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*NCCIC Is a Service of the Child Care Bureau*

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**CHILD CARE INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES**

Working families face numerous decisions when balancing their work and home life, especially when it comes to choosing the type of child care they will use. Access to safe and affordable child care is a critical issue for working parents. Finding the right type of care that is also affordable may require searching, researching, and connecting with State agencies to help you choose a type of care that best meets your needs. This resource guide has information about child care and provides answers to some of the most frequently asked questions about child care, such as:

- ◆ [What are my child care options?](#)
- ◆ [How can I find child care in my area?](#)
- ◆ [How can I choose quality child care?](#)
- ◆ [What is the typical price for child care?](#)
- ◆ [How can I find help paying for child care?](#)
- ◆ [How can I file a complaint against a center or provider?](#)
- ◆ [How can I find information about contract agreements between parents and their child care providers?](#)
- ◆ [What are the legal requirements related to hiring someone to care for my child in my home?](#)
- ◆ [What is the legal age for a child to remain at home by himself or herself and/or to babysit another child?](#)

- ◆ [Are there resources with information about care for children with special needs?](#)

NCCIC defines child care as the regular, supervised, and paid care of children while the family is at work, school, or in training. It is available to families during work hours and throughout the year. Child care can include a learning program that addresses children's social, emotional, cognitive, physical, and language development. It can provide a schedule of programs and supervision that responds to each child's developmental needs, interests, and behavior. Child care programs are often designed for specific ages and group sizes, and can take place in different settings.

**Childcare.gov** is an online resource designed to link parents, child care providers, researchers, policymakers, and the general public to child care and early learning information and resources sponsored by the Federal government. Visit [http://childcare.gov/xhtml/links/g\\_1/index.html](http://childcare.gov/xhtml/links/g_1/index.html).

Additional resources related to child care are available via NCCIC's Online Library at <http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/index.cfm?do=oll.search>. NCCIC does not endorse any organization, publication, or resource.

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### What are my child care options?

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Finding a child care program that meets the needs of your family may be very important. The following are the four most commonly used types of child care by the general public. Some programs have to comply with State licensing regulations, so a licensed child care program may be another option to consider.

- ◆ **Child care centers** are facilities where care typically is provided to children in a nonresidential building with classrooms of children in different age groups. Care is provided for less than 24 hours per day. State child care licensing regulations include definitions of the types of child care centers that must meet licensing requirements. These definitions often include a minimum number of children and/or a minimum number of hours the facility operates to determine whether it must be licensed.
- ◆ **Family child care** settings are facilities where care typically is provided to children in the provider's residence. Family child care homes usually provide care for a small number of children of mixed ages and have one care provider. As with centers, States have definitions of the types of family child care homes that must be licensed. These definitions are usually based on the number of children in care. For example, several States require family child care homes to be licensed if the provider cares for at least one unrelated child or the children from one family, but many States also allow homes with three or more children to operate without a license. Many States license two types of family child care homes—a **small home** that has a small number of children and usually one care provider, and a **large/group home** that usually has a larger number of children and a provider and assistant.
- ◆ **Family, friend, and neighbor care** is provided by relatives, friends, neighbors, and/or other adults who have a close relationship with the parent(s). Care can be provided in the child's home or the family's, friend's, or neighbor's home.
- ◆ **Nanny/Au pair** is care provided by one person hired by the parent(s) to come into the home on a live-in or live-out basis. Nannies or au pairs can care for the parent's children and/or groups of children from several families.



For all, though, licensing is a process administered by the State government that sets a baseline of requirements below which it is illegal for facilities to operate. The State agency responsible for child care regulations can provide information about regulations child care programs must meet. Contact information for all State licensing agencies is at <http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/statedata/dirs/display.cfm?title=licensing>.

### **How do I learn if a child care facility or provider is licensed?**

You can find this information by contacting your State child care licensing agency. Contact information for all State licensing agencies is available on NCCIC's Web site at <http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/statedata/dirs/display.cfm?title=licensing>.

