

Types of Child Care

What types of child care are available?

How many children can one person care for?

Is all child care regulated? What does that mean?

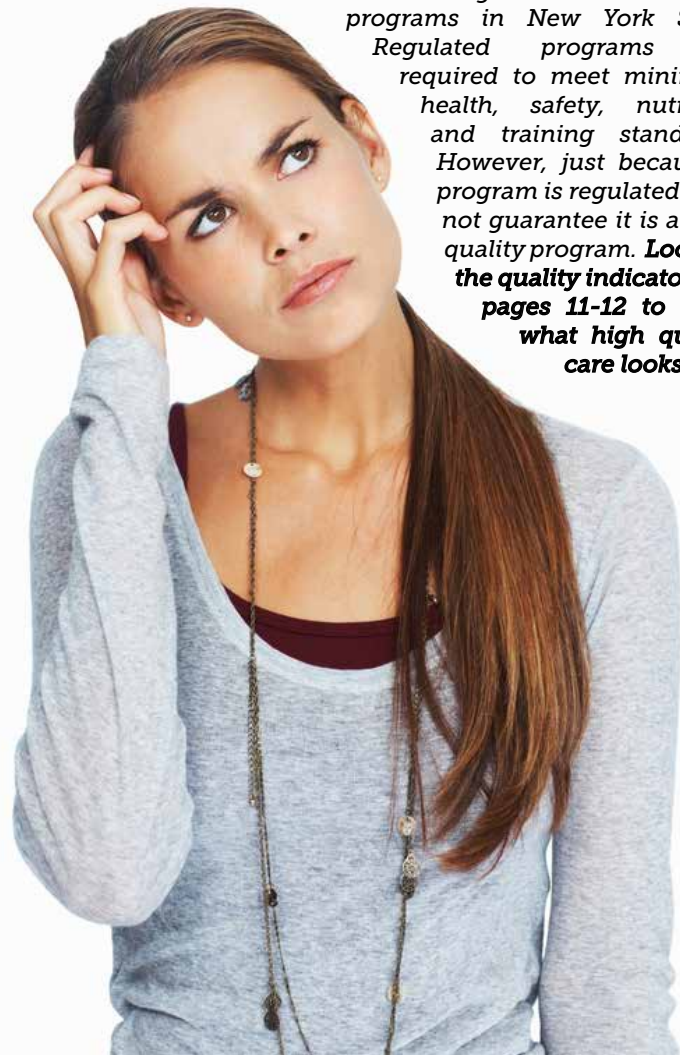
Don't Be Confused...

Let Us Help You Navigate Your Way To High Quality Child Care!

Every parent has different preferences and opinions when it comes to child care. Perhaps you think your child would like to be in a child care center with other children their age. Maybe you want your child to be cared for in a more home-like setting. Some parents prefer to have friends or relatives care for their children.

Because all children are unique and have different needs and personalities, there is not a one size fits all answer for child care. The descriptions on pages 4-6 will help you get a better understanding of the types of regulated and non-regulated child care programs in New York State.

Regulated programs are required to meet minimum health, safety, nutrition and training standards. However, just because a program is regulated does not guarantee it is a high quality program. **Look for the quality indicators on pages 11-12 to learn what high quality care looks like.**



1. Family Child Care

Some parents choose family child care because it offers their children a home-like environment and they like having their children of different ages, together in the same group. Care occurs in an occupied residence.

In New York State we have two types of regulated family child care. They are registered Family Child Care Homes and licensed Group Family Child Care Homes. You can find the definitions below. There are minimum health, safety and nutrition standards for both. NYS requires all registered/licensed family child care programs to complete background checks for providers and household members (18 & over). NYS requires providers to have pre-service and on-going training. Registered/licensed family child care programs are inspected prior to opening and on a every two years or random basis.

1a. Family Child Care Home

- Care is provided by 1 registered caregiver
- Care occurs in an occupied residence
- Can care for children ages 6 weeks - 12 years
- Registered by NYS Office of Children & Family Services.
- A registered family child care home may care for up to 8 children from 6 weeks old - 12 years old*
- There must be one caregiver present for every 2 children less than 2 years of age

1b. Group Family Child Care

- Care is provided by a licensed caregiver
- Care occurs in an occupied residence
- Can care for children ages (6) weeks - (12) years
- Licensed by NYS Office of Children & Family Services
- A licensed group family child care home may care for up to 16 children from 6 weeks old -12 years old*
- There must be one caregiver present for every 2 children less than 2 years of age
- Two caregivers must be present when more than 6

* The max # of children cared for is based on the ages of the caregiver's own children and the ages of those they serve.

