



STARTING a CHILD CARE CENTER

Child care can be an exciting and rewarding field. It can be a wonderful opportunity to have an impact on the lives of children and their families. Caring for children is also a tremendous responsibility, and each State has regulations that apply to child care settings. Here are some topics for you to consider when starting a child care program:

- Child care needs in your community;
- Licensing requirements and professional standards;
- Legal requirements such as zoning, insurance, and taxes;
- Business plan for starting and operating a small business;
- Costs of center start-up and operations;
- Design of the facility, including appropriate use of indoor and outdoor spaces;
- Suitable equipment and materials;
- Staff recruitment, training, and compensation;
- Policy and procedures for staff and families;
- Health and safety issues, including accident and illness prevention and emergency procedures;
- Curriculum and schedule of activities that meet the needs of the children; and
- Connections with community services and organizations.

The following resources will help you prepare to open a quality child care program.

RESOURCES in YOUR COMMUNITY

■ Child Care Resource and Referral agencies (CCR&Rs) are local agencies that help parents find quality child care and child care resources in their community. Your local CCR&R can give you information about the child care needs in your community. You can ask them about rates that other providers charge. The CCR&R will also let families know about your services. The CCR&R has information about training opportunities and other resources. To find your local CCR&R agency, contact Child Care Aware, a national nonprofit initiative, at 800-424-2246. Information is also available in English on the Web at <http://www.childcareaware.org> and in Spanish at <http://www.childcareaware.org/sp/>.

RESOURCES in YOUR STATE

■ Important information about child care in your State is on the NCCIC Web site in the State Profiles section at <http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/statedata/statepro/index.html>. When you select your State, you will find:

- Information on Licensing Requirements, including the **Maximum Child:Staff Ratios**. The child:staff ratio shows the maximum number of children who can be in a staff person's care. (For example, 3:1 is 3 children to 1 caregiver.)

- A link to your State's **Child Care Licensure Regulations**. These have been compiled by the National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care. You can also find your State's regulations on the Web at <http://nrc.uchsc.edu/STATES/states.htm>.
- Contact information for your State's **Child Care Licensing Agency**. The agency will give you information about how to become registered or licensed. They can also send you a copy of your **State's regulations** and other requirements for caring for children.
- Contact information for your State's **Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Administrator**. CACFP may help you pay for healthy meals and snacks.
- A link to your State's **Child Care Homepage**. These Web pages often have information about programs to help parents pay for child care, training opportunities, child care quality improvement plans, and grant programs.

LINKS to NCCIC INFORMATION on the WEB

■ NCCIC's Child Care as a Business topic is on the Web at <http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/poptopics/index.html#ccbusiness>. It includes the following documents:

- *Funding Opportunities for Child Care* (<http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/poptopics/funding-opportunities.html>);
- *Fundraising* (<http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/poptopics/fundraising.html>);
- *Grants and Grant Writing* (<http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/poptopics/grantwriting.html>);
- *Cómo establecer un centro de cuidado infantil [Starting a Child Care Center]* (<http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/spanish/starting-sp.html>).
- *The Child Care Microenterprise Toolkit*
<http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/poptopics/index.html#microenterprise>.

■ The Internet Links section of the NCCIC Web site, which has links to major national child care and early education organizations, is on the Web at http://links.nccic.acf.hhs.gov/internet_links/searchlinks.cgi.

PUBLICATIONS with CHILD CARE PROGRAM START-UP INFORMATION

■ *Board of Directors Child Care Resource Book* (2005), by the Child Care Operations Center of Expertise, General Services Administration (GSA), is a guide for developing a nonprofit board that contracts for child care services. Specific steps and procedures are outlined and sample documents are provided to assist agencies starting boards and opening centers. This resource is on the Web at http://www.gsa.gov/gsa/cm_attachments/GSA_DOCUMENT/boardbook_R2E-c-oN_0Z5RDZ-i34K-pR.pdf.

■ *Child Care Center Facility Development Checklists* (2004), by the Building Child Care in California Project, has information about how you can expand, renovate, build, or purchase a child care center. It breaks down the process into four stages: planning, predevelopment,

development, and start-up. The checklists represent a number of the activities involved in a facilities development project. These checklists are available on the Web at <http://www.buildingchildcare.org/checklists.htm>. An extended list of publications related to developing a child care center is on the Web at http://www.buildingchildcare.org/publications_ccc_index.htm.

■ *Developing a Child Care Center* (2004), by Kay Hutchinson, Kay Sohl, and Marnie Vlahos, published by the Enterprise Foundation, is designed for community-based organizations as a first step in thinking through the development of a child care center. This resource is available on the Web at <http://www.enterprisefoundation.org/resources/ccl/7Developing/index.asp>.

■ *Child Care Center Design Guide* (July 2003), published by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA), has information about planning and designing child care centers in GSA-owned or controlled spaces. It includes planning for space and location; site design; interior space design; furnishings and equipment; interior finishes; and technical criteria. This resource is on the Web at http://www.gsa.gov/gsa/cm_attachments/GSA_DOCUMENT/Design%20Guide_R2FD38_0Z5R_DZ-i34K-pR.pdf.

