

## Facts About Child Care In New York

The New York State Office of Children and Family Services is responsible for licensing or registering child care programs and for monitoring these programs for compliance of the regulations. Child care centers in NYC are regulated by the New York City Department of Health.

In New York State, there are four forms of regulated child care: Family Day Care, Group Family Day Care, Day Care Centers and School Age Child Care. See below for more information about each type.

**Family Day Care** is when one provider cares for children in the provider's home for more than three hours per day. If a provider cares for 3 or more children--other than her own--a provider must be registered by NYSOCFS. A provider may care for up to 6 children. In addition, a provider may care for one or two school age children before and after school hours and on school vacations and holidays.

**Group Family Day Care** is similar to family day care in that care for a child is provided in a provider's home – only more children are allowed because an additional caregiver is present. These two caregivers can care for up to 12 children for three or more hours per day. Group family child care providers may also care for one or two school age children before and after school and on school holidays and vacations. Group family child care providers are licensed by NYSOCFS.

**Day Care Centers** provide group care for children away from their homes for three or more hours per day. Centers may care for children from 6 weeks old to 12 years old and must maintain strict staff/child ratios and group size limits. Day Care Centers are licensed by NYSOCFS with the exception of programs in New York City.

**School Age Child Care** is for children who are of school age--kindergarten through 12 years old -- during non-school hours. In this group care setting, programs must maintain staff/child ratios and group size limits. Programs often operate from September through June and are open at times when school is not in session--before and after school, school holidays, conference days. School Age Child Care Programs are registered through NYSOCFS. You may [click here](#) for a copy of the regulations that govern School Age Child Care.

In addition to regulated child care options, parents may also find additional child care programs from which to choose.

**In-home care** is when a provider comes to the family's home to provide services. This offers flexibility to the parents and personal attention for the child.

**Universal Preschool Programs** are offered in many public schools. These programs are for three to five year olds at no cost to families. Programs are part day and operate on a school calendar. These programs are regulated by the State Department of Education.

**Nursery Schools/Preschools** are group programs that are not in someone's home and operate for less than three hours per day. Many of these programs operate on a school calendar and often offer both a part-day and part-week option to families. These programs are not required to be regulated. However, many programs voluntarily follow State Education Department Guidelines or become regulated as a child care center.

**Legally exempt Providers** are also known as "informal providers" or "kith and kin" care. These providers are often friends, relatives or neighbors who watch one or two children in addition to their own. These providers are not required to be regulated.