### **How can I find child care in my area?**

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For information about the availability of child care, contact your local child care resource and referral (CCR&R) agency. CCR&R agencies may help you choose high-quality child care that meets local regulations and standards and best meets your needs. Contact information for all State CCR&R agencies is available at <http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/statedata/dirs/display.cfm?title=ccrr>.

### **How can I find information about State and federally funded early education programs?**

Federal and state-funded early education programs focus on school readiness and helping enhance children's social, emotional, physical, intellectual, and speech and language development through age-appropriate activities.

The following are State or federally funded programs:

#### **◆ Early Head Start (EHS)**

EHS is a federally funded, community-based program for low-income pregnant women and families with infants and toddlers. It offers children and families comprehensive child development services through center-based programs, home-visiting programs, and a combination of program options. To learn how to contact a local EHS program in your area, call 866-763-6481 or use the online National Head Start Program Locator Tool at <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/HeadStartOffices>. Click "En Español" for information in Spanish. Additional information about EHS is available at [www.ehsnrc.org/AboutUs/ehs.htm](http://www.ehsnrc.org/AboutUs/ehs.htm). Information about enrolling a child in an EHS program is available at [www.ehsnrc.org/ChildEligible.htm](http://www.ehsnrc.org/ChildEligible.htm).

#### **◆ Head Start**

Head Start is a federally funded, community-based child development program for children 3 to 5 years old and their families. It is a child-focused program and has the overall goal of increasing the school readiness of young children from low-income families. Head Start serves children whose family income is at or below the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines. Like Early Head Start, Head Start programs may serve a limited number of children from families who earn more than this income limit. To find a local Head Start program in your area, call 866-763-6481 or use the online National Head Start Program Locator Tool at <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/HeadStartOffices>. Click "En Español" for information in Spanish.

#### **◆ State-funded prekindergarten programs**

Some States have prekindergarten programs that are designed to give 3- and 4-year-old children the experiences they need to be ready for kindergarten. To find out if there is a program in your area and whether you are eligible to participate, contact your local CCR&R agency. Contact information for all State CCR&R agencies is available at <http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/statedata/dirs/display.cfm?title=ccrr>. Your State education agency may also provide information about prekindergarten programs in your area.

More information is available at  
[www.ccsso.org/chief\\_state\\_school\\_officers/state\\_education\\_agencies/index.cfm](http://www.ccsso.org/chief_state_school_officers/state_education_agencies/index.cfm).

### How can I find information about military child care?

The following resources provide information about military child care, including child care for Federal employees:

- ◆ **Military HOMEFRONT** sponsored by the Department of Defense provides information about child care for military families, and provides answers to commonly asked questions about military child care. More information is available at [www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/portal/page/mhf/MHF/MHF\\_HOME\\_1?section\\_id=20.40.500.94.0.0.0.0.0](http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/portal/page/mhf/MHF/MHF_HOME_1?section_id=20.40.500.94.0.0.0.0.0).
- ◆ **National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (NACCRRA)** has partnerships with military services to assist families of deployed or active-duty National Guard, Reserve, Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and Air Force service members. For more information, call 800-424-2246 or visit [www.naccrra.org/MilitaryPrograms/operation-military-child-care.php](http://www.naccrra.org/MilitaryPrograms/operation-military-child-care.php).
- ◆ **Child Care Aware** provides information about military child care at [www.naccrra.org/MilitaryPrograms/](http://www.naccrra.org/MilitaryPrograms/).

Additional information about child care for Federal employees, including military personnel, is available at [http://childcare.gov/xhtml/links/g\\_1/t\\_21.html](http://childcare.gov/xhtml/links/g_1/t_21.html).

