

#TogetherWeWill...

Help parents make informed choices!

Guide to Choosing Quality Child Care



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Get Connected! | 855-CHILD-01 (244-5301) | childcare@episervice.org | www.iowaccrr.org



Iowa
CHILD CARE
Resource & Referral



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Ask Us About
The Parent's
Child Care Checklist

You're On Your Way...

The Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R)

Parent Service Team is excited to help with your child care search!

855-244-5301

We offer parent resources, including:

- Child care options that may meet your needs
- Requirements providers must meet
- Licensing and registration laws
- Choosing the provider that is best for you
- Language and cultural support
- Referrals to other community programs that may meet your needs



The services offered by CCR&R are free and all the information is confidential.

The names of child care programs provided are for referral use only.

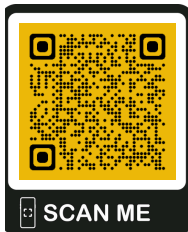
We cannot recommend or suggest any provider.

If you would like to search for child care online,
please visit the CCR&R families

webpage: **www.iowaccrr.org/families**



SCAN ME



SCAN ME

For more info on a provider's registration/licensing record,
visit the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
website: **<http://ccmis.dhs.state.ia.us/ClientPortal/ProviderSearch.aspx>**

Disclaimer

The Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) monitors registered programs where we refer families and the programs self-report most of the information we collect.

Examples of provider information we can verify include:

- Registration and Licensing Status
- Rating in Iowa Quality For Kids (IQ4K®)
- Participation in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)
- ChildNet Certification



Starting the Process

You're the expert in choosing the best child care program for your family!

This is why it is essential that you thoroughly research the various factors involved in choosing a quality program. Before you start looking for a child care program, it's important that you consider the care necessities specific to your child.

- Interview providers to verify they meet your list of necessities
- Verify hours of service
- Schedule a visit to tour and observe the provider and their interactions with children
- Review the program's policies and procedures
- Learn about Emergency Planning
- Check on the program's continuous quality improvement plans
- Ask for references from families
- If you find a provider you like whose program is full, ask if they will put your name on a waiting list

Take your time to review the information included in this guide. If you are not comfortable with the child care setting, keep looking!



LOOKING FOR CHILD CARE?

We are here for you! **We help families with their child care search!**

Connect with CCR&R's Parent Service Team
for your **FREE** child care referral!

www.iowaccrr.org 855-244-5301

IOWA CHILD CARE
Resource & Referral

**If you need more options
or have questions, call your
CCR&R Parent Service team.**

Responsibilities for your child's safety include:

Before the first day, these items are required by the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) for your child's file:

- Recent physical exam (within 12 months), including medical history and shots
- Telephone numbers of the child's doctor and dentist, list of currently prescribed medications or treatments
- Emergency numbers where the provider can reach you, as well as any additional emergency contacts
- A list of people who can pick up your child



After enrolling your child, you can partner with your child care provider by:

- Calling if you are going to be late dropping off or picking up your child
- Giving notice if your child will not be attending
- Following your provider's contracts and policies
- Providing items your child needs (diapers, change of clothes, etc.)
- Paying on time

You can help your child get used to their new child care setting by:

- Taking your child to visit the provider before the first day
- Asking the provider if your child can bring a favorite toy or blanket
- Talking encouragingly about the new program prior to starting the first day

Types of Care



Center/Preschool

- Licensed with the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) every two years
- One annual inspection from HHS licensing staff
- All staff that have contact with children have had an Iowa Abuse Registry record check and a criminal history check

Must follow:

- *HHS Licensing Standards and Procedures, Comm 204*
- *Iowa Administrative Rules 441.109.10 for Emergency Preparedness*

- Staff over 18 years of age have been fingerprinted
- Can be a center, preschool, before and after school program or a combination
- May or may not have a signed Child Care Assistance (CCA) Provider Agreement with HHS



Child Development Home A, B, C1, and C

- Registered with HHS every two years (may be called a registered provider)
- Anyone 14 or older living in the home has an Iowa Abuse Registry record check and a criminal history check
- Provider and anyone 18 years of age or older living in the home have been fingerprinted

Must follow:

- *HHS Child Development Home Registration Guidelines, Comm 143*
- *Iowa Administrative Rules 441.110.8 for Emergency Preparedness*

