



# LET'S GET STARTED!

It's as easy as  
1-2-3

## Making a decision...

### Is family child care right for you?

Starting a new business is a challenge. It takes commitment and WORK! Family child care is no exception. This brochure includes valuable information to think about as you consider if family child care is right for you.

### Will family child care work for me?

Take the *Family Child Care Self-Assessment* (below) and discover what strengths, interests, and ideas you bring to the profession, as well as what challenges may be ahead.

### Successful providers maintain a strong commitment to their work with children.

Family child care is hard work. Most providers report working an average of 55-60 hours per week. This includes either caring for children or doing things they need to do to keep their business operational (grocery shopping, record keeping, home maintenance and cleaning, etc).



## FAMILY CHILD CARE SELF-ASSESSMENT

**ABSOLUTELY**  
I'm ready for  
this challenge

**I'M NOT SURE**  
I need to think  
about this or  
learn more

I enjoy spending time with children and pursuing their interests.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have a support system in place to help me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I can tolerate a certain level of noise and disorder in my home.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My home can be adapted to include necessary space, toys, and equipment for children in my care.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have the available resources I will need to make my home safe for children.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have storage space available in my home for toys and equipment that aren't being used.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel confident in my ability to communicate effectively with parents of children in my care.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am willing to invest time and resources for my own professional development, such as attending classes and networking with other professionals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have the skills to handle the "business side" of things or have someone who will help me with this.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have enough financial security to purchase what I will need to start my business and to support my family for several months until my business is established and children are enrolled.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I can make a commitment to offering family child care for at least two years.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you answered "I'm Not Sure" to any of these questions, it is important to consider what you are unsure of before moving forward with starting your own Family Child Care business. Consider contacting your local CCR&R for information and help.

After completing this self-assessment, do you have questions?

Contact your local Child Care Resource & Referral Agency (CCR&R).

See Step Three for contact information.

# Business strategies

Two ways to increase the amount of money you earn from your business are to increase income and reduce expense.

## Ways to increase your income

- Contact the Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF), which will offer information about the child care assistance program, 1-888-369-4777.
- Contact Child Nutrition & Wellness to participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), which will reimburse you for healthy meals and snacks you serve, 785-296-2276.
- Make sure the fees you are charging are competitive with other providers. Contact your local CCR&R for the average rates in your area.



- Collect fees on time by having a well-written contract and enforcing policies. Your CCR&R can help you draft these documents.
- Consider extending your hours of operation or offering care outside the traditional work week.

## Ways to reduce your expenses

- Use a tax professional who is knowledgeable about family child care tax law.
- Keep careful records about all income and expenses.
- Prioritize your “wish list” and purchase equipment and materials when appropriate.
- Take advantage of programs that provide FREE materials and supplies for your business.

## Ways to protect yourself and reduce the risks of doing business

- Follow all licensing regulations and provide supervision of children at all times. Go over the house rules and safety procedures with the children to avoid dangers.
- Consider all insurance needs. Review insurance policies to make sure your business is covered in all areas. Many people falsely believe that their homeowner’s policy will cover their business and that their automobile insurance will cover them when they transport children enrolled in their child care program.
- Screen and closely supervise anyone hired to help care for the children.
- Report all suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect to DCF. The toll-free Kansas number is 1-800-922-5330.

# Important things to remember

## Communicate regularly with parents

Take time to build strong partnerships with parents. Use various communication tools in order to build partnerships with families, such as daily notes, phone calls, text messages, emails, parent/family conferences, parent evaluations of your program, etc. Invite participation in a variety of ways and remember that happy parents are an extremely effective marketing tool for your program!

## Build a support network

Sometimes family child care providers feel isolated, because they have limited contact throughout the day with other adults. CCR&Rs are here to help and just a phone call away. They welcome your questions and want to support you in your business of providing high-quality care for young children.

## The National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC)

offers an accreditation program for family child care providers, publishes a newsletter, performs advocacy work at the national level — [www.nafcc.org](http://www.nafcc.org)

**Child Care Providers Coalition of Kansas (CCPC)** is the state association in Kansas that publishes a newsletter and sponsors an annual conference — [www.ccpcs.homestead.com](http://www.ccpcs.homestead.com)

## Kansas Association for the Education of Young

**Children (KAEYC)** is a statewide organization with local chapters in some counties. KAEYC also sponsors an annual conference — [www.kaeyc.net](http://www.kaeyc.net)

# Tips to help your business grow and thrive

## Promoting your business and enrolling families

- Contact your local Child Care Resource & Referral Agency (CCR&R) to list your vacancies. Referrals will begin once you have your temporary license.
- Print business cards and carry them with you everywhere! Look for opportunities to meet people and tell them about your service. Tell everyone you know about your child care business. Chances are, if they (or someone they know) do not need your services now, they may at some other time.
- Set professional goals for yourself and your business. Once your business is established, consider accreditation through the National Association for Family Child Care and/or earning your CDA (Child Development Associate) credential.
- Use voicemail or an answering machine so that you won't miss calls from prospective clients. Make sure that it has a professional greeting. Keep a record of families who have contacted you for future reference.
- The best way to build your business is to offer a high-quality service.

