



## **For Families: The Importance of Selecting Licensed Child Care**

The Office of Child Care Licensing (OCCL) recently moved from the Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families (DSCYF/Kids Department) to the Delaware Department of Education (DOE).

OCCL encourages parents/guardians to do their homework when choosing a quality, licensed child care provider; it is one of the most important decisions you can make for your child. Licensed child care providers offer developmentally appropriate activities to keep kids engaged and educated, as well as to support school readiness and success. Child care regulations include requirements for safety, health, and nutritional requirements, too.

Here are a few items parents/guardians should know as they consider choosing care for their children:

- Child care is paying someone to provide care for your child outside of your home.
- There are different types of child care in Delaware including family or large family child care (meaning care is provided in the home of a provider) and center child care (meaning care is provided larger, non-home environment).
- To provide child care in Delaware, all sites must receive a license from the Delaware Office of Child Care Licensing before being able to operate and must have annual checks performed.
- All family/large family child care providers and center staff must pass background checks.
- To receive a license and remain licensed, child care providers must comply with specific rules and regulations to help ensure your child is safe and successful.
- OCCL has a website showing the location and recent licensing history of all licensed family child care homes, large family child care homes, and early care and education and school-age centers in our state. There you can see a listing of regulation violations and substantiated complaint reports to help you make an informed choice regarding the best child care placement for your child. The information is provided here: [www.kids.delaware.gov/occl/occl.shtml](http://www.kids.delaware.gov/occl/occl.shtml). (Search for Child Care)
- You may ask OCCL to see the active record and complaint file of any licensed child care facility in Delaware.
- A provider's license must be posted in plain view; providing care to children outside the child's own home for a fee and without a current license is a violation of Delaware law and has penalties. Allegations regarding possible unlicensed care should be reported to OCCL for investigation.

For more information, please call the Office of Child Care Licensing at 302-892-5800 (New Castle County) or 302-739-5487 (Kent and Sussex counties) or visit online at [www.kids.delaware.gov/occl/occl.shtml](http://www.kids.delaware.gov/occl/occl.shtml).