ywca child care resource and referral
parent resources

information to help you find
the right child care solution
for your family

eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca
metropolitan chicago
welcome...

to the ywca child care resource and referral

The YWCA Metropolitan Chicago is committed to providing women with the support and tools needed to transform their lives, be confident in their choices, and make valuable contributions to their communities. We promote racial justice, embrace diversity, and inspire personal development both within our organization and throughout all our services. Our vision is to eliminate racism and empower women.

The Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) is a valued part of YWCA Metropolitan Chicago and offers families in DuPage and Kane Counties: customized referrals to child care programs; updated information on over 1,200 child care providers; assessment of eligibility for the Illinois Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) to help pay for child care; resources for parents to help interview providers, evaluate programs and understand child care choices; and referrals to other community services. Many of our services are available at low or no cost.

We are pleased to have this opportunity to help you find the best child care solution for your family.

why choose the YWCA CCR&R to help you find child care?

- Our friendly and knowledgeable Parent Referral Counselors have years of experience in the early childhood field and are always available to answer questions or offer additional resources.
- Our fees are based on a sliding scale and our services may be offered at a free or reduced rate based on your family size and income.
- Online referrals are also available through our website at www.ywcachicago.org.
- Services are available in Spanish.
- We are in frequent contact with our providers and value our positive ongoing relationship with them.
- If you misplace your original list or would like an additional list, we will do another search for you at any time within 1 year at no additional charge.
- We are in regular in contact with DCFS to ensure that we only refer those providers who are in good standing.
making the best child care choice for your family

At the YWCA Child Care Resource and Referral, we believe that all children deserve quality care. That’s why we work every day to build strong communities one child at a time.

tips & hints for using your referrals:

• Visit several providers, interview them carefully, and check references.
• The availability of child care can change quickly. We encourage you to contact referrals immediately to determine openings.
• Create a back-up plan for when your selected child care provider is unable to care for your child due to illness or vacation.
• Also create a back-up plan for when your child is sick and cannot attend care. If you do not have friends or relatives who can care for your child when your regular provider is unavailable, you should keep a list of providers who may be willing to care for your child with short notice. Some in-home placement agencies have individuals available to care for sick children in your home. We will be happy to provide a list of these providers in your area upon request.
• If at any time you observe situations and/or procedures you feel are questionable, please call us with your concerns.

The provider names we send are intended as referrals only. This information is supplied by the providers themselves and cannot be warranted by the YWCA CCR&R. We do not license, monitor, or endorse any provider.

YWCA CCR&R Complaint Policy: The CCR&R is dedicated to helping families in DuPage and Kane Counties find quality child care. Should an issue with a provider arise for which you wish to file a complaint, please contact our Parent Referral Counselors at 630-790-8137 to receive a copy of our Complaint Policy and suggested procedures.

Thank you so much for all of your help. You inspired me to find an at-home day care provider. She is dedicated to the love and care of my kids.
—Caroline
What are my child care choices?

Choosing child care is one of the most important, challenging, and personal decisions your family will make. We encourage you to familiarize yourself with the information below. Then, as you meet with each prospective provider, consider your opinions about each program’s environment, staff, curriculum, and group size to select a child care arrangement with which you can feel comfortable and best fits your family’s needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>child care centers</th>
<th>family child care homes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children are separated by age with different adult:child ratios by age group:</td>
<td>One licensed provider may care for up to 8 children between the ages of 6 weeks and 12 years, including his or her own children.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- 6 weeks—15 months: 1 adult to 4 children</td>
<td>A caregiver alone may care for a total of 8 children. Six of those children may be under the age of 5 years if no more than 2 of the children are younger than 30 months of age. With an assistant, other group sizes and ages may be allowed. Contact the CCR&amp;R for more information.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- 15 months—2 years: 1 adult to 5 children</td>
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<tr>
<td>- 2 years: 1 adult to 8 children</td>
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<tr>
<td>- 3 years—4 years: 1 adult to 10 children</td>
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<tr>
<td>- 5 years—12 years: 1 adult to 20 children</td>
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<tr>
<td>Generally open every day except major holidays.</td>
<td>May close for vacation or illness.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open and close at a set time each day with little flexibility; may charge set and non-negotiable fees for late pick ups.</td>
<td>Each provider determines his / her own hours and fees and may offer parents some flexibility.</td>
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<td>Required to be licensed by DCFS unless the program is an official Montessori program, associated with a parochial school, located on federal property, or is part of a public school, as long as the children are at least 3 years old.</td>
<td>May be licensed through DCFS or may be legally license exempt if caring for no more than 3 unrelated children. See below for more information about the differences between licensed and license-exempt providers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Head teachers are required to have at least 1 year of college with a minimum of 6 credit hours in child development and must attend 15 hours of in-service training per year.</td>
<td>Providers may have extensive credentials in child development, minimal training, or no formal training. Programs range from developmentally appropriate curriculums to basic care. Licensed providers are required to be certified in CPR.</td>
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<td>Many adults are present for an increased possibility of supervision and back-up care.</td>
<td>Often an individual person providing care in his/her home. May have a full-or part-time assistant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May provide transportation for older children.</td>
<td>Usually do not transport school-age children.</td>
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</table>

Licensed child care centers and family child care homes have met certain basic standards established by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), including:
- CPR, First Aid, and health and safety training
- Defined ratio of adults to children
- Requirements for space, equipment, and supplies
- Requirements for training
- Medical reports, background checks, & references on file

