

# The Advantages of a Quality Family Home Daycare

In a society where the majority of mothers and fathers are working outside the home, the need for quality childcare is growing at a rapid pace. All parents want only the best for their children, especially when it comes to child care. Since it is now being acknowledged that the first five years of a child's life are the most important of their formative years, parents of young children are discovering that a family home daycare can provide the individualized attention that children of this age need.

Just what is a family home daycare? In short, it is childcare that is offered in the provider's own home. This arrangement has been around as long as parents have had neighbors and friends nearby to help care for their children. Today it's a way for many people who truly enjoy taking care of young children to do the work they love. Some may assume that this is just baby sitting. Actually, a quality family home daycare is so much more than that. A quality home daycare strives to excel beyond basic licensing requirements. Quality childcare providers are entrepreneurs who take pride in their small businesses and continually challenge themselves to remain at the leading edge of the child care profession.

A home daycare often appeals to parents who want to keep their child in a warm and caring homelike environment. They prefer to relate to a single caregiver and believe that children are healthier, happier, and more secure in a smaller group setting. A home atmosphere fosters an overall feeling of satisfaction, contentment, and security. A homelike environment is comforting and reassuring for children. Homes are comfy and cozy, never cafeteria-style or institutional-feeling. In a quality home daycare, children get nurtured the way they should be, and deserve.

One of the major benefits a home daycare can offer parents and their children is a small group, due to the low child to adult ratio that each home daycare must legally adhere to. A smaller group means your child is more likely to get the one-on-one interaction he or she needs and deserves. Small groups are less stressful to children. In them, children can foster closer social bonds and get closer attention. This kind of nurturing, individualized attention contributes significantly to a child's social and emotional growth. Furthermore, any parent of a young child knows that the fewer people their child is exposed to, the less likely they are to become ill.

Another potential advantage of a family home daycare is the mixed-age group of children that the provider cares for. Because of this, siblings can be cared for together, and children have the opportunity to interact and socialize with children in the same and other age groups. These mixed-age groups more closely mirror most families and other real life situations, and can help your child learn to feel more comfortable around older and younger age children.

Another inherent advantage that a home daycare can offer children and parents alike, is continuity. No other childcare arrangement can match the consistency of care that a quality family home daycare can provide. The same person cares for the children all day and can share complete information with the parent. The parent-provider relationship is often individualized and close. Children have a single, consistent caregiver (sometimes two), promoting a sense of safety and security; helping to foster a close and trusting relationship between child and provider. Parents can rest assured that their child can go from infancy to kindergarten with the same childcare provider. Bottom line, a quality family home daycare can be a wonderful asset for parents striving to raise healthy, happy, and self confident children.

