

Call **877-678-2548** for **FREE** information and a list of local child care providers!



ChildCare
Aware[®]
OF KANSAS
Referral Center

Operated by Child Care Aware[®]
of Northeast & North Central Kansas

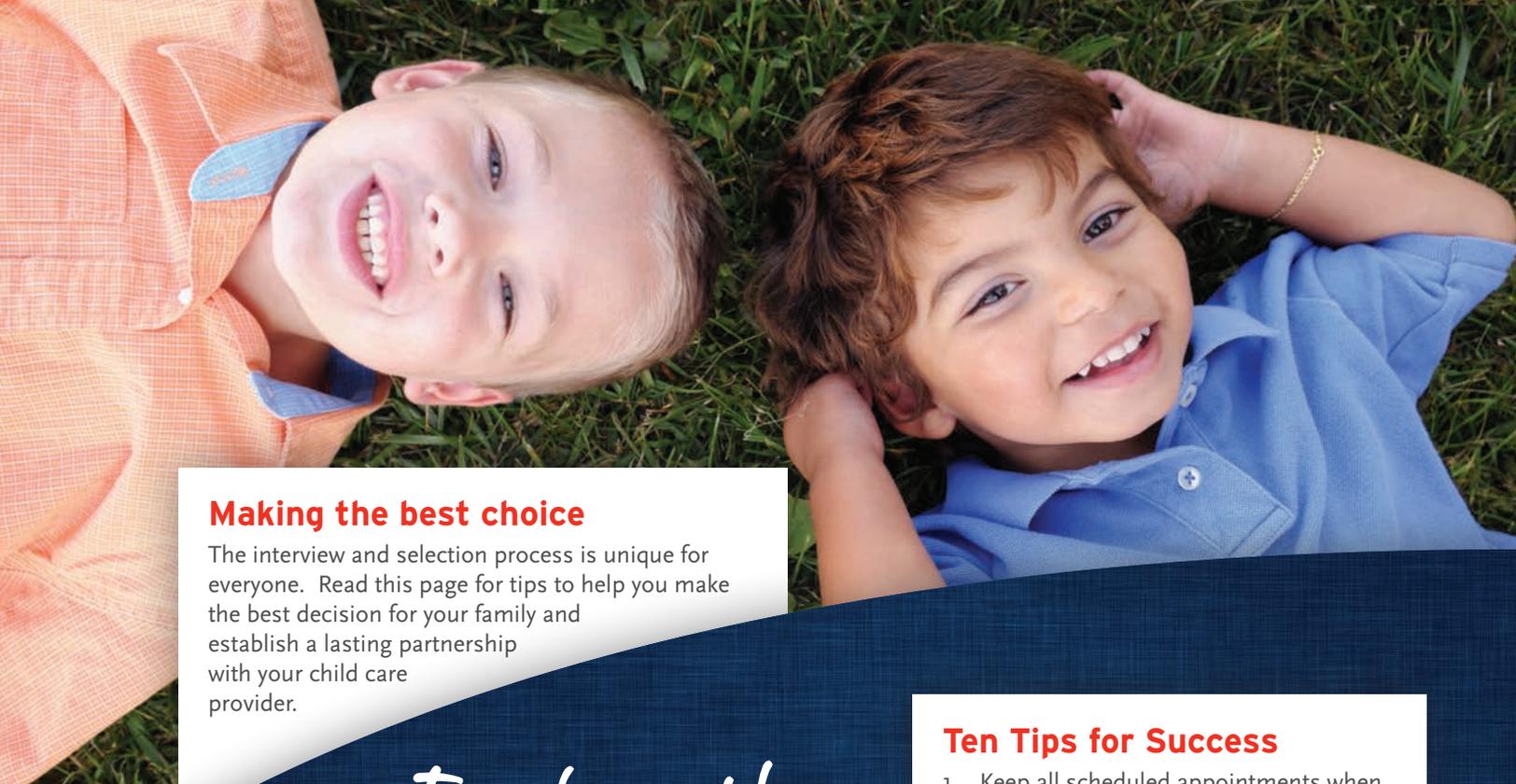
Your child care
search begins here...

Finding Child Care...

Choosing child care is one of the most important decisions you will make for your child. For more than twenty years, Child Care Aware[®] of Kansas has helped families just like yours, understand how to determine the best child care setting for their child. Our statewide network of child care resource and referral (CCR&Rs) agencies works together to connect families across Kansas to child care in their area.

