

What is Child Care?

The law defines child care as...

- ✓ Three or more unrelated children under 13 years of age;
- ✓ On a regular basis (at least one day per week);
- ✓ For more than four but less than 24 hours per day.

When all these conditions exist, a license is required. The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services is responsible for regulating child care. This is done through the Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE). The purpose of regulation is to protect the well being of children while they are away from their parents.

The North Carolina Child Care Commission is responsible for adopting rules to carry out the law. Some counties and cities in North Carolina also have local zoning requirements for child care programs.

Types of Care

Programs That Are Regulated By The Division of Child Development and Early Education

If your provider is caring for more than two children who aren't related and they provide care for more than four hours a day, they probably should be licensed. In general, there are two types of programs regulated by the state, family child care homes and child care centers.

- Family child care home (FCCH)
A child care arrangement located in a residence where, at any one time, more than two children not related to the provider. A FCCH may care for up to eight children, with no more than five preschool children in care at any given time, including the provider's own pre-school age children.
- Child care center
A larger program providing care for three or more children, but not in a residential setting. Children are usually grouped in classrooms by age. The number of children in care is based upon the size of individual classrooms and having sufficient staff, equipment, and materials.

Programs That Are Exempt From Regulation

Listed below are those instances where a program does not have to be regulated by the Division:

- Recreational programs operated for less than four consecutive months in a year (e.g., summer camps)
- Specialized activities or instruction such as athletics, dance, art, music lessons, horseback riding, gymnastics, or organized clubs for children, such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4-H groups, or boys and girls clubs
- Drop-in or short-term care provided while parents participate in activities that are not employment related, and where the parents are on the premises or otherwise easily accessible, such as drop-in or short-term care provided in health spas, bowling alleys, shopping malls, resort hotels, or churches
- Public schools
- Nonpublic schools that are accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and that operate a child care facility for less than six and one-half hours per day
- Vacation Bible schools
- Centers and homes located on federal property over which the federal government has control (military based and the Cherokee Indian reservation)
- Cooperative arrangements among parents to provide care for their own children as a convenience rather than for employment
- Any child care program or arrangement consisting of two or more separate components, each of which operates for four hours or less per day with different children attending each component
- Track-out programs provided to school-age children when they are out of school on a year-round school calendar

Quality Indicators

Staff to Child Ratios for Child Care Centers

Ratios are the number of staff required to supervise a certain number of children. Group size is the maximum number of children in one group. Low teacher and child ratios and small group sizes are important to the quality of care. Ratios and group sizes for minimum licensure are shown below.

Minimum Requirements		
Age of Children	State Minimum requirements	Maximum Group size permitted
	Ratio: Staff/Children	
to 12 months	1/5	10
12 to 24 months	1/6	12
2 to 3 years	1/10	20
3 to 4 years	1/15	25
4 to 5 years	1/20	25
5 years and older	1/25	25

When the group has children of different ages, staff-child ratios and group size must be met for the youngest child in the group.

Health and Safety Standards

All licensed child care program, including homes, are visited at least once per year by DCDEE staff to make sure the program is in compliance with all child care regulations, including health and safety standards. DCDEE staff monitors health and safety standards such as whether or not the facility is hygienic, the toys and play equipment are in good repair, and that hazards such as cleaning solutions are out of reach of the children. DCDEE also has consultants who investigate complaints related to child care requirements. These are some of the health and safety issues that indicate high quality child care.

- Clean, smoke free, well lit environment without items that might be harmful to children
- Clean and safe toys for the children to use
- Emergency Plans in place
- Frequent hand washing, before meals, after bathroom and diapering
- First Aid equipment available
- Nutritious meals served
- Rules for giving and storing medications are followed
- Drinking water free and available often
- Infants placed on their backs to sleep to reduce the risk of SIDS
- Written permission required for providers to transport children
- Outdoors: Fenced in play area, shade and staff can see entire area. Weather permitting; children should play outside every day.

Positive Teacher/Child Interaction

- Teachers consistently treat all children in a warm, caring manner
- Guidance techniques such as positive reinforcement and redirection are used
- Discipline is age appropriate and never physical, verbal or mentally abusive.