License exempt child care homes are not required to have a state license if they care for 3 or fewer children (including the provider’s own children under the age of 12 years) or the children from one other household. To be listed with the YWCA CCR&R, a license exempt provider must:
- Have a physical and TB test on file
- Have a background check on file
- Sign a self-certification form agreeing to health and safety standards

Did you know? The CCR&R maintains up-to-date child care cost data for the communities we serve. To find out average costs for your area, contact us at 630-790-8137.
what to ask child care providers

provider:
- What do you like most about working with children?
- What do you find most challenging?
- How do you meet the needs of children of different ages, personalities and learning styles?
- Tell me about your experience with children.
- What trainings have / will you attend?
- How do you handle a child who is upset at drop off or pick up time?
- How do you handle a baby who continues to cry after all physical needs have been met?
- What do you do when children are fighting?
- What do you do when a child will not eat?
- What do you do when a child will not sleep?

environment:
- What are the ages of the other children in your care?
- Can you describe their personalities?
- How do you supervise children when you are changing diapers or preparing meals?
- How are children supervised when you are outside?
- How do you reduce the spread of illness?
- Do you have any pets?
- Can you introduce me to any other adults that will have access to my child?

schedule & curriculum:
- Tell me about your daily schedule.
- What activities do you plan each day?
- Do you go on field trips or transport the children in your care?
- Do you help children with homework?

fees & policies:
- Do you have a written contract explaining your policies?
- What is your back-up plan for when you are sick or on vacation?
- What do you do if a child becomes sick or injured?
- Have you ever had to handle an emergency, and if so what did you do?
- Can parents / guardians visit at any time unannounced?
- Can you introduce me to other parents / guardians who have used you for child care?
- What are your fees and what do they include?
- Are there additional program fees, field trip fees or expenses throughout the year?
- What paid days off do you take (holidays, sick days, vacation) and how much notice do you give?

questions to ask yourself:
- Are you comfortable with this provider? Do you trust her to care for your child?
- Do you feel you will have open communication with this provider?
- Will your child be happy in this home? With this group of children?
- Do the references you received from this provider check out?

Asking the right questions can give you a good idea if a child care provider will match your family’s needs and how well your child will fit into their program.
teaching children to value differences

During the preschool years, children begin to develop their own ideas about others as well as themselves.

Their experiences can help them form a strong sense of positive self-esteem and grow up to respect and interact comfortably with people of different race, gender, and ethnic backgrounds.

Because your child will spend part of his/her day with their child care provider, it is important to choose a provider that is open to these ideas and understands the importance of incorporating anti-bias curriculum into their program.

The YWCA is dedicated to the elimination of racism and empowerment of women. We believe that education about biases and racism should begin in the early years of life.

Here are some things to look for in a child care program:

- Toys, books, materials, and wall displays reflect diversity of race, gender, and abilities.
- Teachers discuss differences openly and highlight diversity by choosing picture books, toys, games, and videos that feature diverse characters in positive non-stereotypical roles.
- Teachers are open to questions. Not being open to questions sends the message that differences are negative.
- Teachers are careful not to promote stereotypical gender roles, suggesting that there are certain games, sports, or activities that only girls can do or only boys can do.
- Teachers talk openly to the children about their family heritage to encourage self-knowledge and positive concept.
- If center-based, the staff is representative of people from different backgrounds, cultures, and experiences.
- Providers praise children for behavior that shows respect and empathy for others.

I already recommended the YWCA’s services to a friend! It was wonderful to find out that if I needed more information, I could call them back at any time.

—Jean
ywca programs:

Provider Services
630-790-3030
Trains and supports child care providers

Child Care Assistance Program
630-790-8009
Helps income-eligible families pay for child care

Economic Empowerment Services
630-790-6600
Helps women’s career advancement through one-on-one coaching, career placement, computer training, and financial counseling

Sexual Violence and Support Services
630-790-6600
Helps individuals impacted by sexual assault through counseling and advocacy services

Did you know?  Last year our Parent Referral Counselors helped more than 3,300 children in families find child care. Ninety-nine percent of the parents we called for follow-up said they would use our service again.

helpful websites:

www.ywcachicago.org—YWCA Metropolitan Chicago—detailed information about YWCA programs

www.actforchildren.org—Illinois Action for Children; resources, community, and advocacy for parents & providers

www.dupagehealth.org—DuPage County Health Department

www.kanehealth.com—Kane County Health Department

www.inccrra.org—Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies; information for parents and early childhood professionals

www.childcareaware.org—the National Association of Resource and Referral Agencies

www.zerotothree.com—a national, nonprofit organization that informs, trains, and supports professionals, policymakers, and parents in the lives of infants and toddlers

www.sidsillinois.org—a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting, educating, creating community awareness of, and eliminating sudden infant death syndrome

www.childcare.about.com—a frequently updated site full of resources and information for parents and providers

www.helpguide.org—articles to help families take charge of their lives and make healthy choices

www.workingmoms.about.com—helpful resources and information for working moms

www.nannynetwork.com/library/faq/index.cfm—a directory of nanny placement and referral agencies; includes a library of articles and resources for parents and nannies

“‘The YWCA is great! I was able to find a wonderful home day care provider with a clean and friendly environment close to my home!’”
—Kara