Call **877-678-2548** to speak with one of our knowledgeable Referral Counselors. They will assist you in your child care search — providing you with a list of regulated child care providers in your area, as well as personalized information that will help you choose the right child care provider for your family.





Making the best choice

The interview and selection process is unique for everyone. Read this page for tips to help you make the best decision for your family and establish a lasting partnership with your child care provider.

Finding the right program

Explore. Know your options. Start looking for child care as soon as you can. Finding the right child care setting may take some time.

Evaluate. Consider your preferences. For example, think about the individual learning style of your child (does he/she prefer small groups or large groups?), your family needs, the location and the hours of care.

Observe. Visit at least three programs before making your final decision. Interview prospective providers and talk to everyone who will be involved in your child's care. Plan to spend 30 to 60 minutes at each interview. Take your child with you to see if the program is a good fit for him/her. To help guide you through the interview, refer to the questions in this brochure.

Decide. Think about what you saw at each visit. Refer to your notes and trust your instincts. Pay attention to any uneasy feelings you may have.

Be Involved. You and your child care provider are partners now. You have the right to visit your child's program any time your child is there. Making such visits are one way to monitor the quality of care your child is receiving.

Ten Tips for Success

1. Keep all scheduled appointments when meeting with child care providers. If you need to cancel, call.
2. References should be provided upon request. It is *your responsibility* to interview the references.
3. Make sure you read and agree to the provider's contract and policies. Keep a copy for your records. If you feel that the child care provider is not adhering to their own policies, mention it. Small issues can quickly become big issues.
4. Pay on time. Your child care provider is operating a business and *depends on you*.
5. You will need the provider's tax I.D. number (W-10 form) for taxes. It is the parent's responsibility to ask for this information.
6. Pick up your child on time. If an emergency prevents you from being on time, call.
7. Plan to make unannounced visits to your child at the facility often to see what goes on throughout the day.
8. Communicate openly with your provider about your child and his/her progress, as well as any concerns you may have.
9. Find ways to get involved. Working together is key to making the partnership work.
10. Talk to or read your child(ren)'s cues to know if they are happy!

Questions you should ask...

Are you licensed by the state of Kansas? Look for a posted Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) state license which will show the capacity of the facility based on space and the ages of children in care.

May I see the latest Notice of Survey Findings? This document will show the results of the latest inspection by KDHE. Ask to see the most current Notice of Survey Findings.

What steps do you take to keep my child healthy and safe? Poisons, medications, weapons, and other dangerous substances should be locked up. All children and adults in the facility should wash their hands frequently. Look for working smoke detectors and that electrical outlets are covered. There should be no smoking during business hours. Ask to see the provider's most current CPR and First Aid certificate.

What is your adult/child ratio? It is important that the level of supervision is appropriate to the age group and their needs. In general, younger children need to be more closely supervised and will require a higher adult/child ratio.

How many children are in the group? Caregivers in small groups spend substantially more time interacting with children. Smaller group size is also associated with a lower risk of infection in child care and lower rates of disease.

How do you supervise the children? Children need to be actively supervised at all times, even when the children are sleeping. Ask how often children are visually checked while napping, and where the infants sleep.

What child development training do you have? Ongoing training increases the quality of care children receive. Ask the provider about any degrees, certificates, or special trainings.

What types of learning activities are in your daily routine? A daily schedule with a balance of indoor and outdoor, active and quiet, and age-appropriate activities should be followed. There should be enough games, blocks, dress-up clothes, books, etc., to allow children to select activities that interest them. The outdoor area should be safe, with space to play freely. Ask the provider for a tour of the indoor and outdoor space used for play and learning activities.

How do you partner with families? The facility should allow you to visit your child at any time and should be accepting of your family's cultural values. Ask the provider about family nights, conferences, or volunteering opportunities that are available.

Do you have a policy handbook and contract? The handbook should include a discipline policy, fire/tornado emergency plans, sick child policy, etc. The contract should include payment rates and schedule, termination policy, hours of operation, etc. Ask the provider for a copy of the policy handbook and contract.

Are nutritious meals offered? Nutritious, balanced meals and snacks should be prepared, served, and stored in a safe manner. Foods that can cause choking should not be served. Ask the provider to see a copy of the menu.



What will child care cost?

The cost of child care will vary depending on the age of your child, the activities of the program, the provider's qualifications, and the geographic location of the facility.