Discipline- Corporal Punishment (spanking, slapping, or other physical discipline) is prohibited in all licensed child care programs. Religious-sponsored programs that notify the Division of Child Development that corporal punishment is part of their religious training are exempt from that part of the law.

Staff Education

Studies have shown that the more education and experience a child care center administrator has, the greater the impact on the center because of improved management, lower staff turnover, and better classroom practices. Child care providers with more early childhood education and experience interact better with children and create more enriching classroom experiences. Studies have shown that children whose caregivers had higher qualifications did better both academically and behaviorally at least into early elementary school.

The law requires that, at a minimum, a lead teacher be 18 years old, have high school diploma or its equivalent and NC Early Childhood Credential or its equivalent. Once hired, the lead teacher must enroll in the community college coursework within the first six months of employment and complete it within 18 months of enrollment to receive a North Carolina Early Childhood Credential. (There are additional options that are equal to the Credential). To earn higher points in the education component of the rated license child care staff must complete more coursework and/or formal education and have experience working with preschool children. The number of points a center can earn for staff education is based on:

- The education and experience levels of the administrator
- The number of lead teachers with NC Early Childhood Credentials
- The number of lead teachers with additional early childhood or child development education and/or experience
- The number of teachers with NC Early Childhood Credentials
- The number of teachers with formal additional early childhood or child development education and/or experience

The rated license education standards for family child care home providers and school-age staff are slightly different. However, it is still based on the level of education and experience working with young children.

Staff Turnover

Consistency and minimal turnover in caregivers are critical elements of high quality child care. It is important for the emotional health of children and helps them develop security, confidence, and an overall sense of well-being.

Family Involvement

Stay involved with what's going on at your child's program/provider. Drop in to visit, when possible, ask the provider how your child is doing each day and week, and help with field trips when possible. You are legally able to visit at any time when you have a child enrolled in child care. Check on the

Division of Child Development website regularly to see if the program has had any complaints and is keeping up with the state's rules and regulations.

Because parents are in a child care program each day, they have the best knowledge of what the provider is or is not doing. Children need for parents to constantly assess the child care arrangement. Here are some proactive ways parents can evaluate child care providers on an ongoing basis:

- Ask your child what he or she does during the day
- Find out how he or she interacts with the caregiver. Listen carefully to what your child says
- Spend a few minutes each day talking with the caregiver about your child
- Drop in frequently and participate in activities
- Observe behavior during drop-off and pick-up, and explore unexplained changes

Parental Rights

- Parents have the right to enter a family child care home or center at any time while their child is present.
- Parents have the right to see the license displayed in a prominent place.
- Parents have the right to know how their child will be disciplined.
- A Quality Care Checklist is provided in this packet for you take with you while visiting any programs you might be interested in.

The child care rules specify that parents, guardians, or full-time custodians are allowed unlimited access to their child's program during its operating hours for the purposes of contacting the child or evaluating the caregiving space and the care provided for the child. The rules also indicate that the parent should notify the on-site administrator/provider of his or her presence upon entering the premises. A provider cannot prevent a parent from picking up or visiting a child unless there are court papers which restrict access of that individual.

Accreditation

There are several national accrediting organizations for child care programs. Getting accredited is voluntary and usually involves an intensive self assessment as well as outside observation. For Child Care Centers the accreditation process does not impact on their star rated license. For Family Child Care Homes, accreditation can contribute to earning more points in the program standards piece of the star rated license.

Developmentally Appropriate Activities

Age appropriate materials and toys
Activities that focus on both fine and large motor skills
Books of all varieties for children to use and read daily
Children allowed to make choices
TV viewing limited or excluded from program activities. the program.

Preschool children learn best when they have positive and caring relationships with adults and other children; when they receive carefully planned, intentional guidance and assistance; and when they can safely encounter and explore many interesting things in their environment. Children enter preschool with different strengths.

