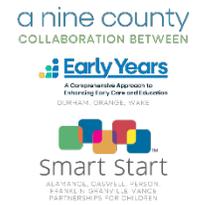




# Child Care Referral & Listing Policies



## Provider FAQ's

### What is Child Care Referral Central?

Child Care Referral Central (Referral Central) is a regional collaborative between Alamance, Caswell, Person, and Franklin-Granville-Vance Partnerships for Children and Early Years (of Durham, Orange, and Wake counties) that makes finding child care in the 9-county area easy and central for families. Your program information is available to families calling in to the Child Care Referral Central toll-free number and to families who use the Child Care Referral Central on-line child care search. Responsibilities for Child Care Referral Central's services are shared among the partnering agencies, including provider relations and outreach in local communities, and all child care consumer education and general coordination provided by Early Years.

### What are Child Care Referral Central's child care referral services?

Referral Central helps families find child care by providing them with information on child care providers, general licensing information and information on choosing quality child care. Information is provided in both English, Spanish, and other languages through an interpretation service and all our services are FREE. Referral Specialists conduct customized searches on our computer database for providers that match the families' individual needs. We can identify providers for them based on many criteria, such as location and vacancy information. An effort is always made to give at least three possibilities. Our role is to help families understand the questions to ask to get the answers they need to make the best choice for their child. We provide them tools to help them evaluate child care quality and we encourage them to visit at least three child care providers before making their care decision. Referral Specialists may also set up site visits and may accompany families during visits to provide additional support for families.\*

***All listings and referrals are made in an unbiased manner without regard to race, color, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation and national origin. We do not make recommendations to any child care program and we do not screen parents for child care providers.***

### What are the benefits to child care providers listing with Child Care Referral Central?

In the referral process, parents can learn a lot about your child care program including where you are located, the hours you operate, the ages of children for which you provide care, your tuition rates and other fees, whether or not you offer or participate in child care scholarship programs, your staff to child ratios, or your licensing or accreditation level. After learning about your vacancies, they may call you or stop by for a visit. Listing with Referral Central is free and is a great marketing strategy for programs to target their services directly to consumers.

### What kinds of child care programs are listed with Child Care Referral Central?

Child Care Referral Central lists and refers to licensed centers, licensed home providers, preschools, out-of-school time programs, and camps. All must be legally operating in the 9-county region.

Child Care Referral Central does not list other forms of unlicensed care however, resources are provided to families about "nanny services", drop-in care, babysitters or other programs as they are requested.

### How does Child Care Referral Central decide when to suspend referrals?

Child Care Referral Central's referral suspension policy is designed with both the concerns of parents and providers in mind. Even though Referral Central does not recommend providers, parents expect that we will not refer them to potentially unsafe programs. On the other hand, child care providers often rely on our referrals to maintain the viability of their business and investigations often last a very long time. By considering both the issue at hand, and the history of violations recorded at the program through their compliance history score, we believe that our policy represents a fair compromise.

A provider listed in the referral database may have referrals suspended under the following circumstances:

- 1) The North Carolina Division of Child Development and Early Education (NC DCDEE) has issued a Suspension or Revocation License. Even if the child care program appeals this Revocation, Child Care Referral Central will suspend referrals until a regular star rating is reinstated.
- 2) The North Carolina Division of Child Development and Early Education has issued a Provisional, Special Provisional, or Probationary License. Child Care Referral Central will suspend referrals until a regular star-rating is reinstated.

\*Durham County child care programs only

- 3) The North Carolina Division of Child Development and Early Education issues a written warning, written reprimand, or Civil Penalty. Child Care Referral Central will suspend referrals until the program agrees to participate in a Mandatory Technical Assistance Contract, when applicable. Continuation of referrals will depend on satisfactory participation in the Mandatory Technical Assistance Contract or notice from the North Carolina Division of Child Development and Early Education that the facility's Corrective Action Plan has been successfully completed.
- 4) When a complaint against a program is so extreme that the Administrator of Child Care Referral Central determines that suspension is warranted.

**What does Child Care Referral Central tell parents when referrals have been suspended?**

When Child Care Referral Central has suspended referrals to providers, the provider's information is simply omitted from the program information shared with parents. If parents request information specifically about a provider that is under investigation, they are told that no referrals are being made to that provider at this time and counselors refer them to the NC DCDEE website, suggest they call the North Carolina Division of Child Development and Early Education for additional information and inform them of their ability to review the provider's compliance history.

**What does Child Care Referral Central do when a parent makes a complaint against a provider?**

When a parent calls Child Care Referral Central to make a complaint about a child care provider, staff must decide if the complaint is of an informal or formal nature. When a complaint is determined to be of an informal nature, Child Care Referral Central staff will encourage the caller to speak directly with the child care program director or family child care home provider. All reported information will be treated confidentially. These complaints are not shared with a regulatory agency. When a Referral Specialist receives a call indicating that the caller believes a child has been abused, neglected or in any way endangered, or that a program is out of compliance with local or state regulations, this is considered a *Formal Complaint* and is considered to be serious and immediately acted upon. Staff will encourage the parent to call the NC DCDEE. If the parent prefers to give the complaint directly to a family support specialist, the specialist will record the complaint on the *Complaint Form* and report the incident to the NC DCDEE immediately. The caller may decline to identify him/herself, but will be encouraged to do so in case the investigator(s) have questions or need additional information. Although complaints will be kept on file, the information will not be given out to parents or other child care providers. Please note that Child Care Referral Central staff are mandatory reporters and are required to report any allegations of abuse or neglect to the appropriate agency.

**Who should providers talk to if they have a complaint about Child Care Referral Central staff or referrals given?**

If the complaint is about a Child Care Referral Central staff member or information provided by Child Care Referral Central, the provider should ask to speak to their supervisor. If the complaint is about the supervisor or the provider feels that the supervisor's response was inadequate, the provider should email the Director of Family Support at Early Years.