



Checking Out Your Options

There are pros and cons associated with each type of care. The following provides you with comparisons at a glance:

Child Care Center	Family Child Care	In-Home Care
Similar ages grouped together	Mixed ages	
Larger groups of children	Small groups of children	Less social contact
School-like atmosphere	Home-like atmosphere	
Training required	Training required	No training or licensing required
Highest risk of exposure to illness	Less risk of exposure to illness	Lowest risk of exposure to illness
Most opportunity for public observation and monitoring	Less opportunity for public observation and monitoring	No opportunity for public observation and monitoring
Multiple staff members to cover illnesses and vacation	Limited staff members to cover illnesses and vacations	No back up staff to cover illnesses or vacations
Operating hours are not flexible	More flexibility for individual schedules	Most flexibility for individual schedules
Highest staff turnover	Consistent primary caregivers	Consistent primary caregivers

Licensing requires that basic safety and health standards be followed. If you have questions or concerns about a provider meeting standards or you would like to read about a child care provider's record with the Office of Child Care Licensing you can visit their website; <http://kids.delaware.gov/occl/occl.shtml>, or contact the office in your county:

New Castle County	Kent and Sussex Counties
DSCYF/Office of Child Care Licensing 3411 Silverside Road Concord Plaza, Hagley Building Wilmington, DE 19810 302-892-5800 FAX: 302-633-5112	DSCYF/Office of Child Care Licensing 821 Silver Lake Boulevard, Suite 103, Dover, DE 19904 302-739-5487 or 1-800-822-2236 FAX: 302-739-6589

*Keep in mind if you use unlicensed care that should be licensed in your state, you cannot take it as a tax deduction.

Quality of care will vary. As a parent you will have your own standards. Deciding which program is best for your child and family is up to you. It's very important for you to visit the facility, observe and ask questions. Provider names given through Children & Families First are referrals only, not recommendations. Licensed centers and family child care providers have the opportunity to participate in Delaware Stars for Early Success quality rating and improvement system and/or become accredited. The Stars and accreditation status of a program is one way you can obtain information on the quality of care being provided.

For more information on Delaware Stars or accreditation visit the following websites:

Delaware Stars for Early Success: A voluntary quality rating and improvement system that assesses improves and rates the quality of early care and education and school age settings. www.delawarestars.udel.edu or www.greatstartsde.org.

National Association for Education of Young Children (NAEYC): Accredits center-based, part day preschools and head start programs. www.naeyc.org

National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC): Accredits family child care providers. <http://www.nafcc.org/>

National AfterSchool Association (NAA): Accredits school age before and after school programs. <http://naaweb.org/>