### How can I find information about nannies?

The International Nanny Association (INA) can provide information about nannies, answers to frequently asked questions about working with nannies, and information about what you need to know before hiring someone to work in your home as a child care provider. For more information, call INA at 888-878-1477 or visit [www.nanny.org/index.php](http://www.nanny.org/index.php).

More information about nannies and the legal requirements related to hiring nannies is available in the "[What are the legal requirements related to hiring someone to care for my child in my home?](#)" section of this resource guide.

### How can I choose quality child care?

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Various tools and checklists can help you select quality child care. The American Academy of Pediatrics suggests looking for the following qualities when choosing child care:

- ◆ Adult caregivers with training or experience in child development;
- ◆ A warm, nurturing, developmentally appropriate, and intellectually stimulating environment;
- ◆ Small child-staff ratios with consistent, long-term adult caregivers; and
- ◆ Good parent-staff communication.

**Child Care Aware** provides additional information and resources. Call 800-242-2246 or visit the Web at [www.childcareaware.org/en/](http://www.childcareaware.org/en/). Information in Spanish is available at [www.childcareaware.org/sp/](http://www.childcareaware.org/sp/).

The following brochures, checklists, and resources also may help you choose quality care:

- ◆ *Choosing Child Care*, by Child Care Aware, [www.childcareaware.org/en/child-care-101/choosing-child-care](http://www.childcareaware.org/en/child-care-101/choosing-child-care). In Spanish at [www.childcareaware.org/sp/child\\_care\\_101/choosing\\_child\\_care.php](http://www.childcareaware.org/sp/child_care_101/choosing_child_care.php).
- ◆ *Choosing Quality Child Care for a Child with Special Needs*, by Child Care Aware, [www.childcareaware.org/docs/pubs/102e.pdf](http://www.childcareaware.org/docs/pubs/102e.pdf). In Spanish at [www.childcareaware.org/docs/pubs/102s.pdf](http://www.childcareaware.org/docs/pubs/102s.pdf).
- ◆ *Finding High-Quality Pre-K*, by Pre-K Now, [www.preknow.org/documents/Pre-k\\_checklist.pdf](http://www.preknow.org/documents/Pre-k_checklist.pdf). In Spanish at [www.preknow.org/documents/Pre-k\\_checklist\\_sp.pdf](http://www.preknow.org/documents/Pre-k_checklist_sp.pdf).
- ◆ *Five Steps to Choosing Safe and Healthy Child Care*, by Child Care Aware, [www.childcareaware.org/docs/pubs/106e.pdf](http://www.childcareaware.org/docs/pubs/106e.pdf). In Spanish at [www.childcareaware.org/docs/pubs/106s.pdf](http://www.childcareaware.org/docs/pubs/106s.pdf).

The National Network for Child Care provides several resources on how to choose quality child care settings available at [www.nncc.org](http://www.nncc.org).

NACCRRA offers a publication to help you choose the right care for your child. This resource is available at [www.naccrra.org/docs/parent/38\\_QueBrochure-highqual.pdf](http://www.naccrra.org/docs/parent/38_QueBrochure-highqual.pdf).

Child Welfare League of America has information about child care for parents, providers, and the general public at [www.cwla.org/programs/daycare/default.htm](http://www.cwla.org/programs/daycare/default.htm).

### **How do I learn if a complaint has been filed against a center or provider?**

You may find information about a child care provider or learn if a complaint has been filed against a regulated child care program by contacting your State child care licensing agency. Contact information for all State licensing agencies is at <http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/statedata/dirs/display.cfm?title=licensing>.

### **What is the typical price of child care?**

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An estimated 10.6 percent of the annual income of a two-parent household will be spent on child care and it can be the second largest expense for families after their mortgage or rent. The typical price for child care varies by community, by type of care used by the family (for example, center-based care tends to be more expensive than family child care, and infant care is more expensive than care for an older child), and by child age.

