

About This Type of Care

These programs typically are legally exempt from regulations and may not be required to meet health, safety, and training standards unless they care for children who receive government child care subsidies or vouchers.

The specific definition of family, friend, and neighbor care and the regulatory requirements depends on the number of children in care, whether or not the children are relatives, and the state in which you live.

Families may choose this type of care for several reasons:

- Family, friend, and neighbor caregivers are someone you feel comfortable with and trust.
- There may be more flexibility in hours and transportation with a family, friend, or neighbor provider.
- This type of care often is the least expensive.

It is always important to ask your family, friend, and neighbor caregiver or check with your local [Child Care Resource and Referral agency](#) to check to see if they are required to be licensed.

Tips for Choosing This Type of Care

- If your caregiver is not required to be licensed, ask them if they have taken first aid and CPR training.
- If infant care is needed, ask your caregiver if they have taken safe sleep training. If your caregiver has not taken the training, ask them to enroll. Check with your local Child Care Resource and Referral agency for information on safe sleep training. Your infant should be put to sleep on his/her back in a designated space with no soft bedding, bumper pads, or stuffed animals. Ask how your infant will be supervised at all times, but especially during naps.
- Ask your caregiver about what type of meals are served to make sure your child is receiving nutritious meals and snacks throughout the day.
- Consider performing a [background check](#) on your caregiver and other adults residing or visiting frequently if care is provided in their residence.
- Ask the caregiver about the number of adults and children present (staff to child ratios).
- Be sure to discuss and agree upon things like payment arrangements, holiday schedules, screen time and discipline.
- Check to make sure the caregiver's indoor and outdoor environment are safe and free of any hazards.
- Create an agreement that you can use to ensure that you and your caregiver are on the same page for child care expectations. Our [In-Home Child Care Agreements one-pager](#) can help.

Additional Resource

Download our [All in the Family brochure](#) for tips on making Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care work for you.