Federal Assistance: You may be eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit. Call 1-800-829-1040 or visit www.irs.gov for more information.

State Assistance: The Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) has funding available to help income-eligible families pay for child care in a regulated facility, or by a relative or in-home caregiver. Call 1-888-369-4777 or visit www.srskansas.org for more information.

Military Subsidies: You may qualify for child care subsidy assistance if you are an Active Duty military family or Active Duty National Guard (AGR) serving under Title 10 or Title 32, United States Code (U.S.C.). Visit <http://www.naccrra.org/> military-families for information on how to apply.

Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account (FSA): This tax-advantaged financial account allows an employee to set aside earnings to pay for care. Money deducted from an employee's pay into an FSA is not subject to payroll taxes, resulting in substantial payroll tax savings.

Local Assistance: A facility may give you a discount for having multiple children enrolled or offer a sliding fee. Some businesses and communities have programs to help families pay for child care.

About regulated child care in Kansas...

All facilities that provide child care are licensed by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE). KDHE administers the child care licensing laws and issues licenses for child care facilities to protect the health, safety, and welfare of children receiving care away from home.

Provider Compliance History

Check: Before selecting a child care facility, families can do a provider compliance history check using the Child Care and Early Education Portal at <http://www.kdheks.gov/bcclr/capp.htm>

KDHE Licensing Requirements:

Below are a few Kansas requirements for regulated child care. For a complete list, visit the KDHE website at <http://www.kdheks.gov/bcclr/index.html>

- The licensee must be 18 years of age, have an understanding of children, complete certified first aid and CPR, as well as child care related training.
- Each new applicant applying for a license to maintain a child care facility must be a high school graduate or the equivalent, such as having a GED.
- A Kansas Bureau of Investigation (KBI) criminal history and child abuse and neglect background check is processed on all persons living, working or volunteering in the licensed day care home. (National background checks are not required.)
- Facilities are inspected to check compliance with regulations to protect the health, safety and well-being of the children in care at least once every 12 months.

Examples of child care arrangements when a license is NOT required:

- When child care is provided in the child's own home. For example, a nanny or other caregiver that comes to your home to care for your child.
- When child care is provided in the home of the child's relative.
- A residential facility or hospital that is operated and maintained by a state agency. For example, facilities operated by school districts.

Source: www.kdheks.gov

What types of regulated child care are available?

Family Child Care (FCC)

Licensed Day Care Home (one provider):

A child care facility in which care is provided for a maximum of ten children under 16 years of age (includes children under 11 years of age related to the provider). The total number of children in care at any one time is based on the ages of the children in care.

Group Day Care Home (two providers):

A child care facility in which care is provided for a maximum of 12 children under 16 years of age (includes children under 11 years of age related to the provider). The total number of children in care at any one time is based on the ages of the children in care.

License Capacity: One Provider

Maximum Number of Children Under 18 Months	Maximum Number of Children at Least 18 months but Under 5 Years of Age	Maximum Number of Children at Least 5 Years of Age but Under 11 Years of Age	License Capacity
0	7	3	10
1	5	4	10
2	4	3	9
3	3	2	8

Source: www.kdheks.gov

License Capacity: Two Providers

Maximum Number of Children Under 18 Months	Maximum Number of Children at Least 18 months but Under 5 Years of Age	Maximum Number of Children at Least 5 Years of Age but Under 11 Years of Age	License Capacity
1	8	3	12
2	7	3	12
3	6	3	12
4	4	2	10

Source: www.kdheks.gov



Quality counts

Provider Credentials

Research clearly shows that education and specialized training in early childhood practice positively impacts the quality of an early learning program. Ask about the provider's credentials.

The National Child Development Associate (CDA) credential qualifies providers who work with children birth to age five. Child care providers who earn a CDA complete:

- Hands-on experience with a specific age group
- Formal child development training and education
- Observation of skills and knowledge by a qualified advisor
- A professional resource file
- Gathering of parent questionnaires
- An oral interview and written test

Accreditation

Accreditation indicates that a program meets nationally recognized guidelines for high-quality early care and education. Child care centers may be accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Family child care providers may be accredited through the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC). School-age programs may be accredited through the National Afterschool Association (NAA).

Kansas Quality Rating and Improvement System (KQRIS)

The Kansas Quality Rating and Improvement System (KQRIS) conducts annual assessments of child care programs that are licensed by the state and awards a rating of 1-5 Stars, based on five key areas of quality. Each area receives points, and those total points add up to a star rating — just like hotels, restaurants or movies. Families can access a Quality Rating Report with information on each of the five key areas of quality.

