



Starting a Family Child Care Business

4Cs of Alameda County | www.4calameda.org

Providing family child care is a wonderful career. It's also a difficult, demanding and complicated job. And it's a serious commitment: When you care for children in your home, their safety, health, happiness, and development are your responsibility.



GET THE BEST START AT 4CS

4Cs of Alameda County offers the Child Care Initiative Project (CCIP), training that will help you with all aspects of providing family child care. Choose from topics including:

- Licensing requirements and inspections.
- Business practices, contracts, record keeping, and taxes.
- Low-cost ways to set up your environment.
- Caring for infants and toddlers.
- Other aspects of program planning and working with children and families.

For more information, call the Resource and Referral Department at 510-582-2182.

ASK YOURSELF

- Am I willing to make changes in my home to meet licensing requirements?
- Am I well organized, able to keep detailed and accurate business records and financial accounts?
- How will my family and I feel about having parents and children in our home from early morning until evening, every day?
- Do I enjoy spending time with children, helping them grow and learn?
- Do I have the patience, energy, and flexibility to deal in a positive way with a range of different children's needs, all day, every day?
- How will I deal with challenges, such as children with aggressive behavior or parents who don't pay or pick up children on time?
- Can I develop positive relationships with a variety of families and children, including those with cultures very different from mine?
- Am I interested in learning more about child development?

YOU ARE NOT ALONE!

Spending every day alone with children can be isolating. You will benefit in many ways from getting together with other family child care providers to share experiences, swap information and ideas, and give each other

emotional support. Try to find other family child care providers in your neighborhood, or meet others at workshops and classes, and form an informal support group. You can also get involved with the California Association of Family Child Care by visiting their website at www.cafcc.org.

STEPS IN GETTING A FAMILY CHILD CARE LICENSE

- Attend an orientation (at 4Cs in Hayward or the state building in Oakland). For a schedule of orientation sessions, see www.cclcd.ca.gov/res/pdf/BayAreaOrientationSchedule.pdf. For telephone information, call the Bay Area Licensing Office at 510-622-2634. Registration and prepayment required. The \$25 fee for this session is not refundable. You will need to print out and bring:
 - Family Child Care Regulation Highlights and Application and Instructions for a Family Child Care Home License (LIC279A)- plus the forms listed on page 2, links available at the bottom of web page: www.cclcd.ca.gov/PG513.htm
- You may complete orientation online instead of attending an in-person session. Go to <http://cclcd.ca.gov/PG2685.htm> and click on Register for the Family Child Care Home Orientation.
- You and anyone else who will be left alone with the children must take 16 hours of health and safety training. See 4Cs website for current schedule of classes.
- You and everyone else over 18 living in your home must have:
 - A criminal record clearance, including finger prints
 - A TB test or chest X-ray to check for tuberculosis
- You must pass a pre-licensing inspection of your home – check out the requirements at <http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/forms/english/LIC9217.pdf>.

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE CHILD HEALTH AND NUTRITION PROGRAM

This federal program provides:

- Monthly cash (partial) reimbursements for healthy meals and snacks served in the child care home.
- Nutrition education and workshops.
- Advice on setting up your food program.
- Recipes and fun activities for children.

To enroll, call the Child Health and Nutrition Program at 510-584-3105.

KEEP LEARNING

No matter how much you already know about children, learning more will help you be more effective – and happier! Experiences in early childhood have a lasting impact on children’s future learning and emotions, so what you do is important! The more you learn about child development, the better you will understand how to promote positive behavior and create an environment where children are learning and thriving. And you can learn special ways to care for children with disabilities or children learning more than one language.

- 4Cs offers free workshops on many child development and early childhood education topics, in English, Spanish, and Chinese. See our training calendar at www.4calameda.org.
- Local community colleges offer ECE workshops, courses, and degree programs. View course catalogs online.

FORM PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES

When you enroll a new child, you are entering an important relationship with the parents or other adults in the child’s life. Sit down and talk!

- Ask about the child: What advice do they have about caring for their child? What comforts the child when he or she is upset? What activities does the child enjoy?
- Ask about the family’s goals. What are they looking for in child care? What are their views on discipline, feeding, etc.?
- Ask what language they speak at home. Can you speak that language? If not, will they teach you a few words and share music or books from their culture?
- Share information about the care and activities you provide.
- Explain your policies and procedures; it is best to have a written contract covering hours, charges, days off, etc. The more you go over it in the beginning, the less misunderstanding later.