CONTACT US

Call: 315 • 446 • 1220 ext. 303
Toll Free: 888 • 729 • 7290 ext. 303

Website: www.childcaresolutionscny.org
Email: parenthelp@childcaresolutionscny.org

6724 Thompson Rd • Syracuse, NY • M-F
63 Genesee St • Auburn, NY • 13021 • T-F

2. Child Care Centers

Child care centers care for children in groups. Centers are licensed and regulated by the NYS Office of Children & Family Services (OCFS). Because they are regulated by NYS they are required to meet minimum health, safety, nutrition and caregiver training standards. NYS requires background checks on all staff members at child care centers. Every licensed child care program must be inspected at least once before each license renewal.

Some parents choose centers because they believe that larger groups, multiple caregivers and state inspections make programs safer for their children and make the arrangement more dependable. Centers have more staff, space, equipment, toys and organized activities which some parents prefer.

- Care is provided by multiple caregivers
- Care occurs in a facility separate from a residence
- Can care for children ages (6) weeks - (12) years
- Licensed by NYS Office of Child & Family Services
- Children are typically divided by age group

The maximum # of children allowed in a group at a center is dependent on the age of the children served as is the maximum # of children per caregiver in a group. See the table below for maximum #'s.

Maximum Group Size & Child To (1) Adult Ratio

	6wks- 18 mos	18 mos- 36 mos	3 yrs	4 yrs	5 yrs	6-9 yrs	10-12 yrs
Group Size	8	12	18	21	24	20	30
Ratio	4:1	5:1	7:1	8:1	9:1	10:1	15:1

3. Family, Friend & Neighbor Care

Some parents choose a relative, friend or neighbor to provide child care. These programs are not subject to health, safety and training standards unless they care for children who receive government child care subsidies. They are exempt from regulation because of the number of children in care (2 non related children) or because the caregiver is a relative to the child. Some parents use this type of care because it best meets their schedules, transportation needs, and or their budgets.

- Care is provided by a relative or non relative of the family
- Care can occur in the child's home or the provider's home
- Can care for up to (2) non-related children*
- There is no maximum number of children allowed when all are related to the caregiver
- If care is provided for relatives & non relatives the maximum number of children allowed is 8 (2 non related)*
- Caregiver's own children are not counted in the total number of children allowed.
- Not regulated by the Office of Children & Family Services

*This number is applicable when care exceeds 3 hours per day and occurs in the caregiver's home. If a program is caring for more than 2 non-related children more than 3 hours per day they are must be registered or licensed.

4. School Age Child Care

School age child care programs provide care for more than six (6) children ages 5-12 years, or older, during non-school hours; may also provide care during school vacation periods and holidays. Background checks are required for all staff.

- Care occurs in a variety of settings such as elementary schools, churches, community centers and child care centers
- Can care for children ages (5) years - (12) years, or older in a group setting.
- Registered by the NYS Office of Children & Family Services.

Maximum Group Size & Child To (1) Adult Ratio

	Kindergarten-9years	10 yrs-12 years
Group Size	8	12
Ratio	4:1	5:1

5. Hired Caregiver/Nanny

- Care is provided by an employee of the family in the child's home. The employer (parent) is required to meet minimum wage and other employee benefit requirements.
- There are nanny agencies that will assist families (on a fee-for-service basis) in finding caregivers.
- Not regulated by the Office of Children & Family Services.

6. Early Childhood Education

6a. Pre-Kindergarten: A part-day NYS funded program run and housed by some school districts, and sometimes run and housed in a community early childhood program that can offer a full day option to children.

6b. Nursery/PreSchool: A program that serves children ages 3-5 years old in a variety of settings including, public & private schools, churches, community centers & home residences. Programs may meet anywhere from 1-5 days/week for less than 3 hours per session. They typically follow the school calendar year. Generally non-regulated and are not required to meet any specific requirements except for programs that voluntarily register with the NYS Department of Education.

6c. Head Start/Early Start: Federally funded programs for children that meet 4-5 days/week during the school year. Children must be at least 3 years old and not eligible to attend public school to attend Head Start. Early Head Start is a program that serves pregnant women, & families with children birth to 3 years, for part day or school day sessions and offers a variety of support services. Head Start encourages parent involvement through regular home visits, volunteering in the program and special activities. All Head Start/Early Head Start Centers are licensed by NYS Office of Children and Family Services and serve primarily low income families.

7. Camp Programs

Camp Programs: Day or overnight recreational programs that operate during the summer months and sometimes school breaks. Some programs are licensed by the NYS Office of Children and Family Services and some are regulated by the NYS Dept. of Health and must meet minimum health and safety requirements.