



# Types of Care Options

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## Child Care Centers & Group Homes

The state licenses two types of child care centers: child care centers that care for more than 18 children and group homes that care for 7 to 18 children. Both must meet the minimum standards that the state has set.

State standards for child care centers help protect children from serious harm, such as fire, accidents, child abuse, or outbreaks of infectious disease. The regulations also concern the growth and development of children. They outline the kinds of supplies, equipment, and activities that should be offered in child care centers. The ratio of staff members to children is one of the standards set by the state.

Ask center directors how children in the center are divided by age; the number of children cared for by each caregiver; the total group size; and what procedures are necessary for enrolling your child.

Age	Maximum # of Children Allowed per teacher	Preferred Standard*
Infants	6	3-4
One-year-old (walkers)	8	3-5
2-years-old	10	4-6
3-years-old	15	7-10
4-years-old	18	8-10
5-years-old	20	8-10
6 years or older	25	10-20

*\*Recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children*

## Family Child Care Homes

This is state registered care provided in the caregiver's home for up to 6 children. Georgia requires that family child care providers register with Bright from the Start: Department of Early Care and Learning.

The state requires a fingerprint check, training in CPR and First Aid, and additional 10 "clock" hours of certified training annually. Bright from the Start visits all child care providers every year and any child care providers immediately if there is a complaint.

Family child care providers can care for a limited number of children. The total number must be no more than 12 children under the age of 13, including the provider's own children, any other children who may live in the home, and any children for whom no compensation is received.

In addition, the provider must have an additional person on site (who is at least 16 years old) to help care for the children:

- when more than three children under the age of 12 months are present;
- when more than six children under the age of three years are present;
- when more than eight children under the age of five years are present.

### **Georgia Pre-K**

The Georgia Pre-K program was established in 1993 and is funded by the Georgia Lottery for Education.

- Children four years of age on September 1 of the current school year whose parents are Georgia residents are eligible.
- Because participation in the program is voluntary (NO COST) for both families and communities, there may not be enough space for every four year old to attend.
- Parents wishing to enroll their children may call their local public school system or local preschool providers to see what programs are offered. Parents may also use Quality Care for Children's **Online Child Care Search** or call the **Parent Referral Line** to find programs in the area.
- Pre-K programs typically operate on the regular school system calendar for the length of a regular school day.
- The goals of Pre-K are to provide developmentally appropriate programs emphasizing growth in language and literacy, math concepts, science, arts, physical development, and personal and social competence.

Go to the **Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care & Learning** website for more information: <http://dec.al.state.ga.us/>

### **Head Start and Early Head Start**

Head Start (4 to 5-year olds) and Early Head Start (Birth to 3-years olds) are comprehensive child development programs that serve children from birth to five, pregnant women, and their families. They are child-focused programs and have the overall goal of increasing the school readiness of young children in low-income families.

- Children participate in a variety of educational activities.
- Children receive free medical and dental care, have healthy meals and snacks, and enjoy playing indoors and outdoors in a safe setting.
- Parents may also use Quality Care for Children's **Online Child Care Search** or call the **Parent Referral Line** to find programs in the area.
- Check out the **Georgia Head Start Association** website for more information on how to enroll your child: <http://georgiaheadstart.org>

### **School-Age Programs** (Before and after school programs)

As your child moves into elementary school, you may find that you need school-age care to fill the gaps between your child's school hours and your work hours. School age care settings include schools, community agencies and centers, child care centers, family child care homes, religious institutions, summer camp facilities, and, of course, your own home. A particular program or arrangement can serve any or all of the times your child may need care, including before and after school, on holidays and snow days, and during school and summer vacations.

### **Summer Camps**

It is important to find a summer program that focuses on your child's interests, needs, and development. Summer camps may be either a 'day camp' or an 'overnight camp.' Remember to include your child in the decision-making process. Discuss her favorite activities and hobbies. Together, make a list of questions to ask and things to look for when visiting programs.

### **Half-day Pre-School**

This is care for children four hours a day or less. These programs are not required to be licensed by the state of Georgia. Please inquire about their ratios, group sizes, and teacher qualifications and their licensing exemption letter. Quality Care for Children does not provide referrals for this type of care.

### **Au Pair and Nanny Agencies**

These agencies offer placements for caregivers in the child's home. Please inquire about the agency's policies, procedures and requirements regarding screening and training caregivers. This type of care is unregulated and is not monitored by the State of Georgia. QCC does not provide referrals for this type of care but can provide a listing of agencies.

### **Respite Care**

This type of care is usually offered by family child care providers (but not always). It is for short-term occasional care, generally for children with disabilities.

### **Backup Care**

Even the best planned child care arrangements can be disrupted from time to time. Without emergency care, more commonly known as "backup care," working parents may be forced to stay home or bring their child to work with them.

### **Family Friend and Neighbor Care**

Many children are now being cared for by family, friends, and neighbors in home settings. Family, friend, and neighbor care is also known as "kith and kin" care or "informal care," as opposed to the care provided in more formal and professional center-based and family child care markets. An informal provider may care for a limit of 2 children without registering with the state. QCC does not provide referrals for this type of care.

You may email us at [info@qualitycareforchildren.org](mailto:info@qualitycareforchildren.org) or call our Parent Referral Line for more information:

Metro Atlanta 877-722-2445 · Central Georgia 800-558-4804 · Northwest Georgia 800-308-1825

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