North Carolina Star Rated License Overview

Overview

In September 2000, the Division issued star rated licenses to child care centers and family child care homes meeting all minimum child care requirements as well as those choosing to meet higher standards. Under the original star rated license, facilities were evaluated on three components:

- Staff Education
- Program Standards
- Compliance History

In 2005, the Division changed the way facilities earned stars in order to more accurately reflect indicators of a program's quality. Currently, facilities are evaluated on two components:

- Staff Education
- Program Standards

In addition, programs having a two-component license can earn a “quality point” for meeting enhanced standards for staff education and program standards.

Note: Religious-sponsored child care programs continue to operate with a Notice of Compliance and do not receive a star rating unless they choose to apply.

Why "Star Rated Licenses"?

North Carolina moved to this system in 2000 for many reasons. It allows child care programs to be recognized for the higher quality care that it was already providing. In the previous system, the program's individual strengths were not highlighted. For Family Child Care Homes, there was not any way to indicate being recognized for providing higher quality care

How Points are Earned

When you apply for a star-rated license, a child care consultant will visit your facility to initiate the process of evaluating and assessing program and education standards as well as one quality point option.

You will receive one point for meeting minimum requirements. To earn more than one point in program and education standards, you will have to meet higher enhanced standards. A summary of those standards is listed below:

Program Standards:

What are "Program Standards"?

Program standard points are based on an evaluation of the daily environment at your child's program. This includes:

- **The Program Environment**
 - Sufficient space for activities
 - Age/Developmentally appropriate equipment and materials
 - Age/Developmentally appropriate activities and activity areas and schedule
 - Safe, healthy, and comfortable indoor/outdoor play area
- **The Number of Staff per Child**
- **The Interactions Between**
 - Adults and children
 - Children with other children
 - Children with activities and materials

Program Standards

Child Care Centers:

Must meet one or more of the following based on the number of points for which you are applying:

- Increase the number of activities and activity areas
- Meet enhanced space
- Meet enhanced staff child ratios
- Score at least 4.0 or higher on an environment rating scale assessment

Family Child Care Homes:

Must meet one or more of the following based on the number of points for which you are applying:

- Complete a self-study/assessment using the family child care home environment rating scale over a 3-month period
- Score at least 4.0 or higher on the environment rating scale
- Reduce the number of infants enrolled

Environmental Rating Scales (ERS):

Scores on the ERS significantly impact the number of points a program can receive in the program standards component of the Star Rated License assessment. To earn three to seven points, programs must score between 4.0 and 5.0 for each group assessed. Programs can achieve higher scores on the ERS through preparation and practice. To prepare for the Rated License Assessment go to the [North Carolina Rated License Assessment Project](#) web page. The NCRLAP website will provide answers to common questions about the scales including "How should I prepare for the visit?" and "What should I expect the day of the assessment?" Some programs choose to practice for the assessment by conducting a mock assessment to discover areas of strength and areas of needed improvement.

What is An Environment Rating Scale?

Environment rating scales are nationally recognized tools used to measure the quality of care offered by programs. These quality assessment scales were developed through the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Trained evaluators visit programs to observe the children and their environment. Evaluators score programs on how well, or how often, certain things occur. For example, evaluators will:

- Determine if good health practices, such as hand washing, are followed when children are diapered or fed
- Watch how the caregivers interact with the children and whether they respond to the children's needs
- Observe activities to see whether the children have opportunities to play and learn according to their levels of development
- Evaluate the safety of the classroom area

For more information on the rating scales, access the [North Carolina Rated License Assessment Project web site](#).

Programs wanting to earn higher star ratings must complete environmental rating scales.

Education Standards

What are "Education Standards"?

Studies have shown that the more education and experience a child care center administrator has, the greater the impact on the center because of improved management, lower staff turnover, and better classroom practices. Child care providers with more early childhood education and experience interact better with children and create more enriching classroom experiences. Studies have shown that children whose caregivers had higher qualifications did better both academically and behaviorally at least into early elementary school.