CCR&R agencies collect information on the supply of and demand for child care in local communities. These agencies may provide an estimate on the price of child care in a particular area. For more information, you may want to contact your CCR&R agency. Contact information for all State CCR&R agencies is available at <http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/statedata/dirs/display.cfm?title=ccrr>.

**Statistical Information on Child Care in the United States** has information about the cost of child care and other child care statistics.  
<http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/poptopics/statistics.pdf>

Child Care Aware offers the Budgeting Child Care Options online calculator at [www.childcareaware.org/en/tools/calculator.php](http://www.childcareaware.org/en/tools/calculator.php). It is also available in Spanish at [www.childcareaware.org/sp/tools/calculator.php](http://www.childcareaware.org/sp/tools/calculator.php).



## How can I find help paying for child care?

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There are several financial resources, including government assistance, private scholarships, and tax credits, which might help you pay for child care, depending on your eligibility.

State child care assistance programs are funded through the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), and each State has the flexibility to establish its own program guidelines, requirements, and policies. The CCDF program is federally funded and designed to assist low-income families, families receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and families transitioning off TANF who need child care so they can work or attend training or education. Parents, grandparents, guardians, and relatives with custody of children may apply for child care assistance (sometimes called a subsidy or voucher) at a State or local agency. Applicants may receive assistance if they demonstrate that:

- ◆ Child care is needed to allow family members to work, attend school, or receive training;
- ◆ The household income is not greater than the income limit set by the State;
- ◆ The child is younger than 13 years; and/or
- ◆ The child has a special need or is under court supervision and is younger than 19 years.

States have different eligibility requirements and ways for families to apply for services, including different forms to fill out and steps to follow. The following are some examples of State requirements:

- ◆ Some States require in-person applications, and others offer off-site application services, such as online, telephone, or mail options.
- ◆ All States require families to pay a co-payment fee based on their family income. Some States waive the fee under special circumstances.
- ◆ Some States require single parents to cooperate with child support enforcement regulations to be eligible for services.
- ◆ Some States give assistance to grandparents and other relatives if they meet program requirements.
- ◆ All States allow families to choose from a broad range of child care providers, including relatives, friends, or neighbors.
- ◆ Most States require child care providers to meet basic health and safety requirements, but exactly what the provider must do varies. Some States require all child care providers to be licensed, while others exempt some providers, such as those caring for children of relatives or those caring for a very small number of children.
- ◆ All States pay providers based on a set rate that can vary by age of child, type of care, location, and other factors.
- ◆ All States have different systems for paying providers. Some States use paper checks, others use direct deposit, and others give parents debit cards that can be used to transfer the payment to the provider electronically.



- ◆ Some providers may be required to sign a contract agreement with the State before they can participate in the child care assistance program.

To learn more about the child care assistance program in your State, contact your State child care agency. Contact information for all State CCDF agencies is available at <http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/statedata/dirs/display.cfm?title=ccdf>.

