

CHILD CARE AWARE OF WASHINGTON FAMILY CENTER NEWS

Spring 2018



News for Families: The Benefits of Choosing Licensed Child Care

Did you know that most full-day child care programs in Washington are required to be licensed? Licensing helps ensure that basic health and safety standards are met. These standards are very important to make sure that babies, toddlers and very young children are in safe environments while in child care. Some of these requirements are:

- Anyone who may have unsupervised access to children must pass a criminal background check
- Caregivers must have basic first-aid and CPR training
- Caregivers must have safe sleep training
- Child care facilities must have safe drinking water that is free from lead*

There are more than 5,000 licensed child care programs to choose from in Washington. Yet, some child care providers operate without a license, and there is no way to know for sure if these providers have passed criminal background checks or received the proper training needed to safely care for groups of babies, toddlers and young children. If you are unsure whether a provider you are considering is licensed, it is always a good idea to ask.

All full-day child care programs referred by Child Care Aware of Washington are licensed, as are the full-day programs listed on the Washington State Department of Early Learning's online Child Care Check system. Part-day preschool programs that operate for less than four hours per day are exempt from licensing. Programs that accept state subsidy payments, such as Working Connections Child Care, are required to be licensed. These programs are also required to participate in Early Achievers, WA's framework for improving the quality of licensed child care. Look for the Early Achievers logo to see if a provider you are considering is participating.



Choosing a licensed family child care home or center-based program is one of the best ways to make sure the child care provider you choose is a safe, well-trained professional.

* Lead levels in drinking water must be below maximum federal limits.

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Early Achievers—WA’s Quality Rating and Improvement System



You know your child needs high-quality child care in order to grow and thrive during these most important early years. But how do you measure quality? How can you be sure a child care provider you are interested in is as committed to quality child care as you are? One way to be sure is to check to see if the provider is participating in Early Achievers, Washington’s framework for integrating high-quality practices into licensed child care programs across the state.

More than 3,500 licensed family home and center-based providers are participating in Early Achievers across Washington. Together they serve more than 73,000 young children. Early Achievers is free to programs to join, and it provides a wealth of supports and resources to help them increase both the quality of their early learning environments and the quality of their caregiver-to-child interactions. These are important elements in high-quality programs.

Early Achievers also provides families with a rating system that helps them to better understand a particular program’s quality. Early Achievers programs are rated by the University of Washington and earn a rating from Level 2 to Level 5. A Level 3 or higher in Early Achievers is considered to be a “Quality Level of Excellence.”

Look for the Early Achievers logo online when you are searching for child care, and/or at your child’s program, or ask your provider if they are participating. It means they are committed to providing high-quality care. Visit our website to learning more: <http://wa.childcareaware.org/providers/early-achievers>.



Helping Families Across WA

~ written by Erika Washington, Family Representative



Working with families through CCA of WA’s Family Center and Child Care Resources has given me a glimpse of the harsh truths in our state. The rise of homelessness in Washington is on a steady incline, while resources continue to decrease.

Fortunately, my career gives me the opportunity to help families in need.

Many of the families we serve are temporarily living doubled up, in shelters and often in their cars. Our Child Care Subsidy Program has a huge impact on the lives of these families in King and Pierce counties, because it gives parents the opportunity to work or use other services while their child attends high-quality child care at no cost to them. Child care gives children a stable and secure environment, while their families transition through a traumatic phase. I am constantly rewarded by being able to make a difference in my community and in the lives of the families who need it the most.

If you know a family experiencing homelessness in Washington, please call 1-206-329-5842 or 1-877-543-0060 for resources.

Help for Families Experiencing Homelessness

Child Care Aware of Washington’s Family Center has helped more than 800 families with young children that are experiencing homelessness across the state since July 1 of last year. And with the number of families experiencing homelessness continuing to rise, we expect that number to grow.

Children experiencing homelessness often live in unpredictable, chaotic circumstances, with disruptions in their physical environments and relationships. This can slow their emotional, cognitive and behavioral development. This is why it is so important for young children experiencing homelessness to have access to safe, stable and nurturing child care programs.

There is help available for families with young children who are experiencing homelessness to find quality child care at no cost to them. For more information, please visit us online at <http://wa.childcareaware.org/families/child-care-aware-of-washington-services-for-homeless-families> or call 1-800-446-1114.