The law requires that, at a minimum, a lead teacher be 18 years old, have high school diploma or its equivalent and NC Early Childhood Credential or its equivalent. Once hired, the lead teacher must enroll in the community college coursework within the first six months of employment and complete it within 18 months of enrollment to receive a North Carolina Early Childhood Credential. (There are additional options that are equal to the Credential). To earn higher points in the education component of the rated license child care staff must complete more coursework and/or formal education and have experience working with preschool children. The number of points a center can earn for staff education is based on:

- The education and experience levels of the administrator
- The number of lead teachers with NC Early Childhood Credentials
- The number of lead teachers with additional early childhood or child development education and/or experience
- The number of teachers with NC Early Childhood Credentials
- The number of teachers with formal additional early childhood or child development education and/or experience

The rated license education standards for family child care home providers and school-age staff are slightly different. However, it is still based on the level of education and experience working with young children.

Education Standards

Child Care Centers:

The number of points earned in education standards is based on the education level and early childhood experience of staff. The Division's staff will evaluate transcripts to determine the number of semester hours that can be counted towards the higher levels in this component.

To earn more than one point:

- The administrator and at least 75% of lead teachers must have completed their credential requirements
- A certain percentage of staff must have extra semester hours and/or child care experience.

Additional points may be earned if more staff have completed early childhood coursework or have certification on the NC Early Care and Education and have more experience working with children. For example, at the highest level in Education Standards, seven points are earned if:

- The administrator has a Level III NC Administration Credential or equivalent, and 4 years of experience
- All lead teachers have NC Childhood credentials or equivalent or Level I or higher certification on the NC Early Care and Education (ECE); and 75% of lead teachers have either a degree in Early Childhood/child development or any major with 12 semester hours in early childhood/child development and 2 years of experience; or Level IV NC Early Care and Education and 2 years of experience
- 50% of teachers have completed their NC Early Childhood Credential or equivalent; or Level I or higher certification on the NC ECE; and either have additional coursework and 2 years of experience or Level III or higher certification on the NC ECE and 2 years of experience
- School age staff have completed school age coursework, Basic School Age Training, and have experience working with school age children

Family Child Care Homes:

The number of points earned in education standards is based on having NC Family Child Care Credential or Certification on the NC Early Care and Education; the early childhood education coursework; and child care experience. The Division's staff will evaluate your transcripts to determine the number of semester hours that can be counted towards the higher levels in this component.

At the highest point level, 7 points are earned if the child care operator has a degree in Early Childhood Education/Child Development; or associate degree in any major with 12 hours in early childhood/child development; and have experience working with children.

Quality Point

Child care operators may choose to meet additional education or programmatic criteria to earn one (1) Quality Point. This Quality Point will be added to the total points earned in program standards and staff education to determine the total number of stars earned.

Listed below are examples of the Quality Point options. The full text of the Child Care Requirements related to the Quality Point is found in Section .2800.

Examples of Education Options:

- 75% of center infant/toddler teachers have obtained an Infant/Toddler Certificate
- All lead teachers and 75% teachers have completed an A.A.S. or higher in early childhood education/child development
- 75% of group leaders have obtained a NC School Age Care Credential or 6 semester hours in school-age coursework
- A family child care home provider has obtained an Infant/Toddler Certificate or has a BS/BA or higher in early childhood education/child development
- Completed 20 additional annual on-going training hours for all center staff and home providers

Examples of Programmatic Options:

- Uses age/developmentally appropriate curriculum that addresses five domains of child development (not for 4 and 5 star rated programs serving 4-year old's)
- Reduced group sizes in centers
- Reduced staff/child ratios in centers
- Licensed capacity reduced to four preschool children in a family child care home
- Business training course completed for a center administrator and a family child care home provider

How Do Points Determine Star Ratings?

This table shows the breakdown for the number of stars a program can receive based on the total points earned in each of the two components and the quality point option described below.

Number of Stars Received	Total Points Earned on a Two Component License
	1 - 3 Points
	4 - 6 Points
	7 - 9 Points
	10 - 12 Points
	13 - 15 Points

Three Star Example

A facility earns 4 points in program standards and 4 points in education standards, and 1 quality point. The total is $4 + 4 + 1 = 9$ points. The facility would earn a three-star rating.

