

It is important that when choosing child care, parents can receive all the facts. Oliver's Law supports parental rights to obtain complaint information. Parents have always had the right to request information about a child care facility they may be considering; unfortunately, parents have not always been informed of this right.

Oliver was a child who died of injuries he received while in child care. Oliver's parents felt that if they were informed of the right to obtain complaint information, they would have found that the facility had many complaints on file. They would have chosen different care, thus saving Oliver's life. Oliver's parents worked hard to pass AB 458, requiring all Resource and Referral agencies and Alternative Payment Programs throughout the state to inform parents of their right to access the files of providers they are considering.

Licensed child care facilities (centers/family child care homes) have been required to keep complaint information on file since 1997. They are required to present this information to a parent when asked. This gives an opportunity for the parent and provider to discuss sensitive issues, including any changes that have been made to turn the complaint around. It also gives providers a chance to tell their side of the story as well.

If a parent is uncomfortable about asking a provider, or is concerned about complaints that occurred before 1997, he or she can review files at Community Care Licensing (CCL), the local licensing office for Napa and the surrounding counties.

A parent can inspect up to three files at a time from CCL. Files can be summarized over the phone or copies of all public files can be made in person. CCL can provide parents with a brief guide to aid in the reviewing of files.

Complaints are filed in three ways: substantiated, unfounded, and inconclusive.

- Substantiated claims mean the licensing department has met its burden of proof by 51% of conclusive documented evidence.

- Unfounded means there was no proof or evidence to support the complaint and these reports are kept in a sealed file and are unavailable to the public.
- Inconclusive typically reflects a "he said, she said" situation where there is not enough evidence either way to meet the State's burden of proof.

Parents can find out more information by calling the Community Care Licensing Office in Rohnert Park at (707) 588-5026

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