



# Rhode Island Department of Human Services

## Consumer Statement

There are many factors to consider when selecting a child care provider for your child. This consumer statement provides you with information to help make an informed choice. This is not a complete list of the resources available to families receiving child care services. Please contact BrightStars by phone at (401) 739-6100 or 1-855-398-7605, by email at [info@BrightStars.org](mailto:info@BrightStars.org) or search the web at <http://kids.ri.gov/> for a full review of resources available to families accessing child care in Rhode Island. Services are available in both English and Spanish.

There are three basic types of licensed child care facilities in Rhode Island:

- A **Child Care Center** is child care provided outside of a home by a group of people or organization who serve children from six weeks of age up to 16 years old. Many child care programs operate all day and throughout the year while some run on a more typical school calendar schedule. If you have a child who is over the age of five and goes to school, a **school age program** is provided by a group of people or organization who serve children who are in kindergarten, but under the age of 16. Typically, these programs run before and/or after school, and sometimes offer vacation programming.
- A **Family Child Care Home** is child care provided by an individual, within his or her home, who serves no more than eight children, from six weeks old through school age.
- A **Group Family Child Care Home** is child care provided by an individual provider, with assistants, within his or her home, who serves eight to 12 children, from six weeks old through school age.

The following groups may provide child care that is not regulated by the Rhode Island Department of Human Services (DHS).

- **Licensed exempt providers:** Non-licensed relatives who provide care of no more than six children to whom they are directly related. These relatives receive payment through DHS' Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). License exempt providers must complete a CCAP application and attend an orientation prior to providing care. As part of this process, the provider is required to verify the relationship of the children in their care by submitting birth certificates and/or marriage licenses as needed. Acceptable degrees of relationship are limited to grandparents, great-grandparents, aunts, uncles, great-aunts, great-uncles and adult siblings. These providers are not regulated beyond the requirements of CCAP.
- **Non-licensed providers:** a person who is caring for fewer than four children in their home may do so without a license. These providers are unregulated and are not able to accept CCAP payment.

The child care facilities listed above are monitored by the **DHS' Office of Child Care Licensing team**. The Child Care Licensing team ensures that all children attending Rhode Island child care programs are in safe, healthy environments and are provided with care, supervision and developmentally appropriate activities that meet each child's physical and emotional needs. Child Care Centers receive a minimum of two unannounced monitoring visits per calendar year. Family and Group Family Child Care homes receive a minimum of one unannounced monitoring visit per year. The Licensing team is responsible for monitoring the child care regulations for compliance, which can be found here: [www.dhs.ri.gov/regulations](http://www.dhs.ri.gov/regulations).

Any non-compliance observed during a monitoring visit is documented in the Corrective Action Plan section of the form. Non-Compliances are classified by risk level as high, moderate, or low. Each level has a timeline for compliance connected to it. High risk regulations are those regulations that could lead to

immediate harm to a child if not resolved quickly (such as staff:child ratio) while low risk are those that pose no immediate risk but are necessary for providing safe and appropriate care of children.

### Parent Complaint Process & Hotline

Complaints regarding licensed child care providers are handled either by DHS’s Child Care Licensing team or by Child Protective Services at the Department of Children Youth and Families (DCYF). Regardless of where the complaint begins, the Child Care Licensing team maintains information regarding all complaints received, investigative action taken and resolutions.

All persons in Rhode Island are required by law (RIGL 40-11-3) to report known or suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect to DCYF within 24 hours of becoming aware of such abuse/neglect (1- 800-RI-CHILD.) If an individual has a concern that is regulatory in nature that does not rise to the level of a potential child abuse or neglect, that person should call the DHS Licensing team at 401-462-3009 or email the team at [DHS.Childcarelicensing@dhs.ri.gov](mailto:DHS.Childcarelicensing@dhs.ri.gov).

### Reports of Serious Injuries, Deaths and Substantiated Abuse in Child Care Settings

Regardless of the type of care families choose for their child, accidents can happen. All licensed child care providers are required to report serious injuries to both DHS and DCYF within 24 hours of the injury occurring. A “serious injury” is defined as an injury sustained by a child at a licensed child care provider that results in the need for outside medical attention either immediately or within 24 hours of the injury.

A child “death” is defined as any situation in which the death occurred while the child was attending a licensed child care program, even if the provider or caregiver is not responsible for the death or if a child death occurs directly due to an injury or incident that occurred while in care.

The numbers reflected on the chart as “substantiated abuse” are based on indicated abuse findings by DCYF that were directly related to either a licensed child care provider or an employee of licensed child care center. These include allegations of abuse, neglect or emotional maltreatment of a child.

