

Licensing, Accreditation & Credentialing



The quality of early care and education programs depends on the childcare provider.

When caregivers are well prepared, their work is easier and more satisfying, parents are confident their children are receiving good care, and children flourish.

There are three pathways designed to prepare caregivers as early childhood professionals: **licensing, accreditation, or credentialing**. Each pathway supports caregivers in learning more about high quality early care and education.

Licensing ensures providers meet health and safety requirements. **Accreditation** indicates that children's learning and development are supported by appropriate interactions and activities. **Credentialing** permits an individual to teach children in state-funded preschool settings. Each pathway links providers to the "circle of care" as they network with others and access resources to learn more caring for children and guiding their early learning.

All our children deserve high quality early care and education so that they will be successful in school and in life. Caregivers can take steps to make that happen.

Here's how...

1 License for the Family Child Care Provider

The license is issued by the California Department of Social Services / Community Care Licensing.

- The license is for an individual, at a specific location.
- It is a State license that allows the legal operation of childcare. There are different kinds of licenses, small family childcare, large family childcare and centers.
- This license is required of all caregivers caring for children of more than one family, not their own. A provider who does not fit this description is "license-exempt."
- The license covers only health and safety regulations.

This is generally the first step towards accreditation or credentialing, unless a provider is "license-exempt."

The Process

- Each provider must attend a mandatory orientation, provided by the Department of Social Services.
- Each adult whose name is on the license and also anyone who will come into contact with the children at the facility must be fingerprinted and have a background check. This MUST be done through Live Scan.*
- Each adult whose name is on the license and also any who will come into contact with the children at the facility must have a valid negative TB test done within the past year.
- Applicants must have 15 hours of credit from a CPR/First Aid course. The American Red Cross and the American Heart Association are among the organizations that offer these courses. Local Resource & Referrals agencies can help in finding courses and signing up. See below.
- The application must be submitted with supporting documents providing proof of the above.
- The Department of Social Services sends a caseworker within 30 days to visit the facility and determine whether all regulations have been met.
- The applicant receives a set time to meet any requirements not fulfilled as determined by the caseworker.
- There is usually a follow-up visit by the caseworker, and then the license is issued.
- License is good in perpetuity, except in cases of non-payment of renewal fees, or revocation.

For more information on the process, applications, etc, please visit: <http://cclcd.ca.gov/Default.htm>

2 Accreditation

- Accreditation is issued through NAFCC (National Association for Family Child Care) for home based childcare providers, but through NAEYC (National Association of Education for Young Children) for center based providers.
- Accreditation is for an individual and their childcare program, at a specific location.
- All providers must have at least 18 months experience in family childcare, and provide care for at least 15 hours a week.
- All providers must have a minimum of 3 children, at least one child living outside provider's home.
- Resource & Referral Agencies (California Child Care Resource & Referral Network) as well as others may help pay fees.
- The process of accreditation takes a long time, but is well worth the wait. Accredited facilities are recognized for meeting higher standards in routine, relationships, learning activities, environments and business practices.

For more information on accreditation requirements, please visit the NAFCC and NAEYC websites.*

The Process

- In California, each provider must have a state license for Family Child Care in order to receive accreditation.
- Each provider must comply with the NAFCC / NAEYC Quality Standards.
- Pediatric First Aid and CPR certification is required.
- All applicants must have 90 hours of Family Child Care related education/training.
- All applicants must complete the Self-Observation application packet (available on the NAFCC website) and submit the application to NAFCC. The NAFCC observer conducts an onsite visit.
- Parent Surveys are conducted on each program applying for accreditation. Parents are asked for their feedback on the individual provider, the location as well as the curriculum for the children.
- Accreditation must be renewed every 3 years.

For more information on accreditation through the NAFCC, please visit: <http://www.nafcc.org/accred/accred.html>

3 Child Development Permit/Credential

- The permit is issued through the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.
- The permit is issued only to an individual.
- The permit is necessary ONLY if the childcare provider is working in a state-funded program.
- College-level coursework is required to obtain a Child Development Permit.
- The permit must be renewed every 5 years, with 105 professional growth hours and is available through programs offered by the CA Department of Education, such as PBS Ready to Learn Workshops, R&R programs, etc.

