



Child Care & Development Fund Program

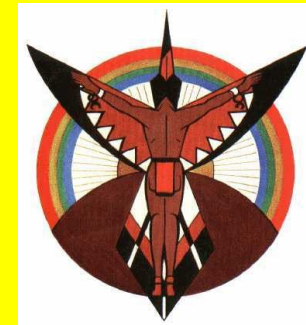
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A Guide to Choosing Child Care



**By the Child Care & Development Fund Program
of the
Inter-Tribal Council of California, Inc.
(ITCC)**



What Are Your Choices?

Family Child Care Homes

Providers are licensed to care for up to six to eight children in their own homes. Large family day care homes can care for twelve or fewer children, if they have a fire inspection and an aide.



Child Care Centers

Centers are licensed to care for groups of more than twelve children. Staff must meet educational requirements and must maintain specified adult/child ratios. The facility must meet building, fire, and zoning codes.

Child Care Co-ops

Usually centers that will exchange child care assistance for money. A ***child care co-op*** usually cannot provide more than 25 hours a week of child care for any one parent or member, because parents have to provide as much child care as they use.

Exempt Child Care

An individual who cares for ***only 1 (one) family's*** child or children in their home, also known as FFN (family, friends, and neighbors), or kith & kin, in addition to their own children. This person is not required to be licensed according to the State of California Licensing Regulations.

Child Care Centers on Tribal land are usually exempt from licensing.

In – Home Child Care

This is an arrangement where a parent hires another adult to care for a child ***in the child's own home***.

Subsidized Child Care

Is limited ***free or low cost*** child care that is available to eligible, low income families who are working, in school, or in a training program. This care is provided in private and public child care centers and family child care homes.



Family & Domestic Violence Prevention Project

*** Purpose**

In an effort to reduce violence in tribal communities, the ITCC implements the Family Violence Prevention & Services Program (FVP&S) to promote the elimination of violence in our tribal communities. Families can live in healthy environments affording tribal communities the right to protect their children and preserve tribal futures.

The ITCC Family Violence Prevention & Services Program provides emergency food, clothing, shelter and transportation services to victims of family violence. Through Family Violence Victim Advocates (FVVA), trained and assisted by ITCC, Native Americans residing in California are provided with emergency services, referrals and workshops for effective education and intervention in Violence Awareness issues.

*Protect Yourself
Protect Your Family*

Please call our Central Office at (916) 973-9581 for more information.



How to Prepare Your Child For Care

When a child first enters care, the experience can be summed up in one word: **Separation**. Anything that you can do to ease the stress of the initial separation will help your child **adjust** and develop new, **close relationships** with the adults and children who they will be with:

- **Talk to your child** about where he will be staying; who will be taking care of him; and what he will be doing. Give him words to describe the experience. **Words** give your child some power over what happens to him.
- Let your child take a favorite stuffed animal, blanket, toy, or a picture of you and the family. These things will give him comfort...**something from home** that he can touch and hold.
- Establish a **daily routine**, so that your child knows when you'll be leaving and when you'll return. It will make days go well for both of you.
- Take a little **extra time** in the morning when you leave your child with the provider and in the evening when you pick her up. This is a good time to talk to the provider and to let your child gradually enter or leave on his own terms in his own time.
- Remember that changes require time for **adjustment**. Your child may fall back upon more familiar and comfortable behavior while he adjusts to new surroundings. If he was toilet trained, he may start having accidents. If he was beginning to talk, he may have less to say. These are **temporary delays** while your child adjusts to a new situation.



Child Care Check List

___ Is TV used? How much and what programs?

___ Does the provider invite cooperation? Do they take the time to answer questions? Do they encourage parents to visit during the day?

___ Is there an **initial interview** with all members of the family? Is the provider interested in finding out about your child and family?

___ What does the provider **charge**? Will you pay monthly, weekly, hourly, or a flat rate? Is there a charge for overtime?

