

Not all family child care homes may be required to follow a set of minimum health and safety requirements. It is always important to ask a family child care provider or check with your local [Child Care Resource and Referral agency](#) to check to see if your provider is required to be licensed.

Family child care homes may be referred to by different names depending on where you live and your state's regulations. Here are some common names for family child care homes:

- Licensed child care home
- Licensed group family child care home
- Legally or license-exempt home
- Certified child care home
- Registered child care home
- Family, friend, and neighbor care

Family child care homes also may be classified as a large or small family home, depending on the number of children in care.

Families choose family child care providers for different reasons:

- The home-like environment is appealing to many families.
- Family child care providers care for fewer children at one time.
- Siblings can be together because most family child care homes have different ages of children enrolled.
- There are fewer adults that may care for your child on a daily basis.
- Family child care homes may be more flexible with their hours of operation compared to other types of care.

You may want to check to see if your family child care provider participates in your state's [Quality Rating and Improvement System](#).

Tips for Choosing This Type of Care

- Ask to see a copy of the program's license and inspection history. These reports provide you valuable information about the provider's health and safety compliance. Click on [Child Care by State Resource](#) to find out more information on licensing and inspection reports in your state.
- Confirm that every adult living, working, or volunteering in the child care home has had a comprehensive background check.
- Ask the provider about the number of adults and children present (staff to child ratios).
- If you are looking for infant care, make sure to ask your provider about their Safe Sleep policies. For more information on questions to ask your family child care provider, [see our Family Child Care Home Checklist](#).