■ *Recommended Books on Group Day Care Center Start-Up and Administration* (January 2003), by the Wisconsin Child Care Information Center, lists books with information on the topics of space and furnishings, leadership and supervision, health and safety, financial management, and forms. It also lists books with information on preschool curriculum, infant and toddler programs, and school-age care programs. This resource is on the Web at <http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/ccic/ccicrgdc.html>.

■ *Making a Place for Children: Child Care Facility Planning Manual for Washington State* (2003), by Jan Gleason and Sally Knodell, for the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, will help you plan the development of a quality center serving children from infancy through school age. It includes the steps to take when designing a facility, information about published requirements, and design considerations for indoor and outdoor elements of the facility. It also offers a general overview of program considerations. This resource is on the Web at <http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/esa/dccel/facmanual.shtml>.

■ *The Business Side of Child Care: A Reference Manual for Child Care Advocates and Lenders* (2002), by Self-Help, is a reference manual with information about the business aspects of planning for and operating a child care program. It includes model budgets for centers of varying sizes and locations (rural, urban). It has information about construction issues, including use of design professionals; regulations; and quality assessments. This resource is on the Web at <http://www.self-help.org/pdfs/childcare%20manual.pdf>.

■ *Operating on Federal Property: Director's Desk Guide* (2002), by the Child Care Operations Center of Expertise, U.S. General Services Administration (GSA), includes guidance, procedures, and sample documents to help directors operating child care centers on Federal property. A model contract between a board of directors and a child care provider defines the

responsibilities of the Board of Directors and the company contracted to provide child care services. “Section G: Board of Directors” in “2000 Survey for Child Care Centers in GSA-Controlled Space” reviews important questions about board structure and responsibilities. This resource is on the Web at

http://www.gsa.gov/gsa/cm_attachments/GSA_DOCUMENT/Directorsdeskguide_R2E-c11-i_0Z5RDZ-i34K-pR.pdf.

■ *Starting a Child Development Center* (2002), by the Child Care Operations Center of Expertise, U.S. General Services Administration (GSA), has an overview of the start-up process for quality care for young children in child care centers located in GSA-managed space. This resource is on the Web at

http://www.gsa.gov/gsa/cm_attachments/GSA_DOCUMENT/startwebB_R2F-cM3_0Z5RDZ-i34K-pR.doc

■ *Start-Up Manual for Faith-Based Child Care Programs* (2002), by Debra Lawrence, published by Child Care Connections, is a procedural manual for helping faith-based communities decide whether licensed child care fits within their ministry. For additional information, contact Child Care Connections in Colorado at 719-638-2070 or on the Web at

<http://www.childcareconnections.net>.

■ *Creating a Child Care Facility at Post* (2001), 2nd Edition, prepared by the Family Liaison Office, U.S. Department of State, serves as a guide to setting up a child care program under the auspices of a Mission Employee Association. The guide includes information on establishing the leadership at post, funding the program, finding the site, purchasing equipment, hiring staff, and developing the program and eligibility criteria. The introduction and table of contents are available on the Web at <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/11556.pdf>. For a copy of the full publication, *Creating a Child Care Facility at Post*, e-mail the Family Liaison Office at flo@state.gov.

■ *The ABC's of Early Childhood Programs and Facility Development* (April 2000), by Community Investment Collaborative for Kids (CICK), looks at issues that have to be considered in planning child care programs. It discusses various types of early childhood programs and subsidy programs. It also has information on partnerships, needs assessment, location, space/design considerations, and financing. This resource is on the Web at

http://www.lisc.org/resources/assets/asset_upload_file419_253.pdf.

RELATED PUBLICATION

■ *Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care Programs, 2nd Edition* (2002), by the American Public Health Association (APHA); the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP); and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, is a comprehensive set of health and safety standards for providing quality child care. This resource is on the Web at <http://nrc.uchsc.edu/CFOC/index.html>.

FEDERAL AGENCIES and NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The following Federal agencies and national organizations have information on child care issues, including start-up costs, budgeting, program development, regulations and standards, funding, and staffing.

■ **Military Child Care Home**

MilitaryHOMEFRONT

U.S. Department of Defense (DoD)

World Wide Web:

http://militaryhomefront.dod.mil/portal/page?_pageid=73,44033&_dad=itc&_schema=PORTAL§ion_id=20.60.500.390.0.0.0.0

MilitaryHOMEFRONT is the official Department of Defense Web site for reliable quality of life information designed to help troops and their families, leaders, and service providers. The Military Child Care Home Web page provides a review of Federal legislation and DoD policies on child care and identifies strategies and actions installation commanders can implement to ensure affordable, quality child care is available for DoD families.

■ **U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)**

800-827-5722

World Wide Web: <http://www.sba.gov>

The mission of the SBA is to maintain and strengthen the nation's economy by aiding, counseling, assisting, and protecting the interests of small businesses. It also helps families and businesses recover from national disasters. Information about starting a small business is on the Web at http://www.sba.gov/starting_business/index.html. Information about financing a small business is on the Web at <http://www.sba.gov/financing/index.html>. SBA's Online Women's Business Center is on the Web at <http://www.onlinewbc.gov/>.