There is a "permit matrix" whose base level is the Child Development Associate (CDA). www.childdevelopment.org/spermat.htm

The Process

- Each student applying for a Child Development Permit must be fingerprinted and have a background check.
- Once the appropriate coursework and work experience has been fulfilled, the application is submitted to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing. <http://www.ctc.ca.gov/>
- Educational/work experience requirements can be fulfilled at one of multiple entry points, depending on the Permit Matrix. www.childdevelopment.org/spermat.htm
- A provider can move "up" the matrix by fulfilling all the requirements of the next level, and then submitting an application to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing for higher-level permit.
- Some groups offer assistance to help individuals pay processing/application fees, such as the Child Development Training Consortium funded by Child Development Division, California Department of Education (CDD/CDE) and the Caregiver Retention Initiative (CRI/CARES) funded by First 5 California.

For more information on Child Development Permit, please visit: http://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentialinfo/topics/child_dev.html

* For website and additional information please see the back of this brochure.

Useful Links

- **California Child Care Resource & Referral Network**

<http://www.rnnetwork.org/rnnet/index.htm>
The California R&R Network offers a well-developed system that supports parents, providers, and local communities in finding, planning for, and providing affordable, quality child care. California R&Rs are located in every county. R&R services are free and available to all parents and child care providers. To find the R&Rs in your county, visit:
http://www.rnnetwork.org/rnnet/resources_and_links/counties.php

- **California Department of Social Services/ Community Care Licensing**

<http://cclcd.ca.gov/Default.htm>
The license for the Family Child Care Provider is issued by the California Department of Social Services/ Community Care Licensing. This website offers the latest information on state regulations and resources.

- **Child Development Permit Matrix**

<http://www.childdevelopment.org/spermmt.htm>
A useful outline of the various levels and requirements for Child Development Permits. Available in English, Chinese and Spanish.

- **Child Development Training Consortium (CDTC)**

<http://www.childdevelopment.org>
The CDTC was created in 1982 to address the critical shortage of child care workers in the state of California and to support the professional growth and development of those already working in the field. A wide variety of services are outlined on this site, including career incentive grants and Child Development Permit stipends.

- **Commission on Teacher Credentialing / Child Development Permit**

<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentialinfo/leaflets/cl797.html>
The Child Development Permit is issued through the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/>) and is necessary ONLY if the childcare provider is working in a state-funded program. This website offers the latest credential information and requirements.

- **First 5 California**

<http://www.cfcf.ca.gov/parentinfo.htm>
From the website of First Five California you can download the brochure, "Finding Quality Childcare for Your Child" (click on Quality Childcare) in English or Spanish. Use the advice to parents as a checklist for your own practice. What should parents expect from you? What are you already doing?

- **Live Scan**

<http://caag.state.ca.us/fingerprints/publications/contact.pdf>
A comprehensive list of Live Scan office locations across the state of California as well as office hours, fees, etc. Live Scan provides fingerprinting and background checking services to the public.

- **The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)**

<http://www.naeyc.org/>
1-800-424-2460
NAEYC provides accreditation for childcare programs. Among the resources on their website are explanations of what constitutes high quality practice and explorations of ethical questions for caregivers. Also useful are a series of short articles, Early Years are Learning Years, found at <http://www.naeyc.org/resources/eyle/>. Some resources available in Spanish.

- **The National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC)**

<http://www.nafcc.org/>
1-800-359-3817
The NAFCC is a national membership organization working with more than 400 state and local family child care provider associations across the U.S. In 1994, it began a major initiative to develop a new accreditation system for family child care. Their website provides important information on the accreditation process. Some resources in Spanish.

- **Working 4 Quality Child Care**

<http://www.w4qcc.org/>
1-800-359-3817
The goal of Working for Quality Child Care (W4QCC), a project of United Way of the Bay Area, is to promote a well-trained and adequately compensated child care workforce in California, and thereby improve the quality of early care and education for young children.

To learn more, watch *A Place of Our Own* on California public television stations and visit the website at www.aplaceofourown.org.

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