

WHAT IS A FAMILY CHILD CARE HOME?

In a family child care home, a caregiver provides care to a small group of children of various ages in the caregiver's own home.

There are two types of family child care: **licensed** and **license-not-required**.

LICENSED FAMILY CHILD CARE

If you want to care for **3 or more children who are not related to you, you must have a family child care license** issued by the local Health Authority under the Community Care and Assisted Living Act (CCALA).

LICENSE-NOT-REQUIRED FAMILY CHILD CARE

If you care for only 1 or 2 children or a sibling group at any one time who are unrelated to you, you do not need a license.

A Family Child Care Home is a Small Business

Opening a family child care is not a decision to be taken lightly. New businesses take time and attention before they become financially strong. If you take the operation of your business seriously, it will run smoothly. This saves time and energy that can then be used in providing quality child care.

You must never have more children in your care at any one time than the regulation and/or your license allows. It is important to protect your business reputation by operating legally at all times.

Becoming a skilled family child care provider takes time, work and money. There are many things to consider. You need to think about your feelings, your knowledge and your hopes for the future as well as how other important people in your life feel about your bringing up children in your home.

Benefits of Family Child Care

Family child care is a very natural style of caring for children that offers great benefits. Children can learn a great deal from other children who are either younger or older than themselves. Younger children can benefit from observing the play and language skills of older children and learn appropriate social behaviour. Preschoolers and kindergartners can learn to be patient, kind and responsible when helping younger children. Children from the same family can remain together in the same child care setting. An only child gets a varied living experience from a mixed aged group, perhaps having the chance to try out being a big brother or sister as well as a younger brother or sister. Every child in the family child care learns about making friends and helping others.

Starting Off Right

There are some important first steps to take before you are ready to begin operating your family child care. These include learning about quality child care, acquiring a variety of toys and other equipment, organizing your home for child care, developing written policies, learning about the business side of your work, and considering ways to market your business. Vancouver Child Care Resource & Referral can help you with all these steps.