

Quality Indicators for Child Care Homes

Collaborative for Children's Quality Indicators rate child care homes as Excellent, Good or Minimal in several key areas.

High-quality early learning is critically important to a child's growth and development. At Collaborative for Children, we created our own set of quality indicators for **licensed or registered child care home providers** in our area. Based on information provided by the child care providers, we assign a rating of Excellent, Good or Minimal in the following areas, and based on the criteria listed below.

EDUCATION

This category refers to the education of the child care home provider.

- Excellent: The licensed or registered child care home provider has a Child Development Associate credential, a Certified Child Care Professional credential, Montessori certification or an Associate or Baccalaureate degree in Early Childhood Education or Child Development.
- Good: The licensed or registered child care home provider has six hours of completed college credits in courses related to early childhood education and child development or a certification such as a Director's credential.
- Minimal: The licensed or registered child care home provider meets the requirements for Education in the Texas Minimum Standard Rules established by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (currently a high school diploma or equivalent and 30 clock hours of training annually).

EXPERIENCE

This category refers to the length of experience a home provider has in caring for children.

- Excellent: The home provider has 10 or more years of experience caring for children in a regulated child care program (licensed child care center, licensed or registered home or church-regulated child care setting, i.e., Mother's Day Out program).
- Good: The home provider has more than five but less than 10 years of experience caring for children in a regulated child care program.
- Minimal: The home provider has less than five years of experience caring for children in a regulated child care program.

BUSINESS PRACTICE

This category refers to the relevant tools, programs and activities the home provider uses in his or her business, as well as professional memberships.

- Excellent: The home provider offers seven or more of the following: Family Child Care Home Association membership; parent handbook; parent conferences; written daily reports; family events; newsletters; nutrition program participation; professional early education organization membership; participation in an Early Care and Education Quality Improvement project.
- Good: The home provider offers four to six of the following: Family Child Care Home Association membership; parent handbook; parent conferences; written daily reports; family events; newsletters; nutrition program participation; professional early education organization membership; participation in an Early Care and Education Quality Improvement project.
- Minimal: The home provider offers three or fewer of the following: Family Child Care Home Association membership; parent handbook; parent conferences; written daily reports; family events; newsletters; nutrition program participation; professional early education organization membership; participation in an Early Care and Education Quality Improvement project.

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Other Important Factors to Consider When Selecting a Child Care Home Provider:

TOTAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN CARE

Fewer children in care enables the licensed or registered child care provider to offer more individualized care and attention.

HEALTH AND SAFETY PRACTICES

Texas Minimum Standard Rules require licensed and registered child care home providers to ensure the following:

- Healthy and clean environment
- CPR and First Aid certification
- Indoor and outdoor active play space and equipment
- Swimming pools and wading/splashing pool safety
- Safety of children from other people in the child care home
- Safety practices related to firearms in the child care home
- Safe administration of medications to children in the child care home
- Animal safety in the child care home
- Availability of a first aid kit in the child care home
- Procedures for the release of children
- Transportation safety

FIRE SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PRACTICES

Texas Minimum Standard Rules require licensed and registered child care home providers to offer the following:

- Emergency preparedness plan
- Emergency evacuation and relocation diagram
- Fire extinguisher and smoke detection system must be available in the child care home
- Carbon monoxide detection system must be available in the child care home

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Texas Minimum Standard Rules require licensed or registered child care home providers to offer specific learning opportunities for infants through school-age children. The following are some of the requirements:

- Planned program of activities designed to meet the individual needs and developmental levels of all children in care
- Planned activities that support thinking skills, physical development, language development and social development for all children
- Planned program that includes opportunities for active and quiet play, including group and individual activities for toddlers and older children
- Planned program that provides opportunities for infants to safely explore outside the crib or other confining equipment multiple times during the day
- Opportunities for infants to experience grasping, pulling up, crawling and walking in safe environment.
- Easy access of all children to a variety of materials and equipment throughout the day. Examples: containers, baskets or low shelving so children can safely access learning materials
- Daily opportunities for outdoor play for all children in care, including infants
- Pleasant environment, not over-stimulating and arranged to allow freedom of movement for all children in care