- ◆ You may be eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), designed for low-income working families. Depending on your income, you may also be eligible for the Child Tax Credit and Child and Dependent Care Credit. These credits let you deduct the cost of child care from your Federal, State, or local income taxes if you have a qualifying child. For more information, call the Internal Revenue Service at 800-829-1040 or visit [www.irs.gov/individuals/parents/index.html](http://www.irs.gov/individuals/parents/index.html). The National Women's Law Center provides useful child care tax on its Web site. For more information, call 202-588-5185 or visit [www.nwlc.org/details.cfm?id=3134&section=tax](http://www.nwlc.org/details.cfm?id=3134&section=tax).
- ◆ Your employer may offer the option of putting some of your salary aside, which would not be taxed, for child care. Ask your human resources department whether it offers Dependent Care Flexible Spending Accounts. For more information about Dependent Care Flexible Spending Accounts, call the U.S. Office of Personnel Management at 202-606-1800 or visit the Web at [www.opm.gov/Employment\\_and\\_Benefits/WorkLife/FamilyCareIssues/DependentCareFSA/index.asp](http://www.opm.gov/Employment_and_Benefits/WorkLife/FamilyCareIssues/DependentCareFSA/index.asp).
- ◆ CCR&R agencies sometimes have information about child care programs that have scholarships, special funding options, or sliding fee scales based on household income. Contact information for all State CCR&R agencies is available at <http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/statedata/dirs/display.cfm?title=ccrr>.
- ◆ The *Finding Help Paying for Child Care* brochure includes "Five Steps to Healthy Child Care Budgeting" and a checklist for evaluating child care options. [www.childcareaware.org/docs/pubs/110e.pdf](http://www.childcareaware.org/docs/pubs/110e.pdf). In Spanish at [www.childcareaware.org/docs/pubs/110s.pdf](http://www.childcareaware.org/docs/pubs/110s.pdf).
- ◆ If you are a student, you may be eligible for the Child Care Access Means Parents in School Program (CCAMPIS). CCAMPIS helps low-income parents who are in postsecondary education programs by supporting campus-based child care services. More information is available at [www.ed.gov/programs/campisp/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/programs/campisp/index.html).

### **How can I find information about other assistance programs for low-income families?**

Information about other federally funded programs that provide assistance and support to low-income families and their children is in the Federally Funded Family Support Programs document, which is available at <http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/poptopics/fedfamilysupport.html>.

### **How can I file a complaint against a center or provider?**

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Contact your State licensing agency to find out if a child care program is licensed, or to file a complaint if you think a program is not following regulations.

If you suspect that abuse or neglect is taking place in a child care setting, you can do the following:

- ◆ Call the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline at 800-422-4453, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The hotline gives information about how to make and where to file a report.



- ◆ Contact your State child protective services agency. Contact information for all State child protective services agencies is available on Child Welfare Information Gateway's Web site at [www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/reslist/rl\\_dsp.cfm?rs\\_id=5&rate\\_chno=11-11172](http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/reslist/rl_dsp.cfm?rs_id=5&rate_chno=11-11172).
  - The Child Welfare Information Gateway Web site has resources about prevention, identification, and treatment of child abuse and neglect and other child welfare issues. For more information, call 800-394-3366 or visit [www.childwelfare.gov](http://www.childwelfare.gov). Information in Spanish is available at [www.childwelfare.gov/spanish/](http://www.childwelfare.gov/spanish/).
- ◆ Contact your State child care licensing agency if you think your child care provider is not following State regulations. Contact information for all State licensing agencies is available at <http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/statedata/dirs/display.cfm?title=licensing>.

To find or obtain a full-text copy of your State's child care licensing regulations, visit the National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education Web site at <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

### **How can I find information about contract agreements between parents and their child care providers?**

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You may want to consider the contractual policies that providers have in place before choosing a child care provider. Before signing a contract with a provider, make sure that the policies meet your personal needs.

A contract agreement can include the days and hours of operation, costs, drop-off and pickup times, sick child policies, sleeping arrangements, supplies that you need to provide, emergency plans, and information about other services or additional fees a caregiver can charge. Misunderstandings may be avoided if all parties involved know who is responsible for what. Contracts and rules may be written or verbal when you first enroll your child in care. Not all providers will have written contracts and/or a written set of rules; however, you will want to establish some ground rules before enrolling your child. You may want to compile your own checklist or write your own contract if your provider does not have anything formally written.



Questions you may want to address with your provider before enrolling your child in a child care program include:

- ◆ How much does the provider charge for basic child care for infants or toddlers or for a second or third child in the family?
- ◆ How and when will the provider collect payments for services?
- ◆ Does the provider charge a fee for late pickups?
- ◆ Does the provider have a license?
- ◆ Can the provider drop you from the program?

- ◆ Does the provider charge for days when your child is ill, on vacation, or for holidays or days of inclement weather?
- ◆ Does the provider charge an extra fee for meals, diapers, or other supplies or services?