___ Are you asked to pay for **holidays** or for days when your child is ill?

___ Does the provider **close** for holidays or vacations? Which ones? What happens during **school vacations**?

___ Does the provider know **CPR & first aid**? Fire safety?

___ Is the provider prepared for **emergencies**? How will you be contacted?



___ Will the provider care for your **sick child**? Do you have a backup plan?

___ Do the people caring for the children take time to listen to and talk with **each child**? Do they treat each child as an individual with **unique needs**?

Child Care Check List Continued

___ Do the children seem **comfortable**, active, and interested in what they are doing? Do they **cooperate** with each other?

___ What is the provider's philosophy of caring for children? Is **educational development, creative expression**, and/or **social interaction** encouraged and valued?

___ What kinds of **toys, materials, equipment, books** are used? How do they use them? Why?

___ What is the **daily routine**? Does the schedule allow for free time?

___ What methods are used for **toilet training**? Do you agree with them?

___ What is the philosophy on **discipline**? Do you agree with it?

___ Are all children expected to take **naps**?

___ What kinds of **meals** are served? When? Is there 'junk food' and sugar served?



What to Tell the Provider about Your Child

Before leaving your child with anyone, be sure that they have some basic information:

- * Previous **group experience** your child has had.
- * Your **child's interests**: describe your child's favorite games, books, songs, activities.
- * Describe your **child's personality**: whether she is active, shy, verbal, quiet.
- * Make sure the **emergency cards** and health forms are completed and are kept up-to-date and on file with your provider.
- * The method that you use to **discipline** your child.
- * How you **comfort** your child when he is upset or hurt.
- * How you have **prepared** your child to meet the provider.
- * The **expectations** that your child has about being in child care.
- * What **medications** that your child may be taking. Any medical problems or **allergies** that may restrict your child's activities.
- * Any family situations that may place extra **stress** on your child or affect her feelings and behavior.
- * Complete up-to-date **immunization records** are required for all children who are being enrolled in child care centers, unless it is in conflict with the parents' religious beliefs.

The following is the required immunization schedule:

Birth.....	Hep B (1)
2 months	Hep B (2), DTaP (1), Hib (1), Rota (1)
4 months.....	Hep B (3) DTaP (2) Hib (2) Rota (2)
6 months.....	DTaP (3) Rota (3) LAIV (1)
12 months.....	MMR (1) Varicella (1) Hep A (1)
15 months.....	MMR (2) Varicella (2)
18 months.....	DTaP (4) LAIV (2) Hep A (2)
School entry.....	DTaP (5) LAIV (3) MMR (3) Varicella (3)

Hep B=Hepatitis B, Hep A=Hepatitis A
DTaP=Diphtheria & Tetanus Toxoids & Acellular Pertussis
Hib=Haemophilus Influenzae
Rota=Rotavirus
LAIV=Influenza
MMR=Measles, Mumps, & Rubella

After Your Child Is Enrolled

The care of your child is a **partnership** that requires good communication among **parents, provider, and child**. Keep those lines of communication open, and enjoy raising your child with the support and help of trusted and experienced child care providers.

- **Talk with your child** each day about their experiences and feelings. Find out the things that your child likes or the things that trouble him about care. This is information that you can use to work with the provider to make the care of your child the best that it can be.
- Talk with the **people who care** for your child on a daily basis about foods, behavior, activities, funny kid quotes, family events, learning of new skills and new words, friends and feelings. Give information about yourself and child; hear information about your child's growth and development; begin to share **the parenting** with your provider.



- Participate in your child's care in some way; **volunteer time** to make toys, games or linens; attend parent meetings; visit for lunch or field trips; help on weekend work crews; and/or sit on the Board of Directors or Parent Advisory Committee. **Help your provider**.
- **Visit** your child during the day. Plan to spend some time seeing what she does, who she plays with, how your provider cares for your child. **Make child care an extension of your family**. Remember the "Open Door Policy" allows you to drop in on your child at any time that she is in care. This is your right as a parent who is receiving child care services.



