 94105
(415) 391-8993, E-mail: wuyee@wuyee.org

Mission: Wu Yee is a private, non-profit agency which has been meeting the needs of children and families since 1977. Begun as a community child care and referral agency, Wu Yee has expanded to include five child care centers, services for parents and professionals, and health and safety programs. Wu Yee helps improve family life by providing and advocating for quality child care and children’s services. They serve families of all language, cultural and ethnic orientations.
OTHER RESOURCES

TALKLINE - 24 parental stress line, emergency child care and support - (415) 441 - KIDS

Child Abuse Prevention Services
Child care and intervention for children at risk of or victims of abuse or neglect:
San Francisco County Child Abuse Hotline (415) 558-2650
San Francisco Child Abuse Council (415) 668-0494
San Francisco Child Protection Center (415) 206-8772

Children With Disabilities
Information on services and child care provided to children with disabilities:
Support for Parents & Families (415) 920-5040
Administration (415) 282-7494
California Children’s Services (415) 759-2919

The Children’s Waiting Room
At the San Francisco Civil Courthouse
400 McAllister Street, Room 111
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 703-0255

A Project of the Northern California Service League and the San Francisco Women Lawyers Alliance

Services: The objective of the Children’s Waiting Room is to provide safe, secure, and positive child care services to children whose parents have business before the court. This is a free service, geared towards children of low and moderate income families.

Hours: Mon-Fri 8:30 -12 noon; 1:00-4:30 pm.

Social Security Benefits are sometimes available for children. If a parent has deceased or if a child has specific conditions, they may be eligible for Social Security.

Supplemental Social Security is available to lower income children with disabilities. Social Security funds can be used to pay for child care. For Social Security eligibility information please call - (800) 772 - 1213

Tax Credits are also available for parents paying for child care. Parents of children under specific income limits may be eligible for the federal Earned Income Credit, the Child & Dependent Care Tax Credit, and educational tax credits for college expenses. Tax assistance may make it more affordable to attend college and pay for child care expenses. Credits may be available even if no taxes are owed. For additional information, call (800) 829-1040

Veterans Benefits may be available to children and spouses of disabled veterans or veterans killed in action. They may be eligible for college tuition payments in public colleges and universities. Veterans themselves may also be entitled to educational benefits. Veterans educational benefits may be used to pay for child care. Contact the local Veterans Administration office for further information at (800) 827-1000

Employer Sponsored Benefits may be available from your employer. A Dependent Care Assistance Plan allows employees to reduce some taxable income in order to pay for child care services. The reductions are made with pretax dollars and therefore reduce the employees taxable income. Employees may also be eligible to exclude from their gross income amounts paid by their employer if used for child-care or dependent care assistance. Contact your employer for child care information.
First - 5 San Francisco
Works to make a difference in the lives of children under 5 years in San Francisco by providing parent support and free preschool for 4-year-olds. For information call 415-934-4849 or www.first5sf.org.

DCYF
The San Francisco Department of children, Youth and their Families creates and facilitates innovative citywide policies and initiatives in support of children and youth. Parenting information, city sponsored events, family days at San Francisco destinations and family friendly information can be found at www.dcyf.org or by calling 415-554-8990.

United Way of the Bay Area
The United Way offers a number of programs for families in San Francisco including the “Working for Quality Child-Care Project” which can be reached at cares@ccwrc.org or 415-808-7327 and the “Earn It, Keep It, Save It” project which is a free tax assistance, earned income credit and free tax preparati site for families in San Francisco with children. Call 1-800-358-8832 for information.