Three Star Example	
Program Standards	4 Points
Education Standards	4 Points
Quality Point	1 Points
Total Score	9 Points
Star Score	

Choosing Quality Child Care - The Right Decision

Here are some questions you can ask to get a sense of the quality of child care provided in a particular program

Staff Education

- What kind of education does your staff have?
- In what kind of ongoing education does your staff participate?

Program Standards

- How do you handle nap time?
- What is a typical day like at your program?
- What kind of flexibility do you have to accommodate a baby's natural schedule regarding eating habits and diapering needs?
- How do you handle toilet training?
- How do you discipline children?
- How many other children will be with my child?
- What Types of play or learning activities do you have for children in my child's age group?
- What is your policy for caring for children's medical needs?
- Do you administer medication to sick infants and toddlers?
- How will you communicate with me about my child's day?

Planning for the Visit

In preparation for this visit, you should take a checklist with you to remind you of things to look for, and to record your observations. If you have additional questions, add them to the checklist. You should call the program in advance to arrange a convenient time for your visit. If appropriate, take your child along and observe their reaction to the program.

A checklist of important items to consider has been provided below. Print this checklist and use it as a guide and worksheet as you interview each child care provider.

- [Family Child Care Home Checklist](#)
- [Child Care Center Checklist](#)

Visiting the Program:

During the visit remember that you are the consumer, and you have the right to ask as many questions as you want. Before making your decision about a child care provider you should visit several facilities. Compare the results of the checklists to determine the best suited program for your child. The more you know, the easier your decision will be, and the more comfortable you will feel making it.

Parent Involvement:

Because parents are in a child care program each day, they have the best knowledge of what the provider is or is not doing. Children need for parents to constantly assess the child care arrangement. Here are some proactive ways parents can evaluate child care providers on an ongoing basis:

- Ask your child what he or she does during the day
- Find out how he or she interacts with the caregiver. Listen carefully to what your child says
- Spend a few minutes each day talking with the caregiver about your child
- Drop in frequently and participate in activities

- Observe behavior during drop-off and pick-up, and explore unexplained changes

Choosing quality child care can be a time-consuming and complex task. Nothing is better than seeing a program first-hand!

Quality Child Care

High quality child care is consistently shown to have positive benefits for children. When visiting a program, you'll want to look for these important signs of quality child care:

- Higher star rating – The program license is posted, and the program has a higher star rating (if applicable) which means better quality care for your child.
- Few children per staff – A small number of children for each staff member allows each child to receive individualized attention and care.
- Small group size – Small group size promotes a nurturing, secure setting.
- Developmentally appropriate curriculum – The program uses a plan to encourage learning and involve children in activities that suit their ages and developmental stages.
- Positive interaction – Children communicate with and learn from staff and each other.
- Consistent supervision of children – Each staff member is responsible for the same children each day.
- Well-trained, dedicated staff – Staff has education and training in child development and early education. The program has little staff turnover.
- Ongoing family-staff communication – Families are well-informed about their children's activities and progress and are encouraged to be involved in the program.
- Clean, safe surroundings – Clean indoor and outdoor areas provide room for children to play and interact safely.
- Healthy, safe, and nutritious habits – Meeting the health, safety, and nutrition needs of your child allows children to learn and grow.

Paying for Child Care-Types of Financial Assistance

Overview

How Does Child Care Financial Assistance in North Carolina Work?

North Carolina's Division of Child Development and Early Education uses a combination of state and federal funds to provide subsidized child care services to eligible families through a locally administered state-supervised voucher system. Annually each county receives a combination of state and federal funding from the Division of Child Development for subsidized child care services. The amount of funding allocated to each county is determined by legislation.

If the county department of social services or other local purchasing agency does not have enough funding to serve all families who apply for subsidized child care, the agency may establish priorities for services. For example, an agency may choose to give priority to working parent(s) or families who need child care to support child protective services.

If a family meets the eligibility criteria, the state of North Carolina pays a portion of the cost of child care. Parents are free to choose a child care arrangement that best fits their needs as long as the provider chosen participates in the Subsidized Child Care Program.