Resources for Families - Child Development

Watching your child grow and learn new things is one of the most rewarding parts of parenthood. Those first teeth, first steps and first play dates are so exciting. But how do you know if your child is developing normally?

While every child and family is different, there are certain milestones that children should make during the years from birth to age 5. Here are some great resources where you can learn more. Don't forget the importance of speaking with your pediatrician if you have any questions or concerns. Also, many child care providers have years of experience and child development expertise, making them a great resource too.

- ParentHelp 123/Help Me Grow Washington—website packed with great information about child development—<http://www.parenthelp123.org/child-development/help-me-grow-washington>
- Vroom—Fun and easy app-based “brain-building” everyday activities for parents and children—<https://www.vroom.org/>
- Zero to Three—national organization with a website full of great information about everything from child development to early literacy and more—<https://www.zerotothree.org/>
- Sesame Street in Communities, Traumatic Experiences—help for families with young children who have experienced difficult, traumatic events—<https://sesamestreetincommunities.org/topics/traumatic-experiences/>

Adults Need Vaccines, Too! Don't Wait. Vaccinate!

Vaccinating our children is commonplace in the United States. But many adults don't know which vaccines they need, and even fewer are fully vaccinated. All adults need vaccinations to protect against serious diseases that could result in severe illness requiring medical treatment or even hospitalization, missed work and not being able to care for family. Even if adults were fully vaccinated as children, the protection from some vaccines they received can wear off over time and they may need a booster.

Every year, tens of thousands of Americans still suffer serious health problems, are hospitalized and even die from diseases that could be prevented by vaccines. Certain people may be at higher risk for getting some diseases or having more serious illness if they were to get sick, like young children and those with health conditions. Protect your health and the health of those you care about by getting your recommended vaccines.

At your next doctor's visit, ask your doctor or other health care professional which vaccines are right for you based on your age, job, lifestyle, health conditions and vaccines you received as a child. You also can visit www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults for more information and find a link to an adult vaccine quiz to see which vaccines are recommended for you.

Content adapted from the National Immunization Awareness Month Communication Toolkit (2017), developed by the National Public Health Information Coalition (NPHIC), in collaboration with the CDC.

Need Help Paying for Child Care?

Child care is expensive. In some cases it costs more to have one infant in child care for a year than it does to cover a year's tuition at a public university!

Thankfully there is help available. Visit us online at <http://wa.childcareaware.org/families/family-resources-1/need-help-paying-for-child-care> to see if your family is eligible for any of the resources we have found to be the most helpful. You can also find out what the average cost of child care in your area is.

Did you know there is fee assistance available to military families? There is and it is provided by Child Care Aware of America. You can find out more online.

Advocacy for Families

It is never too early or too late to let your legislators in both Washington, D.C. and Olympia know you support investment in high-quality child care.

Right now at the federal level the Child Care for Working Families Act (CCWFA) is making its way through Congress. If passed, this legislation would help ensure that every family that needs child care has access to high-quality, affordable programs. You can help support the CCWFA by contacting your federal representatives and telling them you support this bill.

On the state level we are preparing for a very important legislative session next year when the state must contend with years of underpayment to providers who accept children on state subsidies, and with a \$12 million budget cut to Early Achievers.

Visit our Action Center today to quickly email your representatives. <http://wa.childcareaware.org/advocacy>



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Advocacy:	Phone:	Website
Children’s Alliance	(800) 854-5437	www.childrensalliance.org
Find your WA State legislator		app.leg.wa.gov/
Child Development		
Seattle Children’s Hospital— classes & wellness information	(866) 987-2000 (206) 987-2000	www.seattlechildrens.org
Parenting Counts	(800) 637-3652	www.parentingcounts.org
The Center for Children with Special Needs	(866) 987-2500	www.cshcn.org
Zero to Three		www.zerotothree.org
Thrive Washington		https://thrivewa.org
American Academy of Pediatrics		www.healthychildren.org
Community Resources		
Parent Trust for Washington	(800) 932-4673	www.parenttrust.org
Parent Help 123	(800) 322-2588	www.parenthelp123.org
Department of Early Learning	(866) 482-4325	www.del.wa.gov
Apple Health	(855) 900-3066	www.applehealth.org
Washington Information Network	211	www.win211.org



Comments: (206) 329-1011 x 264
Family Center: (800) 446-1114

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