■ **Child Care Law Center (CCLC)**

415-394-7144

World Wide Web: <http://www.childcarelaw.org>

CCLC is a national nonprofit legal services organization that uses legal tools to foster the development of high-quality, affordable child care—for every child, every parent, and every community. CCLC works to expand child care options, particularly for low-income families, and to make sure that children are safe and nurtured in care outside the home. CCLC has information on a variety of legal issues including liability and insurance issues, zoning and deed restrictions, contracts, and materials about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

■ **National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)**

800-424-2460

World Wide Web: <http://naeyc.org>

NAEYC is a nonprofit professional organization of more than 103,000 members dedicated to improving the quality of care and education provided to our nation's young children. NAEYC runs the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs, which is a voluntary, national accreditation system for high-quality early childhood programs. It also runs the National Institute

for Early Childhood Professional Development, which provides resources and services to improve professional preparation and development of early childhood educators.

■ **The National Economic Development and Law Center (NEDLC)**

510-251-2600

World Wide Web: <http://www.nedlc.org>

NEDLC is a nonprofit organization that specializes in community economic development. They view child care as a key to building sustainable local economies. NEDCL's Early Care and Education Program occurs at the neighborhood, community, county, and State levels. It helps improve the supply of quality, affordable child care and early childhood programs and services in poor communities. Information about the child care program is on the Web at http://www.nedlc.org/Programs/divisions_cyf_childcare.htm. NEDLC also supports the Building Child Care (BCC) Project, which provides a centralized clearinghouse of information and services to improve child care providers' access to financial resources for facilities development projects in California. Many of their can also be used by those in other States. Information about this project is on the Web at <http://www.buildingchildcare.org/index.htm>.

■ **National Institute on Out-of-School Time (NIOST)**

Wellesley Centers for Women

781-283-2547

World Wide Web: <http://www.niost.org>

NIOST works to improve the quantity and quality of out-of-school time programs throughout the country. NIOST focuses on education and training, community development, consultation, research, and public awareness and policy. NIOST serves children, parents, out-of-school time program staff, school principals and supervisors, community leaders, and government officials committed to improving out-of-school time options for children and youth.

■ **National Network for Child Care (NNCC)**

World Wide Web: <http://www.nncc.org>

NNCC operated the Cooperative Extension system, which uses the expertise of many of the nation's leading universities in the areas of child care and early childhood development. NNCC offers an Internet source of over 1000 publications and resources related to child care. Links to articles on Child Care Business Management are available on the Web at http://cyfernet.ces.ncsu.edu/cyfdb/browse_2pageAnncc.php?subcat=Child+Care+Business+Management&search=NNCC&search_type=browse.

■ **Redleaf National Institute (RNI)**

651-641-6675

World Wide Web: <http://www.redleafinstitute.org>

RNI helps improve the quality of family child care by helping providers manage their businesses. RNI also offers support to trainers, tax preparers and organizations who help providers with their business. The Institute offers training, telephone and e-mail assistance, publications, and help in handling IRS audits. Their handouts have useful information for both family child care providers and child care centers. Handout topics include:

- Contracts;

- Food Program and Food Expenses;
- Money Management and Retirement Planning;
- Promoting Your Business;
- Record Keeping and Taxes; and
- Reducing Risks.

Selected handouts are available in Spanish and in Hmong. These resources are available on the Web at <http://www.redleafinstitute.org/Index.cfm?section=BL&Page=BL06#mkting>.

PUBLISHERS

■ **Child Care Information Exchange (CCIE)**

800-221-2864

World Wide Web: <http://www.ccie.com>

CCIE is a publishing house that has promoted the exchange of ideas among leaders in early childhood programs worldwide through its magazine, books, training products, training seminars, and international conferences. *Child Care Information Exchange* is a bi-monthly magazine for administrators of early childhood programs.

■ **Redleaf Press**

800-423-8309

World Wide Web: <http://www.redleafpress.org>

Redleaf Press is a leading nonprofit publisher of curriculum, management, and business resources for early childhood professionals. Redleaf Press distributes approximately 500 high-quality titles at any given time. Redleaf Press is a division of Resources for Child Caring, a nonprofit child care organization.

■ **School-Age *NOTES***

614-855-9315 or 800-410-8780

World Wide Web: <http://www.schoolagenotes.com>

This newsletter provides monthly ideas, strategies, and curriculum activities for working with school-agers. A quarterly resource catalog has materials on discipline, science, health, administration, activities and games for school-age programs, and descriptions of models programs with contacts.

The National Child Care Information Center, a service of the Child Care Bureau, does not endorse any organization, publication, or resource. For more information, please contact NCCIC: 10530 Rosehaven Street, Suite 400, Fairfax, Virginia 22030; Ph: 800-616-2242; Fax: 800-716-2242; TTY: 800-516-2242; E-mail: info@nccic.org; Web site: <http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov>.