What Are Some Considerations for Infant Care

- **What kinds of **sleeping arrangements** are available? Cots, mats, cribs? **Babies should always be put down on their backs for napping or sleeping.**
- **What **experience** has the provider had with infants and toddlers?
- **Who supplies the **diapers**? Formula and/or baby food? Parent or provider?
- ** Is there a special **outside play area** for infants and toddlers?
- **What are the **ages** of the other children in care?
- ** Remember, a child's anxiety over **separation** from parents is heightened at



What Are Some Considerations for School-Age Care

- **Is **transportation** provided to and from school?
- **Are the activities geared for the age of your child? Is the program an extension of a preschool curriculum, or is there a **separate program** for older children?
- **Are **afternoon snacks** available?
- **Does the provider feel comfortable with visits **from school friends** on site or at their friends' homes? Are there **athletic leagues** or clubs after school: little league, scouts, 4-H (an agricultural club), performing arts, etc.?
- **Is the method of **discipline** appropriate for older children? Do they have some say in organizing their day?

How To Choose An In-Home Provider

Take time to think through this decision. Do not feel pressured to say yes or no on the spot. Take the time to advertise in the paper or on bulletin boards, and allow time to interview the person you might choose. Develop interview questions that ask about **knowledge** and **problem solving**. Below are some examples:

1. What is your **experience** with in-home child care? Ask for a written list of references, and call them.
2. What activities do you like to do with children? How do you **discipline** children? Do you have children of your own?
3. What would you do if a **child were injured**?
4. What would you do if a child refused to take a nap?
5. What if a child hit you?
6. Talk about your last few jobs. What did you like most? Least? If you hear complaints about the other families, chances are that you will get complaints about your family too.
7. Are your work hours flexible? If the provider has to leave at 5:30 p.m. every evening, and you are often delayed at work, perhaps this provider is not for you.
8. Let her interact with your child. Does she seem comfortable picking up the baby? Talking to an older child? How does the **child respond** to the interaction?
9. Pay her to come back and spend a day with you and the child. Show her around the house. Demonstrate the **schedule** you want followed, and be a model for how you want her to interact with your child. Get all the information that you can about your provider, and share **your needs** with her.

Other Considerations

- * **Clarify** the household duties. Talk over expected cleaning and cooking chores. It is difficult to add duties later.
- * If your provider turns out to be wrong for you and your child, you must let her go. It will mean starting the search all over again, but you do not want your child to suffer because of tensions between you and the provider.

What Does a License Tell You?

All child care **centers** and **family day care homes** in California must be licensed by the Department of Social Services.

**A child care license limits the number and ages of children in care.

**A license requires that all child care providers are checked for criminal records, and that they have tuberculosis clearances.



**Before a license is issued, all child care centers and homes are checked for health and safety hazards.

If you have questions about the care your children are receiving at a center or home, talk to the teacher, director of family day care, or home provider about your concerns or impressions. If you think the children in care are at risk for health and safety hazards and you have talked to the provider without any results, you can call the licensing authority and can request an investigation of the care situation. You can also find out about the status of a child care license and if there have been any previous complaints.

If you have any concerns about a particular provider, you can call the following agencies: ITCC's Child Care Development Services, your local resource & referral agency by calling the Statewide toll-free number or the licensing bodies of both Child Care Centers and Family Child Care Homes.

- 1.) ITCC **(916) 973-9581** ext. 28
(Statewide)
- 2.) California Child Care Resource & Referral **(800) 543-7793**
(Ask for your County's Local Child Care R & R phone number)
- 3.) Community Care Licensing, River City **(916) 229-4530**
(**Child Care Centers** in Sacramento and surrounding Counties)
- 4.) Sacramento County Family Day Care Licensing **(916) 875-2808**
(**Family Child Care Homes** in Sacramento County)