## Planning your daily schedule and activities

- Provide time for play and child care routines, such as diapering, snacks, meals, and rest time.
- Plan your curriculum or daily activities based on child development and how children learn.
- Prepare activities that offer a balance between quiet and active play, free play and structured activities, with activities that interest and challenge the children in your care.
- Limit the use of television or computer time to less than one hour each day. Be selective about what the children watch, making sure it is both educational and appropriate for young children.
- Manage working with children of different ages by planning your schedule and activities in a way that gives you time with infants when older children are playing or napping. Offer activities that work well with children of varying ages and abilities.



# Schedules, routines, and activities

A predictable schedule is important to children, and will help your days be calmer and more organized. Children feel secure when they know they can depend on certain routines. Your schedule reflects your unique situation. It should allow for flexibility, as well as allow you to take advantage of teachable moments— unexpected learning opportunities such as the discovery of a bird's nest or an ant hill!



# Step One

Although it is very important to enjoy spending time with children, it takes more to be a successful family child care provider. A knowledge of basic child development is key to meeting the individual needs of a child. Being calm during times of stress or crisis and being organized are also important. Successful partnerships with parents take effort and rely on good communication skills.

## Having the support of your family matters

How your family feels about your child care business is important to your success, your sanity, and the well-being of your family unit. You will need to customize your business to best fit your family's needs. You have to find a balance between your own family and the families you serve. Consider how the space in your home will be utilized for the business.

Will your children have to share their toys with the child care children? Will the child care space be shared with your family's living space or will it be separate? Will you need to rearrange your family space to accommodate your business needs? Talk with your family about how your business will change your household operation, including both the positives as well as the challenges. Express the value of your work with children and

FAMILY CHILD CARE BASIC NECESSITIES CHECKLIST			
Item	Have	Need	Cost
Child-sized table and chairs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Highchairs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Booster seats and infant seats (if transporting)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Individual crib or playpen for each infant	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Beds, cots or nap pads for each older children (If parents aren't providing)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Sheets, blankets and crib sheets (If parents aren't providing)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Changing table or mat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Variety of art materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Books for children of all ages	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Games and puzzles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Sorting and stacking toys	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Dolls and props for pretend play	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Building materials like wooden blocks, Lego's, etc	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Musical instruments, CD player or radio	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Outdoor play equipment, such as riding toys, climber, large balls and hoops	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Storage bins or drawers for children's personal belongings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Fenced yard (may be required for licensing)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Bulletin board for parents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Smoke detector, fire extinguisher, etc (follow Fire Marshall recommendations)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Safety items (outlet covers, doorknob covers, cabinet locks)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
<b>Total Estimated Costs:</b>			\$ _____

their families and help your family understand your very important role.

## Starting any new business costs money

Although the start-up costs for family child care are typically much less than most other businesses, you need to have access to the resources you will need to get started. What it will actually cost varies greatly, depending on what equipment and materials you may already have and what you may need to purchase. It is also important to understand that your income as a self-employed business owner may be irregular and particularly unstable during the first year as you establish your business and build your enrollment.

Consider the family child care basic necessities checklist, remembering that some things are required to begin your business and some can be added as you go. What you will need to get started depends on what ages of children you plan to enroll. For assistance in getting started call your local CCR&R.

# Step Two

## Contact your local health department for help with the regulatory process

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) administers the child care licensing laws and issues licenses for child care facilities. The main purpose of child care regulation is to protect the health, safety, and welfare of children receiving care away from their home.

KDHE contracts with health departments to provide child care regulatory services at the local level. Anyone caring for one (or more) unrelated child for more than 20 hours per week or caring for more than two unrelated children away from the children's own home must be regulated, according to Kansas law.

Contact the child care surveyor in the county where your child care facility will be located to complete orientation prior to submitting an application. To find your local child care surveyor go to [Kansas Department of Health and Environment](#) and click Local County Contacts. They will explain all of the regulations and steps for filling out the licensing application. You will receive a copy of the regulation book and have the opportunity to ask questions.