Facility Type	Serious Injury Reports Received		Cases of Substantiated Abuse		Deaths	
	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020
Licensed Child Care Center	3	2	5	7	0	0
Licensed Family Child Care /Group Family Child Care	0	0	1	2	0	0
Licensed Exempt Care	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Total licensed capacity within licensed Child Care centers: **18, 349**

Total licensed capacity within Family Child Care/Group Family Child Care: **2,722**

Total number of CCAP children enrolled in license-exempt care: **44**

***\*licensed capacity numbers are based on reporting as of January 1, 2021***

### Assistance to help families afford high-quality care:

The Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) can subsidize the cost of child care for families that reside in Rhode Island, are US citizens or legal residents and under the age of 13. The age can be extended to 18 if

the child has special needs.

### **Child Care Assistance is available to:**

- Low income families who meet guidelines and are working a minimum of 20 hours per week and above RI minimum wage.
- Families participating in training, apprenticeship, internship, on-the-job training, work experience, work immersion sponsored by the Governor's Workforce Board, who need child care in order to take part in these jobreadiness/training opportunities.
- Families participating in the RI Works program.
- Pregnant/Parenting Teens participating in DHS' Youth Success program

### **Also available to families is Transitional Child Care:**

Allows families already participating in the CCAP program to remain eligible for the subsidy program if their income increases and does not exceed 225 percent of the federal poverty level.

If you have questions regarding your existing CCAP case or accessing/applying for CCAP, you can contact the DHS by calling 1-855-MY-RIDHS (1-855-697-4347) Monday through Friday, except holidays, 8:30PM to 3PM or by visiting <https://healthyrhode.ri.gov/HIXWebI3/DisplayRIServices>.

### **Choosing a Child Care Provider:**

Families that qualify for the CCAP program can choose their own child care provider. The CCAP program will reimburse authorized child care providers up to a certain amount. Most eligible families share in the cost of care, called a co-payment, based on their income, family size and the number of children receiving child care subsidies. This fee is paid directly to the child care provider.

Families can select the child care provider of their choice and, if necessary, may use more than one provider to meet their child care needs so long as the hours of care do not overlap. Options for child care include:

- A DHS-licensed child care center or before/after-school program
- A DHS-licensed family child care home
- A license-exempt provider (relative) that has received approval from DHS



For a list of providers approved to participate in CCAP, please contact BrightStars by phone at (401) 739-6100 or 1-855-398-7605, by email at [info@BrightStars.org](mailto:info@BrightStars.org) or search the web at <http://kids.ri.gov/>. Services are available in both English and Spanish.

The 211 Helpline is also available to assist anyone with a disability who contacts BrightStars. The 211 Helpline can access hearing relays. The 211 Helpline can refer individuals with a disability to The Point, which manages the Center for Disabilities.

### **Rhode Island's Quality Rating Improvement System, BrightStars:**

Rhode Island has a quality rating improvement system (QRIS), BrightStars, for all its licensed child care providers. A QRIS is a method used in almost all states in the U.S. to assess, improve and communicate the level of quality in early care, education and school-age settings.

Through the star rating system, BrightStars helps early learning, education and school-age programs that care for children learn about best practices and apply them to the care children receive. BrightStars recognizes program quality and gives parents

information to make choice about their children's care and education. Families can search for a licensed child care provider at <http://kids.ri.gov/>. The consumer website assists families in searching for an early learning program by a variety of elements, including zip code, contact information, enrollment capacity, languages spoken, quality rating, monitoring reports, setting, financial assistance, meals served, hours of operation, availability, and private pay rates.

### **Early Developmental Milestones and Screenings:**

Resources to understand childhood developmental milestones and screenings can be accessed here: <http://kids.ri.gov/>.

### **Suspension and Expulsion Policy for Children Served in CCAP-Approved Early Learning Programs:**

Suspension and expulsion are practices that are not supported in CCAP programs unless all other options have been exhausted. Suspension and expulsion are generally not considered to be in the best interest of children and families. In general, when CCAP providers have a child they are concerned about, they must first work with the child's teacher and community supports, such as SUCCESS, in order to formulate a plan for supporting the child in the classroom. During this time the program should maintain communication with the DHS CCAP team. Providers are encouraged to articulate suspension and expulsion policies in their Family Handbooks.

### **SUCCESS:**

SUCCESS is a free service that pairs early learning programs with Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants to support the social, emotional, and behavioral health needs of identified children.

If you have concerns about a child's development, social and emotional skills, or behavior in the classroom, consider referring to SUCCESS. Families are important partners in our efforts to support young children and will be a part of the consultation process; therefore, families must agree to all referrals. To learn more about our services or to make a referral, please call 401.793.8700.

For a complete listing of all resources available to families accessing CCAP, please visit <http://kids.ri.gov/>.