

Dear Parents,

During the first 5 years of life, a child experiences a more rapid period of growth and development than at any other time throughout their lives.

Programs with small groups of children that are cared for in a nurturing and supportive manner allow for positive life experiences. Trained child care providers know how to set up play opportunities in ways that help children learn.

While only a parent can decide upon the environment that is right for their child, there are indicators that identify quality child care and quality caregivers. Please refer to the list included in this pamphlet for key indicators to identify quality care.

Choosing child care is one of the most important decisions you will make as a parent.

Our members are given the opportunity to continue their professional growth as family child care providers. We offer workshops, conferences, and other resources in relation to early childhood development and care.

Board of Directors

Contact your local Area Chairperson:

The OCCCA does not endorse any particular provider or philosophy of care.

About the OCCCA

The Orange County Child Care Association is a Non-Profit organization made up of state licensed family child care providers and other family child care advocates.

For more than 35 years we have supported and promoted quality child care through - provider training, public education and by advocating better regulations.

We are supported by member dues, fundraisers, grants and donations.

Services of the OCCCA are available to all families, regardless of race, religion, or national origin.

For information on how to conduct a Phone Interview or a One-on-One Interview go to our web site @ www.OrangeCountyChildCareAssociation.org



Call the OCCCA Referral Hotline for
FREE Child Care Referrals
714.893.0390
949.348.6988

Or visit us on the web:
[OrangeCountyChildCareAssociation.org](http://www.OrangeCountyChildCareAssociation.org)



Orange County Child Care Association

*Provide, Promote and Support
Quality Family Child Care*

FAMILY CHILD CARE REFERRAL SERVICES

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Association.org](http://www.OrangeCountyChildCareAssociation.org)

OCCCA
P.O. Box 26769
Santa Ana, CA 92799
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Child Care Providers enter the field because they care about children – but just caring is not enough

Research shows that caregivers who have had child-related training provide a more stimulating environment for children, spend more time with them, and are more responsive and comforting.

Key Indicators of Quality Child Care

- ♥ Active, comfortable and happy children;
- ♥ Activities to match a variety of ages, abilities and interests;
- ♥ Opportunities for infants to explore and interact with their environment;
- ♥ ‘Hands on’ activities to challenge preschoolers;
- ♥ An environment where children feel welcome.

Key Indicators of a Quality Caregiver

- ♥ Recognizes, respects and nurtures the individuality of each child;
- ♥ Appears warm, relaxed and energetic;
- ♥ Demonstrates pride in his/her profession;
- ♥ Continues professional growth by attending workshops, conferences and college classes;
- ♥ Works with the parents for the good of the child;
- ♥ Exceeds state licensing requirements.

Advantages of Licensed Family Child Care

- ♥ Licensed Providers are subject to background checks and State regulations.
- ♥ Group size is smaller than center-based care, creating a more intimate atmosphere, and allowing for more individual attention.
- ♥ Continuity of care creates a foundation of trust and security, giving child the environment to feel safe and secure.
- ♥ Children learn from each other. They get the opportunity to interact and socialize with a variety of children of all ages; to be both leader and follower.

Techniques to Ensure Quality Care

- ♥ Treat the Provider with respect.
- ♥ Ask questions – select a provider with philosophies similar to yours, learn to recognize and appreciate quality child care.
- ♥ Communicate concerns and questions.
- ♥ Honor contractual agreements.
- ♥ Listen to the Provider’s opinions and suggestions – this is a partnership.

“The best child care for kids under three, next to being home with a parent – is a family child care home...” from *Familyhood: Nurturing the Values that Matter*, by Lee Salk, Ph.D.

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Child Care Checklist

This checklist can help assess the quality of a child care home. You may want to make copies of checklist to use with each program you visit.

License

- Is the home licensed
- What is the enrollment capacity
- How many are in provider’s care and what are their ages

Philosophy

- Do the provider’s philosophies about child care agree with yours
- What is the provider’s conflict resolution & discipline policy

Health & Safety

- Is provider comfortable with unannounced visits
- What emergency procedures are in place
- Is the Emergency Evacuation Plan posted
- Proof of CPR/First Aid Training
- Policy regarding sick children

Caregiver Information

- Provider’s background and training
- How does provider interact with your child
- Is provider active in continual training and education
- Professional affiliation

Environment & Equipment

- Is the family child care home clean
- Safety program to prevent accidents
- Variety of toys, play area

Daily Activities/Programs

- How are basic needs met: daily routine, planned activities, naps, meals, outings, diaper changing, toilet training

Fees & Policies

- What do fees cover, how much, due date, late fees, other charges
- Absences, vacations, holidays
- Policy for late pick-up