

## The Child Care Service

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CCRC's child care resource and referral service helps employees explore all types of child care arrangements for children from 0 to 12 years old. Trained specialists help employees become informed consumers who can choose the child care program most suited to their family's needs. They answer questions about child care issues and child development as it is related to child care. The personal attention given to your employees provides the information and support they need to locate and evaluate an appropriate program. When an employee calls CCRC s/he speaks directly with a child care specialist, who is specifically trained in counseling parents about their child care options. CCRC is a community-based agency and subcontracts with other community-based resource and referral agencies across the country, therefore employees always speak to a child care specialist who has personal knowledge about the child care availability in the area in which the parent is searching. CCRC understands families have different needs and therefore need information about different types of child care. CCRC offers referrals to:

- child care centers
- family child care providers
- school age child care programs
- emergency back-up child care
- special needs child care programs
- summer camps
- nursery schools

Child Care Specialists are available Monday through Friday 8 a.m. - 9 p.m. E.S.T., Saturday and Sunday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. E.S.T. The initial intake of information concerning the parent's need for child care can be done by telephone or by fax, depending on the preference of the employee. Additionally, employees may initiate the service via CCRC's web site which offers exclusive access to its clients. The initial conversation between the employee and the child care specialist includes:

- Identifying the needs of the employee.
- Assisting the parent in determining the most suitable type of care for his or her child.
- Providing a listing of the available child care slots that meet the parent's criteria.
- Discussing child care issues of interest and/or concern to the parent.
- Educating the parent about quality indicators.

After the initial conversation the child care specialist searches the child care database to identify child care providers who meet the employee's criteria. **The child care specialist then calls each of the providers to determine if openings are available.** Once "live referrals" are obtained, the child care specialist contacts the employee and mails or faxes the referrals to the employee. Along with the referrals, the specialist mails to the employee a customized packet of information including a glossary of child care terms, and specific child care publications, parenting tips and articles relevant to the individual employee's situation.

## ■ ■ ■ THE CHILD CARE SERVICE - CONTINUED

*Parent Choice* - We feel that parents know what is best for their children, and the enhanced R&R service is designed to support and assist parents with their choice. It is for this reason that the specialists refer parents to legally operating care, but will not recommend specific providers.

*"Live Referrals"* - Our files contain information about licensed providers and are updated on a regular basis. If a parent is looking for care in a specific month, we will call applicable providers for that parent to verify their "live" openings. "Live" openings are those that are available at the time of the parent's call.

*Provider Information* - Each provider file contains information on over 40 aspects of the child care program including hours, fees, access to public transportation, subsidy availability, physical setting, and information about smoking and pets in the environment.

*Provider Assistance* - Recognizing that the referral component of our services to employees can only be as good as the number of existing, quality child care providers, CCRC also works to recruit and support child care providers. Our work with providers includes:

- \* *Ongoing training for new and existing providers and child care administrators.*
- \* *Recruitment and support for family child care providers.*
- \* *Outreach and recruitment efforts in areas of identified shortage or special concern.*
- \* *Consultation on child care center start up.*

### THE CHILD CARE SEARCH IN SUMMARY

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| <b>Step 1</b> | Employees call CCRC, and speak directly with a child care specialist.   |
| <b>Step 2</b> | The child care specialist provides the employee with an overview of the child care options available, answers employee questions, and highlights the pros and cons of all types of care. The specialist then discusses the specific criteria that the employee is looking for.  |
| <b>Step 3</b> | Drawing on a database of licensed providers, the child care specialist calls providers to identify those that meet the employee's specific needs. Within 48 hours, the child care specialist gets back to the employee with profiles of providers that meet their needs and have openings. The child care specialist sends the employee the profiles, along with relevant publications. |
| <b>Step 4</b> | Ongoing check-in calls by the child care specialist occur to support the employee throughout their search, and to provide additional information if necessary.  |
| <b>Step 5</b> | One week after care is needed, CCRC follows up with the employee to check-in on how care is going, and evaluate the service that the employee received.   |