There are two types of regulated family child care – Licensed Day Care Home and Group Day Care Home. Both have the following requirements:

- Annual inspection from your local licensing surveyor
- Annual fire inspection
- Pediatric first aid and Pediatric CPR training
- Complete health records on all children and staff, including up-to-date immunizations
- Initial and ongoing professional development training
- All household members must pass a comprehensive background check, including a Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) fingerprint check. To find FBI fingerprinting in your area click [here](#).
- Annual written licensing renewal paperwork
- Provider must be at least 18 years of age
- Must be a high school graduate or the equivalent, such as having a GED
- All household members must have a physical examination and a TB (tuberculosis) test on file for anyone over 16 years of age
- Pets must be certified as healthy from a licensed, practicing veterinarian, with updated vaccinations yearly

Persons in the process of becoming licensed to offer family child care may be issued a temporary permit, valid for ninety days. A provider with a temporary license must follow all of the same regulations as a provider with a permanent license.

### Licensed Day Care Home

A child care facility in which care is provided for a maximum of ten (10) children under 16 years of age and includes children under eleven (11) years of age related to the provider. The total number of children in care at any one time is based on the ages of the children in care.

#### Ratio of Children to One Provider

Under 18 mos.	18 mos. to kindergarten	Kindergarten to 11 years	Total Max
3	3	2	8
2	4	3	9
1	5	4	10
0	7	3	10

*Note: Children Kindergarten age and over may be substituted for younger children in the license capacity.*

Source: [www.kdheks.gov](http://www.kdheks.gov)

### Group Day Care Home

A child care facility in which care is provided for a maximum of twelve (12) children under 16 years of age and includes children under eleven (11) years of age related to the provider. The total number of children in care at any one time is based on the ages of the children in care, and may require the presence of another qualified teacher/provider.

#### Ratio of Children to Two Providers

Under 18 mos.	18 mos. to kindergarten	Kindergarten to 11 years	Total Max
1	8	3	12
2	7	3	12
3	6	3	12
4	4	2	10

*Note: Children Kindergarten age and over may be substituted for younger children in the license capacity.*

Source: [www.kdheks.gov](http://www.kdheks.gov)

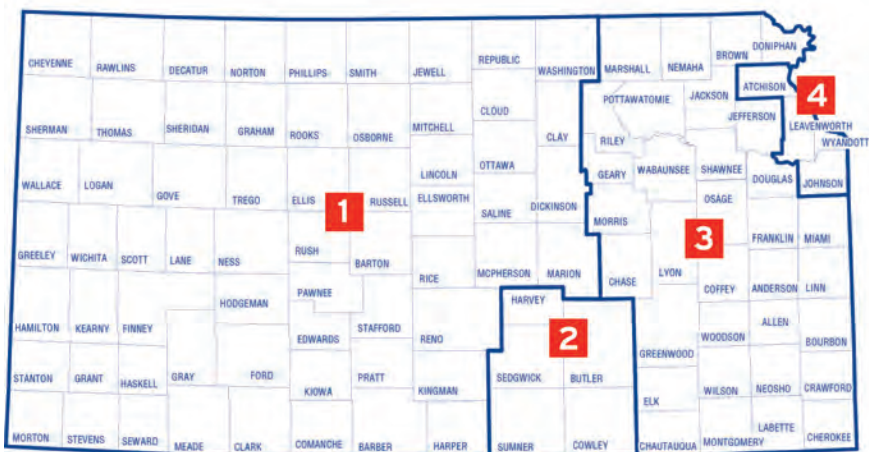
A few of the services each CCR&R provides include:

1. The Child Care Referral Center Service is free advertising for your child care business. We respond to thousands of requests each year from families searching for child care.
2. Child Care Aware News is a quarterly newsletter for child care providers full of information about programs and services, upcoming events and activity ideas.
3. Ongoing professional development opportunities with classes published both in Child Care Aware News and on our statewide calendar. Online trainings are available through the Child Care Aware of Kansas website.
4. Resource Lending Libraries offer resources, curriculum kits, videos, toys and equipment for checkout. Die-cutting and laminating services may also be available.
5. Scholarship opportunities vary by county for professional development, college coursework, and national credentialing.
6. CCR&R professionals are available for consultation and information about topics, such as:
  - Establishing health and safety practices
  - Designing a contract and provider policies
  - Setting competitive rates for your area
  - Developing a business plan
  - Creating a professional development plan
  - Organizing the child care space in your home
7. CCR&Rs offer special support to family child care providers.

## Step Three

# Contact Child Care Aware® of Kansas

Child Care Aware® of Kansas offers a variety of services to help you as you establish your business. We contract with Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&Rs) across the state.



**1 REGION ONE**  
Toll free 855-750-3343  
Service Centers:

- Salina

**2 REGION TWO**  
Toll free 800-684-3962  
Service Center:

- Wichita

**3 REGION THREE**  
Toll free 877-678-2548  
Service Centers:

- Topeka
- Lawrence
- Pittsburg

**4 REGION FOUR**  
Toll free 800-755-0838  
Service Center:

- Kansas City

CCR&Rs may have specialists who can offer information and assistance to providers who care for children with special needs or disabilities. Offices are typically open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