The amount the state pays for child care depends on:

- The family's situational criteria
- The family's income
- The cost of the child care provided

Do I Qualify?

You may be eligible to receive child care assistance if one or more of the following situations apply to your family:

- You are working or are attempting to find work
- You are in school or in a job training program
- Your child is receiving child protective services
- Your child needs care to support child welfare services or if your family is experiencing a crisis
- Your child has developmental needs

Most families, including those receiving Work First Family Assistance, are required to pay a percentage of their child care costs based upon their gross monthly income. The percentage is 10%, if applicable.

Application Process

If this is your first time applying for child care subsidy, please be advised that you must be the parent or legal guardian of the child receiving subsidy benefits. The information provided below will help you with the application process.

If you meet the eligibility criteria provided in the "Do I Qualify" section of the website, you are ready to begin the process of applying for child care subsidy.

Making the Right Decision

One of the most important decisions you will ever make as a parent is choosing quality child care for your child. Every child is special and unique and deserves the best start possible. Studies reveal that a high quality child care program help children better prepare for school and increase their chances of success. Research also indicates that employers benefit when their employees' children are in quality child care arrangements. Parents are more productive and focused on work knowing their children are being nurtured and interacted with in ways that promotes all areas of their development. This confidence in care creates a win-win situation for everyone: parents, children, and employers.

Part of making the right decision is understanding the Star Rated License. All licensed programs, except religious sponsored programs, have a star-rating similar to the ratings you will find for other products and services. A One Star means the program meets North Carolina's minimum child care requirements. A Five Star license means a program meets the voluntary enhanced standards required for the highest star level. The child care license is posted in every child care program for parent review. On the license you will see the scores the program has earned in the two major components of the license: Staff Education and Program Standards. You will also be able to see if the program received a Quality Point. For more information on the Star Rated License, click on the Star-Rated License tab at the top of the page.

How Can the Division of Child Development Help Me?

The North Carolina Division of Child Development and Early Education makes every effort to provide information parents need to make the best possible child care choices. The Division records a variety of information on regulated facilities that you might find useful in your search, including:

- Star rated license information
- Sanitation scores
- Complaint investigations
- Visits made by Division staff

Disclaimer Statement

Surry County Child Care Resource and Referral will make referrals, not recommendations, to licensed child care center, licensed family child care homes, summer camps, preschool programs, and church sponsored facilities with specification requested by parents.

Referrals will be made without regard to race, color, sex, age, disability, religion, or national origin of consumer or provider.

We do not license, endorse, or recommend any provider, nor can we assure that any provider offers quality child care, or any additional services required by customers. Customers are sent an information packet and checklist to help evaluate services, encouraged to visit and interview prospective providers, and urged to check references. It is the customer's responsibility to select and investigate the provider as to their appropriateness and/or ability to provide child care to meet the family's needs.

Complaint Policy

Surry County Child Care Resource and Referral is committed to educating parents, providers, and the community on child care issues and advocating for improved quality and availability of child care in Surry County. Anyone with a concern about a child care home or center is encouraged to call us at 336-786-1880. Our staff will make every effort to help the caller clarify his or her problem or concern and suggest further action if necessary.

Surry County Child Care Resource and Referral is not a regulatory agency, and the staff has no authority over the child care providers in this area. Staff members make no decisions about the truth of the allegations made in the complaint and do not investigate complaints. However, each incoming complaint will be handled according to the Surry County Child Care Resource and Referral complaint procedure. This procedure will be followed without regard to ethnicity, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, or political affiliation.

Surry County Child Care Resource and Referral staff will interview the caller in order to determine if the concern is a personal issue, possible child abuse or neglect or licensing violations. Staff will ask if the caller has discussed these concerns with the director/owner of the child care facility. If not, staff will encourage the caller to do so. If the director/owner does not satisfactorily answer the caller's questions or correct possible concerns, the staff will provide information on the appropriate course of action.