As a consumer, the relationship you have with your child care provider will affect how you feel about the services you and your child receive. Even if you have carefully selected your child care provider, as a smart consumer you still will want to get to know him or her better. The University of Minnesota offers suggestions to help you and your child care provider have a better relationship, and ways you can help your provider do a better job. You can:

- ◆ Talk to your provider. Share what is happening at home with your child that you feel your provider should know to help him or her better meet your child's needs.
- ◆ Listen to your provider as he or she shares information about your child's day.
- ◆ Show appreciation for what he or she does. Notice his or her successes. Take time to express your appreciation.
- ◆ Respect the confidentiality of your relationship. Both you and your provider should respect any personal information that is exchanged.
- ◆ Share daily pleasures. Find out what your child ate, experienced, and enjoyed during the day.

The following publications include additional information about contract agreements between families and child care providers:

- ◆ *Communicating With Your Provider* (2009), by the University of Minnesota Extension Service. [www.extension.umn.edu/distribution/familydevelopment/00158.html](http://www.extension.umn.edu/distribution/familydevelopment/00158.html)
- ◆ *Understanding Child Care Contracts and Rules* (2009), revised by Rose Allen and Trish Olson, University of Minnesota Extension Service. [www.extension.umn.edu/distribution/familydevelopment/00161.html](http://www.extension.umn.edu/distribution/familydevelopment/00161.html)
- ◆ *What Are My Parental Rights and Responsibilities When My Child Is In Child Care?*, by the National Network for Child Care. [www.nncc.org/Choose.Quality.Care/RightsEng.pdf](http://www.nncc.org/Choose.Quality.Care/RightsEng.pdf)
- ◆ *Contracts with Parents* (1996), by the National Network for Child Care. [www.nncc.org/Families/fdc14\\_contracts\\_parents.html](http://www.nncc.org/Families/fdc14_contracts_parents.html)

Legal questions about contractual agreements between you and your provider can be addressed with the help of an attorney. The following resources provide information or legal help with issues related to contract agreements between families and child care providers:

**Legal Services Corporation (LSC)**

[www.lsc.gov/](http://www.lsc.gov/)

LSC is a private, nonprofit corporation established by the United States Congress and provides civil legal assistance to those who otherwise would be unable to afford it. LSC agencies are available in all 50 States. A list of legal service agencies funded through LSC is available at [www.rin.lsc.gov/scripts/LSC/PD/PDList7.asp](http://www.rin.lsc.gov/scripts/LSC/PD/PDList7.asp).

**Child Care Law Center (CCLC)**

[www.childcarelaw.org](http://www.childcarelaw.org)

CCLC offers resources on a wide range of legal issues related to child care businesses, including contract and policy information for child care centers and family child care homes. CCLC also has an information and referral line Monday through Thursday, 12-3pm (PST), at 415-394-7144, to help answer legal questions relating to child care.

**National Network for Child Care**

[www.nncc.org](http://www.nncc.org)

National Network for Child Care offers a variety of publications and resources, including resources on business management and parent and provider contracts.

The following resources provide additional information about child care:

- ◆ *Preparing Children for Child Care*, by the University of Minnesota Extension Service.  
<http://www.extension.umn.edu/distribution/familydevelopment/00159.html>
- ◆ *Child Care Dilemmas: What Do I Do When . . .*  
<http://www.extension.umn.edu/distribution/familydevelopment/00155.html>

**What are the legal requirements related to hiring someone to care for my child in my home?** [Back](#)

Just like any other type of employee, nannies may be required to pay Social Security and Federal and/or State income taxes on their earnings. You may also be required by Federal law to pay the employer's portion of Social Security tax on a nanny's salary, and some States may require unemployment tax payments. The following resources can provide information about things to consider, such as work agreements and employer and employee expectations, when hiring someone to care for your child in your home. Information about employer tax obligations and how to determine if a child care provider can be an independent contractor or your employee is also provided.

