

# Questions to Ask

- Is the environment safe and healthy?
- Are educators and administrators trained in child development?
- How many children are in the classroom and how many adults are there to support them?
- How is play integrated into daily activities and routines?
- Is the setting using observations to inform activities and to determine children's developmental progress?
- Are there opportunities for families to be involved in the classroom, program, and school?
- How do educators support children's home languages?
- Is there an adequate outdoor play environment to support physical development?
- Are educators and children engaged in conversation?
- Does the learning environment include art, dramatic play, blocks, reading areas, math, science, and writing?
- Do children have opportunities to move freely in their learning environment?
- Are children able to communicate their personal needs, such as using the bathroom?
- How are children with specialized developmental needs supported in the program?

# Partners

## Child Care Resource & Referral and Financial Assistance

Community Resources for Children 707.253.0376

## California State Preschool Programs

Napa County Office of Education 707.253.6915  
CANV Kids 707.253.6122

## Head Start Programs

Child Start, Inc. 707.252.8931

## School Districts

Calistoga Joint Unified School District  
707.942.4703

Howell Mountain Elementary School District  
707.965.2423

Napa Valley Unified School District  
707.253.3435

Pope Valley Union Elementary School District  
707.965.2402

St. Helena Unified School District  
707.967.2708

This information was compiled by First 5 Napa County and the Napa County Child Care and Development Planning Council in consultation with the Early Childhood Services Department at the Napa County Office of Education.



## **Napa County Pre-K and Transitional Kindergarten**

Finding the best early learning and care setting for your young child

**Play is the highest form of research.**

**ALBERT EINSTEIN**

Families of four year olds face a unique range of educational options for their children in California. Four year olds can be served in traditional preschool and early learning settings or through expanded transitional kindergarten programs.

Attending a high-quality early education program prepares children to learn and succeed by developing social-emotional, pre-reading, and math skills, helping them to be ready for kindergarten and beyond.

Finding the best option for your child and your family takes time and research. You know your child best. This guide will support you in determining which program will best meet your child's individual needs.

## Types of Programs Available

Program Type	Definition	Ages Served	Educator Qualifications	Student-Educator Ratio
<b>Family Child Care Home (FCCH)</b>	Home based care in a family-like setting providing daily activities that are age and developmentally appropriate. Many FCCHs offer care outside of traditional hours.	Birth to School Age	None Required -- Education levels vary. Parents and caregivers can ask the educator about education levels at individual programs.	Depends on the ages of the children in the program. Large FCCHs: up to 14 children. With 2 adults, cannot exceed 14. Small FCCH: up to 8 children, 1 adult.
<b>Center-Based Programs</b>	Full or Part Day programs providing daily activities that are age and developmentally appropriate.  Examples include: state preschool programs head start, and private center-based programs.	Private Programs: infants to 5 years  Public Programs: 3-5 years	Private Programs: 12 ECE Units  Public Programs: Child Development Associate Teacher Permit and/or an AA or BA Degree	Private Programs: 1 adult per 12 children  Public Programs: 1 adult per 8 children  Group size varies by program type and license.
<b>Transitional Kindergarten (TK)</b>	First year of a two-year kindergarten experience that uses a modified kindergarten curriculum that is age and developmentally appropriate.  Often a Part Day program and is a district by district decision.	4 to 5 years  Fall 2022: 5th birthday falls between September 2nd and February 2nd	Credentialed K-12 teachers. New teachers hired after July 1, 2015 are required to have 24 ECE units, a Child Development Teacher Permit or equivalent experience in a preschool setting.	1 adult per 12 children. Class size does not exceed 24.
<b>Kindergarten</b>	Instructional year to prepare children for 1st grade.	5th birthday by September 1st	Credentialed K-12 Teachers	1 adult per 20-30 children. District by district decision.

## All Young Children Need...

- To see themselves and their families reflected in the learning environment
- Learning environments that recognize each child's unique strengths and supports full inclusion
- Age appropriate learning experiences informed by children's developmental levels
- Teachers who recognize, understand, and respond to children's cultural and linguistic needs
- Respectful interactions with caring adults and peers
- Active and engaging hands-on learning through play with time to practice developing skills
- Opportunities to connect new ideas and skills to what they already know and do
- Opportunities to explore, experiment, discover, be curious, ask questions, and reflect
- Learning experiences in small and large groups
- Flexibility to move around the environment
- Engaging materials and activities that promote creativity, choices, and problem solving
- Work and play experiences that support understanding of language and social emotional competencies