KQRIS is currently only available in select areas. We continue to advocate for funding to make KQRIS available across the state. Ask your Referral Counselor if KQRIS is available in your area.

Child Care Center (CCC)

A child care facility in which care and educational activities are provided for 13 or more children two weeks to 16 years of age for more than three hours and less than 24 hours per day including day time, evening, and night-time care, or that provides before and after school care for school age children.

CCC & Preschool Staff to Child Ratios

Age of Children	Minimum Staff/Child Ratio	Maximum Number of Children per Unit Size
Infants (2 weeks to 12 months)	1 to 3	9
Infants to 6 years	1 to 4 Maximum 2 Infants	8 Maximum 4 Infants
Toddlers (12 months to 2 years if walking alone)	1 to 5	10
2 to 3 years	1 to 7	14
2 1/2 years to School Age	1 to 10	20
3 years to School Age	1 to 12	24
Kindergarten Enrollees	1 to 14	28
School Age	1 to 16	32

Source: www.kdheks.gov

Preschool

A child care facility which provides learning experiences for children who have not attained the age of eligibility to enter kindergarten and who are 30 months of age or older; that conducts sessions not exceeding three hours per session; that does not enroll any child more than one session per day; and that does not serve a meal. The term "preschool" shall include education preschools, Montessori schools, nursery schools, church-sponsored preschools, and cooperatives. A preschool may have fewer than 13 children and be licensed as a preschool if the program and facility meet preschool regulation.

The license for the preschool states the maximum number of children that can be in care at any one time, and also states the maximum number of children than can be in care in any one unit by age group. Staff to child ratios must be maintained at all times.

NOTE: People in the process of becoming licensed as a family child care provider may be issued a temporary permit, valid for 90 days. A person with a temporary permit will have attended an orientation session, submitted their written application to KDHE, and passed the DCF* and KBI registry check. They may not have had their inspection visit and may still have corrections to complete before receiving a permanent license. A provider with a temporary license must follow all of the same regulations, including license capacity.

* Department for Children and Families (DCF). Formerly known as the Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services (SRS).

Need further assistance?

If you need further assistance in your child care search, contact a Referral Counselor for additional referrals and creative options that will help in your search. We are committed to helping you find the best information on locating quality child care and child care resources in your community.

Additional Resources

Child Care Aware® of America: Child Care Aware® of America has a monthly column, *Are You Aware?*, and a bimonthly newsletter, *The Daily Parent*, that are freely available in both English and Spanish. As a subscriber to *Are You Aware?* or *The Daily Parent* you will receive emails notifying you when a new issue is available online. Your email address will be used by Child Care Aware® only and will not be sold or otherwise distributed. To subscribe, go to <http://childcareaware.org> and enter your email address.

Local Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Agencies:

Contact your local Child Care Aware® of Kansas CCR&R agency for information about trainings and workshops for families. Visit <http://ks.childcareaware.org> for a state map with your local CCR&R contact information.

Kansas Action & Information Center: Join our Kansas Action & Information Center to learn more about local, state and federal legislation, regulation and policies that may affect children and families and the child care and educational programs that serve them. Visit <http://www.ks.childcareaware.org/actioninfo.html> to sign up for regular notifications on changes that may impact you.

Please Complete Our Online Survey! Your comments regarding the child care referral services you receive are very important to us! Please log on to our website at www.ks.childcareaware.org/parent.html to complete a quick and easy survey. If you have a complaint, please call toll free 1-855-750-3343 or 785-823-3343.



About Our Services

While we are pleased to provide a free referral service, Child Care Aware® of Kansas cannot legally endorse or recommend any one program. The list of facilities you receive are referrals, not recommendations. Every effort is made to supply you with up-to-date information. Your referral list will contain the child care program:

- contact information
- location
- days and times care is available
- rates
- environment description
- provider educational qualifications
- provider training, accreditation status
- Kansas Quality Rating Improvement System (KQRIS) quality rating (if applicable)

We maintain confidentiality of all information we receive from you. Your email address will be used only by Child Care Aware® of Kansas and our agencies, and will not be sold or otherwise distributed. You will receive information about Kansas Parent Action and Information Center, an online newsletter helping families obtain the latest information on child care issues, as well as other helpful information.