



A Program of the Children's Coalition
for Northeast Louisiana

**YOU
YOUR CHILD &
CHILD CARE**



You want the best for your child.

We are here to help!



**Northeast Louisiana
Child Care Connections will:**

- Help you find child care that meets your needs
- Provide tips on evaluating quality child care options
- Provide resources on parenting and early childhood issues
- Provide information about Child Care Assistance

**Call Northeast Louisiana Child Care Connections
to speak to someone who can help
match you with child care.**

318-323-4522 or 1-877-206-0819

The ABC's of Spotting Quality Child Care

Quality Child Care Checklist

- Are children supervised at all times, even when sleeping?
- Can caregivers be seen by others at all times, so a child is never alone with one caregiver?
- Is discipline positive, clear, consistent, and fair?
- Have all caregivers had a criminal background check?
- Are families encouraged to visit the center at any time?
- Is the room large enough for children to move about easily and freely?
- Are toys and materials clean and organized and easy for children to reach?
- Are caregivers trained in infant/child CPR/Pediatric First Aid?
- Do caregivers have current emergency contact information?
- Are chemicals, such as cleaning products, kept away from the children?
- Are the meals and snacks healthy and served appropriately?
- Do families and caregivers discuss the child's daily activities?

Where to Find Information

The Louisiana Department of Social Services website posts information about child care center's licensing visit. Look to see if licensing deficiencies were cited by going to www.dss.louisiana.gov



Child Care Assistance

Eligibility Requirements

Families may be eligible for child care assistance if they meet at least one of the following criteria:

- The family has a working parent/guardian who is employed for at least 25 hours per week and meets income guidelines.
- The family has a working parent/guardian who is attending an educational/job training program for at least 25 hours per week and meets income guidelines.
- The family has a parent/guardian engaged in a combination of working and an educational/job training program for at least 25 hours per week and meets income guidelines.
- The family receives cash assistance from the Louisiana Office of Family Support, and the parent/guardian is engaged in an approved activity.

How to Apply

To request an application for child care assistance, call or visit the local Office of Family Services. The offices are open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.

Applications are also available on the DSS website at www.dss.state.la.us

Caldwell Parish	649-2673 or 649-2548
East Carroll Parish	559-2904 or 559-2905
Franklin Parish	435-2101
Lincoln Parish	251-4105, 251-4107, 251-4108 or 251-4109
Madison Parish	574-4524 or 574-454525
Morehouse Parish	283-0825
Ouachita Parish	362-5333
Richland Parish	728-3253
Tensas Parish	766-3277 or 766-3278
Union Parish	368-3166
West Carroll	428-3252 or 428-3253

What should I look for when choosing a child care program?

Quality Start

Quality Start is a voluntary program in which child care centers may participate. Child care centers are able to receive 1 to 5 stars (much like a hotel or restaurant's stars) based on achieving early childhood programmatic criteria. Quality Start is a guide for parents to "spot" quality child care programs by providing a benchmark. Ask your child care program if they are participating in Quality Start and how many stars they have. The higher the stars, the higher the quality.

For more information please visit www.qrslouisiana.com

Money in your pocket!

School Readiness Tax Credits

The School Readiness Tax Credit is an additional state child care tax credit for taxpayers with children who are under the age of 6 and are enrolled in a child care center that has earned at least 2 stars in Louisiana's Quality Start program. The amount of the tax credit will increase with the number of stars that the child care center has earned. The School Readiness Tax Credit adds to a parent's existing state child care tax credit as follows:

Quality Rating	Percent Increase
5 Star	200%
4 Star	150%
3 Star	100%
2 Star	50%
1 Star or No Stars	0%

Types of Child Care

Child Care Centers

Child care centers are licensed by the Louisiana Department of Social Services. These centers generally care for children from ages 6 weeks through 5 years.



Some child care programs also offer after-school care for children of other ages. Children in child care centers are most often separated by age groups. As the children develop, they generally are moved to older age groups. Child care centers usually accommodate families who have traditional work hours, but it is possible to find some centers that offer extended hours.



Family Day Care Home

This type of service is located in a caregiver's home. In Louisiana, Family Day Care Home Providers must be 18 years old and may care for a maximum of 6 children. Any of the provider's own children who are under the age of 13 are included in the number that they may care for. In Louisiana, Family Day Care

Homes are not licensed. However, they should be registered with the Louisiana Department of Social Services.

In-Home Care



In-Home Providers must be at least 18 years old and are certified by the Child Care Assistance Program to provide care for a child in the child's home. State child care assistance payments cannot be made to any provider who lives in the same house as the child for whom the care is being provided.

School Age Child Care

Beginning in kindergarten and continuing until age 13, this type of care provides supervision and planned activities for children both before and after school and during holiday breaks. This type of service may be found in public or private schools, churches, child care centers, family home settings, and other community groups. The fees depend on the ages of children, hours, services provided and sources of funding.