Possible Child Abuse

Surry County Child Care Resource and Referral staff will help the caller to report the problem to the Department of Social Services (336-401-8800) and/or the Division of Child Development and Early Education (800-859-0829). Surry County Child Care Resource and Referral staff will make every effort to encourage the caller to report the problem. Surry County Child Care Resource and Referral is required by North Carolina law to contact the appropriate agencies.

Possible Licensing Violations

If a caller reports a concern that a child care home or center has violated state child care regulations, Surry County Child Care Resource and Referral staff will provide information about licensing requirements and if applicable encourage the caller to report the problem to the Division of Child Development and Early Education (800-859-0829) and/or the Department of Social Services (401-8800). SCCCR&R may lodge licensing violation complaints.

Personal Complaints

Surry County Child Care Resource and Referral will encourage a caller with concerns involving child rearing philosophy, differences in child care style, disagreement in business matters, etc. to speak directly to the provider in order to resolve these issues. If anyone has a complaint about the referral call or process, they may speak with the Executive Director at 336-786-1880.

Fee and Confidentiality Statement

Surry County Child Care Resource and Referral is funded through the North Carolina Partnership for Children to provide you with child care referrals for free. Child care referrals and information are provided at no cost to customers.

The information requested Surry County Child Care Resource and Referral in order to assist customers searching for child care is used only for the purpose of providing child care referrals and collecting statistical information concerning child care needs to better serve the community. All personal or identifying information will remain confidential and will not be released to anyone outside of Surry County Child Care Resource and Referral without written consent.

**Some of the information on this form has been obtained from the DCDEE web site:
<https://ncchildcare.ncdhhs.gov/>**

CENTER CHECKLIST

Name of Center:	
Address:	
Type of License:	
Cost of Care:	
Infants:	
Toddlers:	
Preschool:	
School Age:	

Four Series of Checklist Questions Are Provided on the Following Pages:

1. Tour the Center: The Inside
2. Tour the Center: The Outside
3. Interaction Between Staff/Children/Parents
4. Operational Policy
5. Additional Questions to Ask

Tour the Center: The Inside

Question		
Required by the State		
Is the license displayed in a visible location?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are separate spaces available for the different age groups?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the quantity of toys and materials sufficient for the number of children in the classroom?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are the toys and materials developmentally appropriate for the different age groups?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the classroom arranged in a way that toys and materials are accessible to children?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are the furnishings in the classrooms child sized?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there obvious hazards such as dangerous substances, electrical cords, uncovered electrical outlets, cleaning materials, or medications accessible to the children?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are fire extinguishers on site?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are fire escape plans/emergency evacuation plans posted?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are the sinks and bathroom stocked with appropriate supplies?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
NOT Required by the State		
Is your initial reaction upon entering the child care center a positive one?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is there space for active play and other space available where quiet play may take place?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Tour the Center: The Outside

Question		
Required by the State		
Do the children have an opportunity to play outside each day?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the outside area free of litter and obvious hazards such as broken glass?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there a variety of outside equipment/toys available and appropriate for various ages?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the outdoor play equipment sturdy and in good repair?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are children being supervised by the child care provider?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is there shade available outside where the children play?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Do children two years and younger play separately from the older children?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
NOT Required by the State		
Are the child care providers interacting with the children?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the center encourage use of the outside area for learning activities as well as free play?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Interaction Between Staff /Children/Parents

Question		
Is the schedule of daily activities posted and current?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does there seem to be enough caregivers for the number of children in the room? (You may need to ask about staff/child ratios)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are the activities observed appropriate for the ages of the children involved?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Do the child care providers follow handwashing procedures after diapering/toileting?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
NOT Required by the State		
Are children allowed to make choices throughout the day?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Do the children seem occupied and engaged by their activities?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are the child care providers handling conflict among the children in a positive manner?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Do the child care providers seem patient and receptive to the needs of children?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is there a daily method of communication between the child care providers and parents?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If you were a child, would you want to spend your day at this center?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Operational/Policy

