

# CHILD CARE OPTIONS AND REGULATIONS

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## Child Care Options

One of first things to consider when choosing child care is what type of setting will be the best fir for needs of your child.

This guide will help you look for indicators of quality in child care including group size and child to adult ratios. Child to adult ratio refers to the maximum number of children per staff. Maximum Group Size refers to the number of children cared for together as a unit. Low child to adult ratios and group sizes have a positive impact on the overall quality of early and school-age care and education programs and experiences that children have in those programs.

### Regulated Child Care Options

- Day Care Center
- Family Day Care
- Group Family Day Care
- School Aged Child Care

### Other Early Childhood Program Options

- Nursery School/Pre School
- Legally Exempt Child Care
- In Home Child Care

## What are the New York Child Care Regulations?

### Day Care Centers

Care is provided for more than 6 children at a time in a facility that is not residence in a group setting. Day Care Centers can serve children ages 6 weeks through 12 years and operate for more than 3 hours a day. All staff members are required to be finger printed for clearance check and take a minimum of 30 hours of appropriate training every 2 years. All Day Care centers must be licensed by the NYS office of Children and Family Services and must meet licensing requirements for the facility, health, safety, staffing and education.

The maximum child to adult ratios permitted by New York State in a licensed center are as follows:

<u>Child's Age</u>	<u>Ratio</u>	<u>Group Size</u>
6 weeks - 18 months	4	8
18 to 36 months	5	12
3 years	7	18
4 years	8	21
5 years	9	24
6 to 9 years	10	20
10 to 12 years	15	30

### Family Day Care Homes

Care is provided in a personal residence for 3 to 6 children, and may have an additional 1 to 2 school age children .Programs may enroll children ages 6 weeks through 12 years. All staff members are required to be fingerprinted for a clearance check and take a minimum of 30 hours of

appropriate training every 2 years. Family Day Care Homes must be registered by NYS State Office of Children and Family Services.

The Maximum child to adult ratio permitted by New York State in registered Family Day Care are as follows:

<u>Child's Age</u>	<u>Ratio</u>	<u>Group Size</u>
0 - 2 years	2	2
2 - 5 years	6	6
5 - 12 years	8	8

#### Group Family Day Care Homes

Care is provide in a personal residence by a primary caregiver and an assistant for up to 16 children. The provider must use an assistant when more than 2 infants or more than 6 children are present. Programs may enroll children ages 6 weeks through 12 years. All staff members are required to be fingerprinted for a clearance check and take a minimum of 30 hours of appropriate training every 2 years, Group Family Day Care Homes must be licensed by the NYS Office of Children and Family Services.

The maximum child to adult ratio permitted by New York State in a Licensed Group Family Day Care are as follow:

<u>Child's Age</u>	<u>Ratio</u>	<u>Group Size</u>
0 - 2 years	2	4
2 - 5 years	6	12
5 - 12 years	8	16

#### School Aged Child Care Programs

Programs are designed for children from kindergarten through age 12. Care is provided before and after school and may also operate during school holidays and vacations. Programs may operate in various facilities such an elementary schools, churches, community centers, and day care centers. School Aged Child Care Programs must be registered by New York State Office of Children and Family Services.

The maximum child to adult ratio permitted by New York State in a registered School Aged Child Care Program are as follow:

<u>Child's Age</u>	<u>Ratio</u>	<u>Group Size</u>
Kindergarten - 9 years	10	20
10 - 12 years	15	30

Listed below are types of programs that are not required to be licensed or registered by the New York State office of Children and Family Services

#### Nursery Schools/Pre-Schools

A program that generally serves children ages 3 through 5 years for less than three hours per day, 1 to 5 days per week and follow the school year calendar. A nursery may voluntarily register with the State Education Department (SED) or may volunteer to be licensed by the Office of Children and Family Services.

### Legally Exempt Care (Informal Child Care)

Legally Exempt child care is a great option for those families. This program allows parents to hire close, dependable, reliable friends and family members as their child's care providers. These hired friends and family members are called Legally Exempt child care providers, who are also eligible to receive subsidy payments, or daycare assistance, from the county they perform their services in. Care is provided in a personal residence for up to 2 children. The care is provided outside of the child's home and the care giver is hired by child's parents.

### In Home Child Care

Care is provided for a child in a child's home. There is not a limit on how many children can be cared for as long as all children in care reside in the home where care is provided. The care giver is hired by child's parents.

### What are the New York Child Care Regulations?

Licensing and registration through the New York State Office of Children Services (OCFS) is required for Family Day Care, Group Family Day Care, Centers, and most School Aged Care Programs. This means that all these types of care are regulated, monitored and inspected by OCFS. These programs must meet minimum standards for health and safety, staff education, group size etc. However having a license or registration does not guarantee quality. It is your responsibility to interview care givers and choose a program that is best for your child and family. For more Information about NYS Day Care Regulations visit [http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/childcare/daycare\\_regs.asp](http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/childcare/daycare_regs.asp) or contact the Regional office of OCFS by phone at (518) 402-3038.



#### **CHILD CARE SUPPORT SERVICES**

A program of Catholic Charities of Delaware and Otsego Counties

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