- Annual monitoring visit
- May or may not have a signed Child Care Assistance (CCA) Provider Agreement with HHS



Child Care Home approved for Child Care Assistance (CCA)

- Not regulated by HHS (may be called a nonregistered provider)
- Anyone 14 or older living in the home has an Iowa Abuse Registry record check and a criminal history check

Must follow:

- *HHS Guidelines for Child Care Homes with a Child Care Assistance Provider Agreement, Comm 95*
- *Iowa Administrative Rules 441.120.8 for Emergency Preparedness*

- Provider and anyone 18 years of age or older living in the home have been fingerprinted
- Have a signed Child Care Assistance (CCA) Provider Agreement with HHS

Types of Care



Child Care Home

Must follow Iowa Code Section 237A.3 5

- Not regulated by the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
- may be called an unregistered provider
- Does not have a signed Child Care Assistance (CCA) Provider Agreement with HHS
- May not care for more than six children at any one time



In-Home Care

Must follow Iowa Code Section 237A.3 5

- This is not care provided in the child care provider's home but provided within the child's own home
- If receiving Child Care Assistance (CCA), there must be a minimum of three eligible children
- Shall only be children within the same family



Type of Care	Required Training	Continuing Education
Child Care Center & Preschool	CPR & First Aid, Mandatory Child Abuse Reporter, Essentials Child Care Preservice, Universal Precautions	At least six hours annually
Child Development Home A, B, C1, C	CPR & First Aid, Mandatory Child Abuse Reporter, Essentials Child Care Preservice	24 hours during two-year registration period
Child Care Home accepting CCA	CPR & First Aid, Mandatory Child Abuse Reporter, Essentials Child Care Preservice	Six hours during each two-year provider agreement period
Child Care Home	Iowa law does not give HHS regulatory authority *no requirements	

child to provider ratios

Child Development Homes are expected to meet the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) regulations for ratios (adult/children numbers).

Child Development Homes & Child Care Homes

Type of Care	Birth-PreK Capacity	School-age Capacity
Child Development Home A <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18 years or older Three reference letters 	Six children: only four can be under 24 months of age, and of those four, only three may be 12 months of age or younger	plus: two school-age children
Child Development Home B* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20 years or older HS diploma/GED Two years of experience 	Eight children: only four can be under 24 months of age, and of those four, only three may be 12 months of age or younger	plus: four school-age children
*Whenever you have more than eight children for more than two hours, you must have a HHS-approved assistant present.		
Child Development Home C1 (one provider) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21 years or older HS diploma/GED Five years of child care experience or CDA or degree in a child-related field and four years of child care experience 	Eight children: only four children may be 24 months of age or younger, of those four, only three children may be 12 months of age or younger	
Child Development Home C (two providers)* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21 years or older HS diploma/GED Five years of child care experience or CDA or degree in a child-related field and four years of child care experience The co-provider must meet the minimum requirements of a Category B provider 	14 children: no more than six children may be 24 months of age or younger, whenever four children under 12 months are in care, both providers must be present	plus: two school-age children for two hours at a time
*The co-provider must be present when more than eight children and/or four infants under 12 months are in attendance. If the co-provider needs to be left unattended with children in the absence of the primary provider, the co-provider must meet the requirements of a Category C provider.		
Child Care Home accepting Child Care Assistance (CCA)	Six children: if at least one of the children is school-aged (a home provider's preschool-age children and younger ARE included in their legal capacity)	
Child Care Home	Six children at one time if at least one is school-aged	

child to provider ratios

Licensed Centers and Preschools
are licensed and follow specific ratios.

These ratios show the type of supervision needed to
provide appropriate care and educational experiences.

Licensed Centers and Preschools

Age of Child	# of Adults	# of Children
0-24 months	1	4
2 years old	1	7
3 years old	1	10

Age of Child	# of Adults	# of Children
4 years old	1	12
5-10 years old	1	15
>10 years old	1	20



It is helpful to interview
programs for comparison. Ask
if they work with their CCR&R
Child Care Consultant.

CCR&R's free
services are available to
improve the quality of care.

what to look for

Please reference the following general information about Licensed Centers/Preschools, Registered Child Development Homes A, B, C1, C and Child Care Homes accepting Child Care Assistance.

