

Answers to
questions
about

child care

ERC Resource & Referral has been providing referral services since 1978. It currently handles more than 1,600 referrals a month and serves Shawnee, Jackson, Osage, Pottawatomie and Wabaunsee counties.

ERC is not-for-profit and is the only licensed child care resource and referral agency in this area. The agency is a member of the Kansas Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (KACCRRRA) and has earned the national Consumer Education Quality Assurance award through the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRRA).



Funding for ERC is made available through numerous sources including the Capital Area Smart Start, Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services as administered by KACCRRRA, United Way of Greater Topeka, the ERC Designers' Showhouse and memberships and donations. Call 785-357-5171 or 1-800-279-2372 for more information on how you can support ERC.



Resource & Referral

1710 SW 10th St., Suite 215
Topeka, KS 66604

Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

785-357-5171 or 800-279-2372

www.ercrefer.org

Funding provided by:



Well On Our Way



Welcome to ERC...

Thank you for contacting ERC Resource & Referral regarding your child care needs. We hope that you find the information included in this newsletter helpful in your search for child care. If you have questions at any time, please don't hesitate to call ERC at 785-357-5171 or toll free at 1-800-279-2372.

Please note that the staff at ERC has not personally interviewed or screened the providers. It is the responsibility of the family to research all options, to require references in your selection process, and to select the facility that best meets your needs. The names you received are referrals only, not recommendations. All services to parents are at no cost and all information shared is confidential.

regulated care

Regulated child care

All facilities that provide child care are regulated by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) and the local health department in each county.

Before selecting a child care facility, parents can receive a provider compliance history check. Requests can be

County Health Departments

Shawnee785-291-2455
 Jackson785-364-2670
 Osage785-828-3117
 Pottawatomie785-457-3719
 Wabaunsee785-765-2425

submitted by e-mail to ceddins@kdhe.state.ks.us or by mail to KDHE, 1000 SW Jackson, Suite 200, Topeka, KS 66612. This process can verify

substantiated complaints or current non-compliance issues. Parents need to allow at least 30 days for a response. There is a nominal administrative cost for this service.

Following is a summary of requirements for regulated child care. This is not meant to be a complete listing of all regulations. For additional information, contact the health department in your county.

Family Child Care

Family child care is typically offered in the provider's home or residence. There are three types of family child care homes — registered, licensed, and group licensed.

A **registered** family child care provider can care for up to six children (including the provider's own children) with no more than three under the age of 18 months. In most counties, registered homes do not have an annual inspection, but a fire inspection may be required. (Check with your local fire department or health department regarding special requirements in your community.) Registered providers must:

- Complete an annual written registration form. (In Shawnee County, registered providers also must have an annual on-site inspection.)
- Attend first aid training.
- Maintain health records on all children and adults in the home, including up-to-date immunizations.
- Submit an annual KBI/SRS background check on all adults at the facility.

A **licensed** family child care provider must complete an annual licensing renewal application and have an annual on-site inspection visit, which may also include a fire inspection. Additionally, licensed providers must:

- Attend first aid training.
- Maintain health records on all children and adults in the home, including up-to-date immunizations.
- Submit an annual KBI/SRS background check on all adults at the facility.

LICENSED HOME CAPACITY	10	10	9	8
Max. no. of children under 18 mo.	0	1	2	3
Max. no of children 18 mo. to Kindergarten age	7	5	4	3
Kindergarten to age 11	3	4	3	2

LICENSED GROUP HOME CAPACITY	12	12	12	10
Max. no. of children under 18 mo.	1	2	3	4
Max. no of children 18 mo. to Kindergarten age	8	7	6	4
Kindergarten to age 11	3	3	3	2

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

- Provide documentation of professional development that meets the state's requirements (15 hours initially and 5 clock hours annually for renewal).

The capacity of the provider is indicated on their license, which should be posted, and depends on the space in the home and the ages of children in care:

A **licensed group home** must meet all of the same requirements and, depending on the ages and numbers of children in care, may require the presence of another qualified teacher/provider.

People in the process of becoming licensed to do family child care may be issued a temporary permit, valid for ninety days. Typically, a person with a temporary permit has attended an orientation session, submitted their written application to KDHE, and passed the SRS and KBI registry. They may not have yet had their inspection visit and may still have corrections to complete before receiving a permanent license. A provider with a temporary license must follow all of the same regulations, including license capacity.

Child Care Centers

A **child care center** must meet the same criteria as licensed homes, but can provide care for 13 or more children for a minimum of three hours a day. Staff qualifications may include a combination of education, experience and training.