Question		
Required by the State		
Does the center encourage parents to drop in and visit at any time?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the facility serve nutritious meals/snacks?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Was there a current weekly menu posted in a visible location?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
NOT Required by the State		
Are parents encouraged to participate and be involved?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the facility enroll children with special needs?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there child care providers with additional training for special needs children?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the center participate in the subsidized child care program?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Do the hours of operation and holiday schedule accommodate your work schedule?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the facility charge when a child is out sick or on vacation?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is there a late pick-up fee charge?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the cost of care include meals and snacks?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the facility offer transportation?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Do ALL staff have current CPR and First Aid certification?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Additional Questions To Ask:

Question
Not Required By the State
How much TV are the children allowed to watch?
How are children disciplined? Are you comfortable with the discipline methods?
How are nap times handled?
What kind of security measures are in place to assure the safety of the children?
What is the center's policy for sick child care?
What is the center's policy for administering medications?
Are there any additional activities (e.g. music, dance) available and are costs included in the weekly fee?
What are the program's staff to child ratios?
Do any employees on staff have degrees in Child Development/Education?

FAMILY CHILD CARE HOME CHECKLIST

Name of Family Child Care Home:	
Address:	
Type of License:	
Cost of Care:	
Infants:	
Toddlers:	
Preschool:	
School Age:	

Four Series of Checklist Questions Are Provided on the Following Pages:

1. Tour the Home: The Inside
2. Tour the Home: The Outside
3. Interaction Between Staff/Children/Parents
4. Operational Policy
5. Additional Questions to Ask

Tour the Home: The Inside

Question		
Required by the State		
Is there an emergency procedures plan posted?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is there a fire extinguisher and working smoke detector on site?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the license displayed in a visible location?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there obvious hazards such as dangerous substances, electrical cords, cleaning materials, or medications accessible to the children?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are the toys and materials developmentally appropriate for the different age groups?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If the provider has pets are the pets current on their vaccinations?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are the furnishings in the area used for child care in good repair?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
NOT Required by the State		
Is your initial reaction upon entering the child care home positive?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is there space for active play and other space available where quiet play may take place?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the provider smoke ?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are the toys and materials accessible to children?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Tour the Home: The Outside

Question		
Required by the State		
Is the outside area free of litter and obvious hazards such as broken glass?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the outdoor play equipment sturdy and in good repair?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Do the children have an opportunity to play outside each day?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are children being supervised by the child care provider?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
NOT Required by the State		
Is there shade available?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the outside area fenced?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the child care provider interacting with the children?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there a variety of outside equipment/toys available and appropriate for various ages?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Interaction Between Staff /Children/Parents

Question		
Required by the State		
Is there a schedule posted and current?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the child care provider follow handwashing procedures after diapering/toileting?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
NOT Required by the State		
Is there a daily method of communication between the child care provider and parents?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the schedule indicate a daily routine that is flexible enough to meet the individual needs of the children?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the child care provider seem patient and receptive to the needs of children?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the child care provider handle conflict among the children in a positive manner?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Do the children seem occupied and engaged by their activities?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are the activities observed appropriate for the ages of the children involved?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are children allowed to make choices throughout the day?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Operational/Policy

Question		
Required by the State		
Does the child care provider have current CPR and First Aid certification?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the child care provider allow parents to drop in and visit at any time?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are nutritious meals/snacks provided?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
NOT Required by the State		
Will I be charged when my child is out sick or on vacation?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Was there a current weekly menu available?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is transportation offered?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is there a late pick-up fee charge?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the home participate in the subsidized child care program?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the cost of care include meals and snacks?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the child care provider have a substitute in case of illness or vacation and does this substitute meet state requirements?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the child care provider enroll children with special needs?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Do the hours of operation and holiday schedule accommodate your work schedule?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are parents encouraged to participate and be involved?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Additional Questions To Ask:

Question
Not Required By the State
Does the home participate in the subsidized child care program?
How much TV are the children allowed to watch?
How do you discipline the children?
How are nap times handled?
What kind of security measures are in place to assure the safety of the children?
What is the policy for sick child care?
Does the provider have pets? If yes, are the pets allowed in the area with the children?
What other family members will be present during child care hours?
What type of heating and air conditioning does the home have?
Does the provider have training in Child Development/Education?