Health & Safety	Interactions & Learning Activities	Provider Education & Turnover
All regulated child care programs should be safe, clean and smoke-free.	There should be space for both active and quiet play.	The children should have consistent care from the same providers.
Follow essential health and safety requirements such as safe sleep practices for infants under one year of age.	The daily schedule should provide a balance of time for free play, activities and rest.	Iowa requires all regulated child care providers to attend required training.
Store medicines and cleaners out of reach of children.	Children should have access to various materials such as books, blocks and art supplies during the entire day.	Mandatory Child Abuse Reporter and Essentials (a 12-hour series on basic health and safety topics) are required trainings.
Each program must also have emergency plans in place specific to its program's operation.	Programs should take children outside regularly.	Regulated providers must be certified in First Aid and CPR (Infant, Child & Adult).

Unregistered Child Care Homes not regulated by the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and have no additional requirements. You can find out more about specific requirements for each type of care by visiting: www.iowaccrr.org/providers.

Written Agreement

A written agreement helps with open communication by explaining what to expect and both the provider's and parent's responsibilities to each other. Review the contract and policies to cover all areas of concern and ask questions if something is confusing.

Family Involvement

Once your child starts attending the program, you should be able to visit when they are open. The provider should let you know about your child's day and you should tell the provider about any changes at home that might affect your child.

Quality Indicators

Iowa Quality For Kids (IQ4K®)

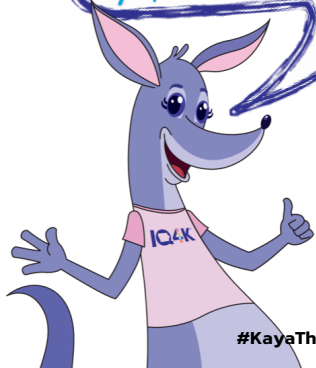
IQ4K is Iowa's new Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) for Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) licensed Child Care Centers and Preschools and registered Child Development Homes.

IQ4K provides five levels of quality that programs can achieve and continue to improve. By implementing Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI), IQ4K allows programs to assess their current grade across all areas of programming and devise a structured plan to increase program quality.



Building quality environments one block at a time

Ask about IQ4K and whether the child care program is involved! Families can be assured, providers participating in the IQ4K system are working to ensure high quality in their programs!



#KayaTheQualityKangaroo

ChildNet

3.0

#TogetherWeWill...
Promote quality in a home
child care business!

ChildNet Certification

ChildNet is a series of 25 hours of training for Child Development Home providers. Providers learn how to operate a successful child care business in their home.

To be ChildNet Certified, a home provider must:

- Complete all coursework
- Be registered with the Iowa Department of Health & Human Services (HHS)
- Participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)
- Have a CCR&R Child Care Consultant complete an in-home checklist
- Maintain certification by completing an in-home checklist every two years
- Attend four hours of training each year in addition to annual required hours

Accreditation

An accredited program meets national standards of quality.

Leading organizations that accredit programs are:

- Homes: National Association of Family Child Care
 - www.nafcc.org
- Centers: National Association for the Education of Young Children
 - www.naeyc.org

Family Resources

Child Care Assistance (CCA)

This program helps eligible parents pay for child care so they may work and/or attend school. Contact the HHS Eligibility Unit at 866-448-4605 or apply online at:

<https://hhs.iowa.gov/programs/programs-and-services/child-care/CCA>.

You can also ask a regional CCR&R agency or your child care provider about additional resources or scholarships.

Child Development Screening

A child's brain develops the most in the first five years of life. Knowing how children develop will help you tell when your child is ready to learn new things.

To learn more, go to: **<https://www.iafamilysupportnetwork.org>** and click on child development or call 888-425-4371.

Early ACCESS

If you have questions or concerns about how your child plays, hears, sees, talks, eats or moves, go to: **<https://www.iafamilysupportnetwork.org/families/early-access>** or call 888-425-4371.

Energy Assistance

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) helps people with lower incomes pay their heating bills. To find your county agency, call 515-242-5655 or visit:

<https://hhs.iowa.gov/programs/apply-services>.

Family Investment Program and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families

The Family Investment Program (FIP) is Iowa's Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program. This program provides cash assistance to families who have children. For more information or to apply, call your local HHS office or visit:

<https://hhs.iowa.gov/programs/programs-and-services/cash-assistance/tanf>.

Food Assistance

The Food Assistance Program, also known as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), helps families purchase healthy food. Call your local HHS office for information at 877-937-3663 or visit: **<https://hhs.iowa.gov/programs/food-assistance>**.

