

# CHILD CARE REFERRAL PROCESS

## PROCESO DE REFERENCIA PARA SERVICIOS DE CUIDADO PARA NIÑOS

CRC BULLETIN #104

Community Resources for Children is a Child Care Resource and Referral Agency. CRC's service area, which is assigned by The State Department of Education, includes all of Napa County. This includes American Canyon, Angwin, Calistoga, Deer Park, Napa, Oakville, Pope Valley, Rutherford, St. Helena and Yountville.

CRC assists parents in finding child care and provides helpful information on choosing quality child care. We also offer technical assistance on the various types of child care, as well as other child development and parenting issues.

We maintain a computerized database of licensed family child care homes and child care centers in our assigned area. This database allows us to keep statistics on child care in Napa County, such as the amount and types of child care available, or the demand for child care. On the average our database includes 120 family child care homes and 80 child care centers in Napa County.

When a new family child care home or child care center becomes licensed, we receive basic information from Community Care Licensing, including name, address, phone number, licensed capacity, and license number. If we have not already been in touch, a Resource & Referral Coordinator will contact all new licensees to ask them if they would like to be in our referral database and receive referrals. We will then ask for more information, such as business days and hours, ages of children served, type of program, languages spoken, transportation provided, special needs experience, etc. This information helps us to give parents appropriate referrals. We call providers on a regular basis for update information, especially vacancies, and we encourage providers to call us whenever they have vacancies or changes in their programs.

About 1,600 to 1,700 parents call CRC each year for referrals for child care. Most parents are looking for infant and toddler care (children under 2 years). In a given quarter 176 parents requested infant care, 130 requested preschool care and 54 requested school age care. There were 188 calls for full time care, 150 calls

for part time care and 73 calls for non-traditional hour care (evening, weekend, rotating schedule, or drop-in care).

When parents contact us for referrals we listen carefully to details such as: child's age, desired location for care, hours of care needed, special needs, and other specifics (parent may not have transportation, be requesting a provider who only cares for infants, has a structured preschool program, or only cares for a few children). The computer brings up all of the providers whose location, hours of care, vacancies and other data, match the parent's request.

We realize that choosing a child care provider is one of the most important decisions a parent faces. Finding good child care takes lots of time and work. Knowing what quality child care is – what to look for, what options are available, and what questions to ask – can make a profound difference in the outcome when you are making this important choice. We encourage parents to call and visit a variety of child care providers and programs in order to decide which program best meets the needs of the family.

CRC has a variety of resources available to help guide you in your search for child care and offers frequent Choosing Child Care workshops, which are free of charge. Please call CRC at 253-0376, ext. 200 and ask for our Resource & Referral Program for more information.

*"The mission of Community Resources for Children is to provide resources for the early care and education of children in Napa County"*