



## What is quality child care?

The ways in which a child care provider interacts with young children indicate the quality of care they can give. Look for a care provider who:

- ✓ shows love and respect toward the children in his/her care
- ✓ exhibits a genuine enjoyment in interacting with young children
- ✓ provides children with learning experiences that match their ages and interests
- ✓ talks with and reads to children every day
- ✓ acknowledges children's accomplishments and positively encourages appropriate behavior through effective methods
- ✓ provides a safe environment in which children can freely explore and learn.

## Where can I get more information?

PATCH is Hawai'i's statewide child care resource and referral agency. PATCH's mission is to support and improve the quality and availability of care for the young people of Hawai'i.

(808) 839-1988 (O'ahu)  
 (808) 961-3169 (East Hawai'i)  
 (808) 322-3500 (West Hawai'i)  
 (808) 242-9232 (Maui)  
 (808) 246-0622 (Kaua'i)  
 (800) 498-4145 (Moloka'i and Lāna'i)  
 Email: patch@patch-hi.org

**The Parent Line** is a free statewide confidential telephone line which offers support and information to parents and other caregivers. The staff will help you problem-solve parenting challenges and child and adolescent behavioral and developmental issues.

(808) 526-1222 (O'ahu)  
 (800) 816-1222 (Neighbor Islands, *toll-free*)



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# Choosing Quality Child Care



The care that children receive during their early years shapes the way they learn, think, and behave for the rest of their lives.

Whether they are cared for by their family members, professional child care providers, or family friends, children thrive when they are nurtured in a safe, healthy environment.



# What Are My Child Care Options?

There are three basic types of child care settings.

## 1. Child Care Center (Licensed\*)

Set up specifically to provide child care for groups of children, such facilities typically:

- have more than one adult to care for the children
- provide opportunities for a child to interact with other children
- have larger group sizes and may have multiple classes within a site.

## 2. Family Child Care Home (Registered\*)

A private care provider who operates a child care business out of his/her home, such care providers typically:

- provide care in a home setting
- may offer opportunities for interaction with children of mixed ages
- may be flexible with child care schedule.

*\* A Licensed or Registered provider has received a certificate of approval or registration issued by the State authorizing the operation of a child care facility and meets certain minimum health, safety, and training standards, including First Aid and child CPR training.*

*An Accredited provider has met the highest quality care standards established by organizations such as the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) for licensed facilities, and the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) for registered family care home providers. Not all licensed providers are accredited.*

## 3. Family, Friend, or Neighbor Care (Legally-exempt\*\*)

A relative (e.g., aunty, uncle, grandma, or grandpa) or friend who is willing to care for your child either in his/her home or yours. Typically, this type of care:

- is in a home setting
- may be someone that your child already trusts and feels comfortable with
- may be flexible about schedules or caring for children who are ill.

*\*\* A legally-exempt provider does not need to meet the state's licensing or registration requirements. If the family receives child care subsidy assistance, a legally-exempt provider does have to meet health and safety requirements established by DHS that may include background checks, training, and inspections. A legally-exempt care provider can care for up to 2 children who are not related to the provider, in addition to their own children or relatives, with no more than 6 children total, if families receive DHS child care subsidy assistance.*

# How Do I Choose?

- Step 1:** Consider which options would best match your child's temperament, interests, and needs as well as your family's circumstances, values, and any other relevant needs.
- Step 2:** Identify prospective care providers.
- Step 3:** Interview care providers; ask questions about children's care, discipline, and activities, as well as the provider's experience in child care to determine how well each care provider matches your child's and family's needs.
- Step 4:** Visit, observe, and evaluate what you see; check to see if the environment is clean, safe, and the interactions of the children and provider are positive.
- Step 5:** Check at least two references; ask what they think of the provider and the care their children are receiving.
- Step 6:** Make a decision based on the information you collected and your level of comfort with the provider.
- Step 7:** Follow up and stay involved; if you have any concerns, respectfully communicate them to the provider and work together to ensure that your child receives the best care possible.

