



GOVERNMENT OF BERMUDA
Department of Health



CHILD CARE

HELPING YOU MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICE!





Choosing the right child care for your child under the age of 5 years old can be difficult. This leaflet is here to help you know what to look out for to ensure your child's wellbeing and safety.



WHY CHOOSE CHILD CARE?

Families can have different reasons for seeking child care. A good caregiver will help children to grow physically, socially and mentally.

Child Care Should:

- ▶ Protect children from harm and illness.
- ▶ Help children explore and learn about the world around them.
- ▶ Help build social skills.
- ▶ Strengthen parent-child relationships. You may spend less hours together, but the quality can be better and that's good for both of you.



WHO CAN PROVIDE CHILD CARE?

Day Care Providers:

- ▶ Work in a home setting.
- ▶ Provide care for more than two hours at a time in exchange for pay or reward.
- ▶ May care for one (1) to three (3) children at the same time. This includes caring for family members under the age of 5 years old.

Day Care Centres:

- ▶ Operate in a setting that is exclusively for child care (i.e. not used as a home).
- ▶ May care for 4 or more children.
- ▶ Have specific adult-to-child ratios for different age groups. Please review our website www.gov.bm/child-care-regulation-programme or the *Day Care Centre Regulations 1999*.

Anyone Who Works as a Day Care Provider Must:

- ▶ Comply with the Children Act 1998.
- ▶ Be registered with the Department of Health.
- ▶ Comply with the conditions typed on their certificate of registration.
- ▶ Display their Department of Health Certificate in their home.

Anyone Who Operates A Day Care Centre Must:

- ▶ Be licensed by the Department of Health.
- ▶ Comply with the Children Act 1998.
- ▶ Comply with the Day Care Centre Regulations 1999.
- ▶ Display their Department of Health License in the facility.

The Following Are Not Considered Day Care Providers:

Guardians, foster parents, occasional baby sitters, private nannies caring for a child in the child's own home, or care provided during religious church activities. Contact us if in doubt.



WHY IS REGISTRATION NEEDED?

Children need a great deal of nurturing and attention in their early years. This is vital for them to grow healthy, secure and able to achieve their potential.

Different jurisdictions have their own regulations about how many children a child-care setting may look after. These are always proportional to the amount of training and certification that caregivers are expected to have (e.g. training in child development, First Aid/ CPR, SIDS, etc.).

The standards in Bermuda reflect the training requirements for Day Care Providers and Day Care Centres. They are in place to ensure that children are looked after in safe and appropriate environments.



GOOD CHILD CARE CHECKLIST

Before enrolling your child, make sure you visit the facility and spend time there observing and asking questions.

If an operator does not allow you to visit before you leave your child, do not use the facility.

If possible, also let your child visit the facility before you make a final decision.

Things to Look Out For:

- Day Care Providers - Certificate of Registration
- Day Care Centre – Licence and Fire Certificate
- Facility is safe, uncluttered, clean and bright.
- Play equipment is sturdy, safe, clean and in good repair.
- There are adequate separate areas for play and rest when caring for babies and older children.
- There is adequate qualified staff.
- Staff are actively supervising, engaging and interacting with the children.
- Staff seem to really enjoy working with children.
- Age appropriate activities are geared towards the interests and development of the children.
- Hazardous materials such as medicines and cleaning supplies are not accessible to children; preferably locked away.

Questions You Should Ask of the Facility:

- ▶ Is the setting licenced or child care provider registered with the Department of Health?
- ▶ Are the Person-In-Charge and Deputy certified? (Ask to see Certificate of Qualifications by DOH.)
 - How many of the staff are qualified teachers?
- ▶ Are the staff trained in child development/early childhood education?
- ▶ How many staff are trained in CPR and First Aid?
- ▶ Are all staff SCARS trained?
- ▶ Are infant caregivers well-informed about Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)?
- ▶ What is the turnover of staff and children?
- ▶ Can you visit whenever you wish? (If not, be very cautious.)
 - Ask to see their Open door policy.
 - What is the daily routine? (e.g. naps and meals)
- ▶ Is there a written plan for play and learning activities? (Ask to see it.)
- ▶ Are there regular opportunities for inside and outside play for all children, including infants?