Listed below are maximum teacher/child ratios per classroom for each age group:

CLASSROOM CAPACITY	AGES	TEACHER/CHILD RATIO
9 infants	Birth – 12 mo./walking	1/3
10 toddlers	12 mo./walking – 2 years	1/5
14 toddlers	2–3 years	1/7
20 preschoolers	2–3 years	1/10
24 preschoolers	3 years – Kindergarten	1/12

helpful tips



A successful child care search

The interview and selection process is unique for every parent and child care provider. Suggestions to help you make the best decision possible and establish a lasting partnership with your provider are listed below:

Top Ten Tips from Parents

1. Child care is a profession. Titles of those in the field are providers or teachers.
2. Keep all scheduled appointments when interviewing or meeting with providers. If you need to cancel, call.
3. There is a correlation between education and high-quality child care. When interviewing, ask the provider how many hours of training she has attended. Find out if the provider has earned a national credential (CDA) or national accreditation.
4. References should be provided upon request. It is your responsibility to interview the references.
5. Make sure you read and agree to the provider's contract and policies. Keep a copy in your records. If you feel that the provider is not adhering to her own policies, mention it. Small issues can become big issues quickly.
6. Pay on time. Your child care provider is operating a business and depends on you.
7. You will need the provider's Social Security number or tax I.D. number to file taxes. It is the parent's responsibility to ask for this information. If needed, ERC can supply you with a copy of the W-10 form requesting the information you need from the provider.
8. Pick up your child on time. If an emergency prevents being on time, call.
9. Plan to visit your child at the facility often and unannounced to see what goes on throughout the day. Notify the health department in your county of any child care situation where you believe the children are at risk.
10. Communicate openly with your provider about your child and his/her progress as well as any concerns you may have. Good communication is key to making the partnership work!

Final checklist

- Is there a substitute or assistant? What are their credentials?
- The license or registration certificate that indicates the number of children the program can serve should be posted.
- The facility should be clean and arranged in an orderly manner.
- The outdoor play area should be safe, with space for the children to play freely.
- Ask to review the Notice of Survey Findings showing results of the latest inspection by the Kansas Department of Health & Environment.
- Disciplinary methods should be consistent and acceptable. Spanking is against Kansas child care regulations. A copy of the discipline policy should be posted or given to parents in writing.
- Interactions between the provider and children should be warm and appropriate. Children should be treated with respect and valued as individuals. The caregiver should set reasonable and consistent limits, as well as respond promptly if a child is in distress or needs assistance.
- Children should be supervised at all times.
- A daily schedule should be followed that has a balance of active and quiet activities, with activities that are age-appropriate.
- The facility should have enough games, puzzles, blocks, dress-up clothes, books and art materials to allow children to select activities that interest them.
- Nutritious meals and snacks should be served. Foods that can cause choking should not be served.
- Health and safety practices should be established and followed. Poisons and other dangerous substances should be locked up.
- All children and adults in the child care facility should wash their hands frequently.
- There should be no smoking in the facility during business hours.

Note: Make copies to use as you interview prospective providers.

helping families

What can I expect child care to cost?

The cost of child care will vary, depending on the age of your child, the activities of the program, the education of the provider, and the physical location of the facility.

You are encouraged to contact ERC for detailed information regarding costs in your specific zip code and/or school area.

The Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services (SRS) has funding available to help income-eligible families pay for child care in a regulated facility, or by relative or in-home caregivers. Call the SRS toll free number 1-888-369-4777 or visit www.srskansas.org for more information. ERC is also an access point for SRS, thus applications and printed materials are available at the ERC office.

Average Weekly Rates (as of June 2006)

Newborn to 18 months

Center \$147
Family Child Care \$100

18 months - 5 years (preschool)

Center \$125
Family Child Care \$87

School Age

Center \$100
Family Child Care \$79



We need your feedback!

After completing your search, please fill out the enclosed postage-paid yellow card and return it to ERC. You are also welcome to fill out the consumer survey on ERC's website www.ercrefer.org.

ERC's state network — the Kansas Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (KACCRRRA) — would also like feedback regarding your use of ERC's services. Visit their website at www.kaccrra.org and click on "Family Survey."

Please contact the Executive Director or Director of Services at 785-357-5171 or 1-800-279-2372 if you have questions or concerns about the services of ERC. Also, feel free to visit our website for information about current activities and general information of interest to parents.

Enclosed you will find an ERC brochure with additional information about all of ERC's services, which includes an application form for membership. We invite you to help support ERC's mission in the community by becoming an ERC member today.

Along with the ERC brochure, you will find the *Family Happenings Calendar*. This is a wonderful resource for upcoming area events for children and families. Be sure to visit our website for current information as we update events often!