The International Nanny Association provides information about nannies, answers to frequently asked questions about working with nannies, and information about what you need to know before hiring someone to work in your home as a child care provider. For more information, call 888-878-1477 or visit [www.nanny.org/nannyforfamily.php#what](http://www.nanny.org/nannyforfamily.php#what).

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) provides information about tax obligations for individuals and businesses, including information about household employees and

independent contractors. The following resources include information about your tax obligations if you hire an in-home child care provider:

- ◆ *Topic 756 – Employment Taxes for Household Employees* provides information about employer tax obligations regarding household employees, including housekeepers, maids, babysitters, gardeners, and others who work in or around a private residence. [www.irs.gov/taxtopics/tc756.html](http://www.irs.gov/taxtopics/tc756.html).
- ◆ *Topic 762 – Independent Contractor vs. Employee* provides information about how to determine whether a worker is an independent contractor or an employee under common law. [www.irs.gov/taxtopics/tc762.html](http://www.irs.gov/taxtopics/tc762.html).
- ◆ The *Household Employer Tax Guide* provides detailed information about tax regulations, credits, and applicable forms. [www.irs.gov/publications/p926/ix01.html](http://www.irs.gov/publications/p926/ix01.html).

Contact information for all IRS offices is available at [www.irs.gov/localcontacts/index.html](http://www.irs.gov/localcontacts/index.html). You can call 800-829-1040 or visit the Web at [www.irs.gov/index.html](http://www.irs.gov/index.html). Information in Spanish is available at [www.irs.gov/espanol/index.html](http://www.irs.gov/espanol/index.html).

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### **What is the legal age for a child to remain at home by himself or herself and/or to babysit another child?**

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Most States do not have regulations or laws about when a child is considered old enough to stay home alone or to babysit other children. Some States have guidelines or recommendations. These guidelines are most often from child protective services and are administered at the county level. Contact information for all State child protective services agencies is available at [www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/reslist/rl\\_dsp.cfm?rs\\_id=5&rate\\_chno=11-11172](http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/reslist/rl_dsp.cfm?rs_id=5&rate_chno=11-11172).

The National Network for Child Care offers the *Home Alone* publication, which covers things families can consider when deciding to leave their children home alone. The publication also features the *Self-Care Readiness Checklist* and is available at [www.nncc.org/SACC/sac31\\_home.alone.html](http://www.nncc.org/SACC/sac31_home.alone.html).

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### **Are there resources with information about care for children with special needs?**

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The following resources provide information for families with children with special needs:

#### **The National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY)**

800-695-0285

[www.nichcy.org/Pages/Home.aspx](http://www.nichcy.org/Pages/Home.aspx)

[www.nichcy.org/Pages/Publicaciones.aspx](http://www.nichcy.org/Pages/Publicaciones.aspx) (Spanish)

NICHCY answers questions about infant, toddler, child, and youth special needs. Call NICHCY for assistance in either English or Spanish, or visit the Web site for information about organizations and agencies in each State that can provide you with resources about disability issues and any help that is available.

### **Child Care Plus+**

800-235-4122

[www.ccplus.org/index.htm](http://www.ccplus.org/index.htm)

Child Care Plus+ promotes inclusion through the expansion of child care options for families with children with special needs, and training and technical assistance for child care providers and other early childhood professionals.

### **The Parent Training and Information Centers and Community Parent Resource Centers**

Technical Assistance for Parent Centers

888-248-0822

[www.taalliance.org/index.asp](http://www.taalliance.org/index.asp)

### **Consortium for Appropriate Dispute Resolution in Special Education (CADRE)**

541-686-5060

[www.directionservice.org/cadre/](http://www.directionservice.org/cadre/)

CADRE provides technical assistance to State departments of education about the implementation of mediation requirements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. CADRE also helps parents, educators, and administrators benefit from the full continuum of dispute resolution options.