- ▶ Will you be provided with information on what your child did every day and in what format?
 - Ask about form of communication i.e. WhatsApp groups, Communication Apps.
- ▶ Are the children supervised at all times?
- ▶ Is television/media viewing allowed at the setting?
 - Ask to see their Media Viewing Policy.
- * *Media viewing (TV, Video, DVD, Cell Phone, and iPads) is not permitted for children younger than 2 years. For children 18 to 24 months of age it should be a high-quality Programme/apps that is viewed with an adult. For children 2 to 5 years of age screen time should be limited to 1 hour per day of high-quality programming, helping children to understand what they are seeing, and help them apply what they learn to the world around them (The American Academy of Pediatrics).*
- ▶ What policies are in place?
 - Such as Transportation, Discipline, Sick Child and Medicine?
 - Ask how policies are shared and whether you can view them in advance?
- ▶ Do all the children have a place for their own belongings?
- ▶ Does the child care provider or caregiver meet regularly with parents?

What is a S.T.A.R.S Inspection?

The Child Care Regulation Programme is utilizing a new comprehensive inspection tool which has been designed using the Children Act 1998, Day Care Centre Regulations 1999, and the Child Care Standards 2018. The S.T.A.R.S inspection tool highlights many areas; Licence (DCC)/ Regulation (DCP), Staff, Supervision, Safety, Health, Sanitation, Learning Environment & Materials, Developmental Activities, Outside Play Area, Caregiver Competencies, Infant & Young Toddlers, Parent & Family Engagement.

STARS stands for –

1. **Striving** for excellence
2. **Target** a play-based approach
3. **Accountable** to children, parents, yourselves
4. **Responsive** to the individual needs of the child
5. **Safe** and healthy

The S.T.A.R.S inspections occur every year. However, with newly Licenced Centres or newly Registered Providers their S.T.A.R.S inspection is deferred within their first year of operation.

What are the different S.T.A.R.S ratings?

Following an inspection Centres and Providers receive a S.T.A.R.S rating between 1 and 5.

★ = **Under 59%** meaning the standard is unmet.

★ ★ = **60-69 %** meaning the Centre/Provider needs improvement.

★ ★ ★ = **70-79%** meaning the Centre/Provider is satisfactory.

★ ★ ★ ★ = **80-90%** meaning the Centre/Provider is very good.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ = **90-100%** meaning the Centre/Provider is excellent.



HELP MAKE CHILD CARE A SUCCESS

Once you select the best setting for your child, consider the following.

Your time and energy really makes a difference.

Visit the setting as much as possible to see how things are going. Does your child seem happy?

Talk with your child and the caregiver every day. Talk with other parents about how their children are doing.

Support the childcare setting by volunteering, attending meetings, respecting opening times, etc.

Questions You Should Ask Yourself as a Parent:

- ▶ Does my child seem to like the caregiver?
- ▶ Is the caregiver someone who is warm, loving and sensitive to children's needs?

- ▶ Does the caregiver respond appropriately to my child's needs?
- ▶ Can the facility meet any special needs that my child may have?
- ▶ To learn more about what is required by law and what is best practice, read the Children Act 1998, Day Care Centre Regulations 1999, Child Care Standards 2018, available all on our website – www.gov.bm/child-care-regulation-programme

FOR THE SAFETY OF CHILDREN, PLEASE:

- ▶ Spread the word that registration is simple and benefits everyone by listing all of Bermuda's authorized Child Care Providers.
- ▶ Inform the Department of Health if you know of anyone who is breaking the law by failing to register as a Child Care Provider.
- ▶ Discourage people you know from leaving their children with unregistered persons.



IF CONCERNS ARISE

If you have any concerns or complaints about your child's day care, discuss it with the Owner/Person-In-Charge first. If you feel that your concern has not been addressed, you can make a complaint to the Department of Health - Child Care Regulation Programme.

If you think there are problems that may place the children in danger you should report this to the Department of Health-Child Care Regulation Programme.

If you suspect child abuse, notify the Department of Child and Family Services immediately by calling **278-9111**.



Mission:

To enhance the development of all young children by ensuring quality, accountability, compliance and best practice in child care settings.

Vision:

Happy, Healthy and Safe Child Care

CONTACT INFORMATION

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