



**2-1-1**  
CHILD CARE



For more information: Dial 2-1-1 or 1-800-505-1000 | [www.211childcare.org](http://www.211childcare.org) | [www.ctunitedway.org](http://www.ctunitedway.org)

## *Licensing vs Accreditation*

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As a parent searching for quality child care, you may hear providers say “I am licensed” or “We are accredited”. What do these terms mean? How does this information help you in choosing child care?

### **Being licensed and being accredited are different.**

***Licensing:*** Licensing regulations are set by *each individual state*. The goal is to ensure the safety and well-being of children. Programs that are licensed must meet the state's *minimum standards*. Each state defines which types of child care arrangements must be licensed.

The Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) is the state agency responsible for licensing child care programs. DPH:

- visits and inspects programs on a regular basis
- conducts unannounced inspections
- investigates complaints
- conducts background checks on providers (and household members for family child care)

To learn more, you can visit their website at

[www.dph.state.ct.us/BRS/Day\\_Care/day\\_care.htm#Regulations](http://www.dph.state.ct.us/BRS/Day_Care/day_care.htm#Regulations)

Parents are encouraged to call the DPH Day Care Licensing Unit for:

- information on regulations
- checking on substantiated complaints
- filing a complaint against a licensed program

They can be reached at 1-800-282-6063.

### ***When is a child care license required?***

Child care arrangements that are:

- For more than 3 hours a day
  - Taking place outside of the child's home
  - On a consistent basis (i.e. the third Monday of every month)
- must have a license

### ***What are the categories of licensure?***

- Family child care home (caring for a maximum of 6 full time and 3 school age children)
- Group child care home (caring for 7 to 12 children)
- Child care center (caring for 13+ children)

### ***Are any child care options exempt from licensing? Yes***

- Nanny care
- Relative care (sometimes called “Kith and Kin” or “Family, Friend and Neighbor Care”)
- Programs administered by public or parochial schools
- Drop-in programs where the parents are on premises (i.e.: playgroups, gym, church, etc.)

**Accreditation:** These are standards created by *national groups*. Accreditation standards are most often higher than licensing regulations. Child care programs can voluntarily become accredited; it is not mandated by state law. Therefore, accredited child care programs have gone beyond the minimal licensing standards to assist them in providing quality care.

***What types of early childhood programs can become accredited?***

- Family child care homes
- Group child care homes
- Child care centers
- Kindergarten and school age classrooms

***What are the most common types of accreditation?***

| <b><i>Accreditation</i></b>                                      | <b><i>Type of child care</i></b>                            | <b><i>What are the main standards addressed?</i></b>  | <b><i>Where can I get more information?</i></b>   |
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| National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC)               | Family child care Homes                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationships</li> <li>• Environment</li> <li>• Activities</li> <li>• Developmental Learning Goals</li> <li>• Safety and Health</li> <li>• Professional Business Practice</li> </ul>   | Visit their website:<br><a href="http://www.nafcc.org">www.nafcc.org</a><br><br>or call<br>1-800-359-3817   |
| National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) | Child care centers, Kindergartens, public school preschools | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationships</li> <li>• Curriculum</li> <li>• Teaching</li> <li>• Assessment of Child Progress</li> <li>• Health</li> <li>• Teachers</li> <li>• Families</li> <li>• Community Relationships</li> <li>• Physical Environment</li> <li>• Leadership &amp; Management</li> </ul> | Visit their website:<br><a href="http://www.naeyc.org">www.naeyc.org</a><br><br>or call<br>1-800-424-2460   |
| National AfterSchool Association (NAA)                           | School-age programs   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human relationships</li> <li>• Indoor environment</li> <li>• Outdoor environment</li> <li>• Activities</li> <li>• Safety, health, and nutrition</li> <li>• Administration</li> </ul>   | Visit their website:<br><a href="http://www.naaweb.org">www.naaweb.org</a><br><br>or call<br>1-800-617-8242 |

**For more information on licensing and accreditation, please call 2-1-1 Child Care at 2-1-1 or 1-800-505-1000. Or visit our website: [www.211childcare.org](http://www.211childcare.org)**