- ◆ Your local child care resource and referral (CCR&R) agency can provide information about how to find care for children with special needs that meets local regulations and requirements. Contact information for all State CCR&R agencies is available at <http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/statedata/dirs/display.cfm?title=ccrr>.
  - The *Choosing Quality Child Care for a Child with Special Needs* brochure provides additional information, [www.childcareaware.org/docs/pubs/102e.pdf](http://www.childcareaware.org/docs/pubs/102e.pdf). In Spanish at [www.childcareaware.org/docs/pubs/102s.pdf](http://www.childcareaware.org/docs/pubs/102s.pdf).

The following resources provide information about inclusive child care:

- ◆ *Building Blocks for Teaching Preschoolers with Special Needs, Second Edition* (2008), by Susan R. Sandall and Ilene S. Schwartz, published by Paul H. Brookes Publishing Company.  
[www.brookespublishing.com/store/books/sandall-69674/index.htm](http://www.brookespublishing.com/store/books/sandall-69674/index.htm)
- ◆ *SpecialQuest Multimedia Training Library* (2007), prepared by the Hilton/Early Head Start Training Program.  
[www.specialquest.org/sqtm/fullvolume/v1\\_complete.pdf](http://www.specialquest.org/sqtm/fullvolume/v1_complete.pdf)
- ◆ *QuickNotes 2nd Edition: Inclusion Resources for Early Childhood Professionals* (2007), by Patricia W. Wesley, Brenda C. Dennis, and Sabrina T. Tyndall, for the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.  
[www.fpg.unc.edu/products/product\\_detail.cfm?apubsid=701](http://www.fpg.unc.edu/products/product_detail.cfm?apubsid=701)
- ◆ *3-4-5 Thrive: A Guide to Providing Educational Opportunities in the Least Restrictive Environment for Iowa's Preschoolers with Disabilities* (2004), by the Iowa Department of Education.  
[www.iowa.gov/educate/index.php?option=com\\_docman&task=doc\\_download&gid=1442](http://www.iowa.gov/educate/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=1442)

- ◆ *Resource Guide: Selected Early Childhood/Early Intervention Training Materials, 12th Edition* (2004), eds. Camille Catlett, Pamela J. Winton, and Sarah E. Hamel, published by the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.  
[www.fpg.unc.edu/~scpp/pdfs/rguide.pdf](http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~scpp/pdfs/rguide.pdf)
- ◆ *Open Hearts, Open Doors: Providing Inclusive Child Care [Corazones Abiertos, Puertas Abiertas: Proporcionando Cuidado de Niños Inclusivo]* (2003), by the Oregon Inclusive Child Care Project, <http://ocdd.org/images/uploads/openHeartsBooklet.pdf>. This resource is available in Spanish at [http://ocdd.org/images/uploads/2004-OHOD\\_ForWeb.pdf](http://ocdd.org/images/uploads/2004-OHOD_ForWeb.pdf)
- ◆ *Questions and Answers About the IDEA and Child Care* (2003), by the Child Care Law Center.  
[www.childcarelaw.org/docs/qanda-ideaandchildcare.pdf](http://www.childcarelaw.org/docs/qanda-ideaandchildcare.pdf)
- ◆ *Finding Our Way Together: A Resource Guide* (2002), by the New Jersey Inclusive Child Care Project.  
[www.spannj.org/njiccp\\_resourceguide/](http://www.spannj.org/njiccp_resourceguide/)
- ◆ *Understanding Inclusion and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)* (2001), by the Florida Children's Forum.  
[www.centraldirectory.org/uploads/inclusion.pdf](http://www.centraldirectory.org/uploads/inclusion.pdf)
- ◆ *Commonly Asked Questions About Child Care and the ADA* (October 1997), by the U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, Disability Rights Section.  
[www.ada.gov/childq%26a.htm](http://www.ada.gov/childq%26a.htm)