Healthy And Well Kids in Iowa

The Healthy and Well Kids in Iowa (Hawk-i) program offers free or low-cost health care coverage for uninsured children under 19 years of age.

Call 800-257-8563 or visit: **<https://hhs.iowa.gov/hawki>**.

Family Resources

Head Start and Early Head Start

This program provides comprehensive early childhood education, health, nutrition and parent involvement services to children and their low-income families.

Call 515-326-5389 or go to: <https://educateiowa.gov/pk-12/early-childhood/head-start-state-collaboration-office>.

Individuals with Disabilities Act and Individual Education Plan

For more information, go to: <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/>

Iowa Family Support Network

Family support programs provide information on parenting, child development and problem-solving. Go to: <https://www.iafamilysupportnetwork.org> or email: iafamilysupportnetwork@vnsia.org or call 1-888-425-4371.

Milestone Tracker Mobile App

Track your child's milestones from two months to five years with easy-to-use checklists and get tips for encouraging your child's development. Download the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) mobile app on your mobile device through your app store or learn more at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones-app.html>.



Tax Credits

When enrolling your child, ask for your provider's Federal Employer Identification Number (IRS Form W-10) or Social Security number for tax purposes.

- The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is a refundable tax credit. For more information, call 800-829-1040 or go to: <https://www.irs.gov>.
 - Search for EITC in the search box.
- The Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit can offset some of the costs families pay for child care.
 - If you pay someone to care for your child while you work, you may be able to claim the credit.
- The Child Tax Credit may help families offset some of the costs of raising children.
 - Even families who owe little to no income tax can receive at least some of this credit.
- Consult with a tax preparer on these tax credits. For more information and a list of free tax preparation sites, call 800-TAX-1040 or go to: <https://www.irs.gov>.

Women, Infants & Children

Women, Infants & Children (WIC) serves families with pregnant and postpartum women or children under five. WIC provides nutritious foods, nutrition education and referrals to other healthcare agencies. Call 800-532-1579 or go to: <https://hhs.iowa.gov/wic>.

child abuse reporting

**If a child is in imminent danger,
CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY**

Please be ready to provide identifying information about the child or dependent adult, their parents or other caregivers and the whereabouts of the child or dependent adult and family.

What Is Child Abuse Under Iowa Law?

The Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has the legal authority to conduct an assessment of suspected child abuse when it is alleged that: The victim is a child subjected to one or more of the eleven categories of child abuse defined in Iowa Code section 232.68.

- *Physical abuse*
- *Mental injury*
- *Sexual abuse*
- *Denial of critical care*
- *Prostitution of a child*
- *Presence of illegal drugs*
- *Dangerous substance*
- *Bestiality in the presence of a minor*
- *Allows access by a registered sex offender*
- *Allows access to obscene material*
- *Child sex trafficking*

A mandatory reporter must provide their name and address, all other reporters may remain anonymous.

- Download the Guide for Mandatory Reporters of Child Abuse
- Comm 164 on the HHS website
- Download the Report of Suspected Child Abuse form
- HHS form #470-0665 on the HHS website

REPORT ABUSE

Child Abuse Reporting

Call the child abuse hotline if you think a provider or staff member is abusing a child.

800-362-2178

Information about a report of suspected abuse and neglect is confidential.

complaint policies

If you have concerns regarding a specific child care provider or child care business that is not meeting Iowa regulations, please use the Iowa Child Care Complaint Hotline

866-448-4605

Child Care Non-Compliance Complaints	Personality Related Concerns
Contact Iowa Child Care Complaint Hotline if you think a provider is not following Iowa regulations, example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• caring for too many children at one time• unsafe conditions for children	It would be best to resolve conflict concerns with your provider, example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• provider's point of view about child care• interaction with the children that is non-abusive but troubles you

Confidentiality Policy

CCR&R keeps all parent/child records confidential and handles information in compliance with state and federal law. Individuals must give CCR&R written permission to reveal their name or other identifying factors.

Contact CCR&R if you have concerns about the referral process or wish to discuss your child care options:

855-244-5301

or contact us online:

www.iowaccrr.org

Thank you

Thank you for considering CCR&R
to assist your family in finding child care.
If you have child care questions, please call:

855-244-5301

Text: IAchildcare to 59925

www.iowaccrr.org

