



A Parents' Guide to Quality Child Care

Partners in Professional Excellence



A non-profit information service providing families access to quality child care options in Halton.

The Halton Resource Connection

Choosing Quality Child Care



If English is your second language and you have questions about the information in this booklet, please contact the Halton Multicultural Council at <http://hmconnections.com/> or 905-842-2486

Introduction

This guide is to assist you in choosing quality child care. When choosing child care, look for a program which meets your child's developmental, cognitive, emotional, social, physical and program interest needs. Each program is unique, and it's important to find the right fit for your child. It may seem like a big task, however, if you know the right questions to ask and plan a careful search you will find a child care setting that provides quality care to fit your needs.

We hope this guide makes the task easier for you. The time and energy you invest in your child care search benefits your children as they grow and develop into self-confident, productive and well-adjusted young people.

Note: Throughout this book we make reference to the child care provider. A child care provider is someone who provides care for a child in a child care centre or home child care setting.

A Registered Early Childhood Educator (RECE) is someone who has graduated from a post-secondary program with a Diploma/Degree in Early Childhood Education (ECE) and is registered with the College of Early Childhood Educators. To practice as an ECE in Ontario, an ECE must be registered and in good standing.

Further information is available at the following websites:

Ministry of Education www.edu.gov.on.ca/
College of ECE <http://www.college-ece.ca>
Child Care Directory and Information Line <http://thrc.ca/>
Halton iparent – information about programs for parents <http://www.haltoniparent.ca>

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The Child Care Directory and Information Line (CCDIL)

A free, centralized one-stop information service to assist in choosing quality child care in Halton.

CCDIL provides:

A customized list of licensed child care options based on your needs and access to Registered Early Childhood Educators who are ready to help

CCDIL is a service of The Halton Resource Connection, a program of Milton Community Resource Centre and Halton Region.

How do I get the information?

Contact CCDIL by telephone, e-mail or visit us in person and speak to our Parent and Provider Consultants. You may also visit our website to fill out a child care search request form. Once your request is received, we will complete a search for child care options in your community. Results can be sent to you by mail, e-mail or fax. You can also contact us for any information or questions related to child care.

Phone..... 905-875-0235
E-Mail childcaresearch@thrc.ca
Website..... <http://thrc.ca/>

What is Quality Child Care?

Quality child care supports a child's emotional, social, intellectual and physical well-being. When looking for quality child care, the child care provider and the environment are critical to your child's success.

Child care providers are the key to quality. Their interactions, the activities offered and the support and communication you receive will contribute to the success of your child's experience.

Ensure your child care provider:

- Knows how children grow and learn
- Is sensitive, kind, responsive, open and informed

- Offers a setting which is inviting to children, while meeting their developmental needs and interests
- Seeks out community resources and support
- Works with you on common goals for your child
- Takes part in training/professional learning opportunities
- Is inclusive of all children
- Is linked to supports in the community
- Refers to supports and resources offered by the Ministry of Education.

For more information

<http://www.earlyyears.edu.gov.on.ca/EYPortal/en/ChildCareLicensing/ChildCareLicensingResources/index.htm>

Quality Child Care in Halton



Quality child care in Halton is supported by Quality First. Quality First is available to licensed child care programs in Halton. Look for the Quality First logo and poster displayed. Quality First looks at 6 indicators of quality:

- Adult/Child interactions
- Environment/Curriculum
- Professionalism
- Inclusion
- Administration and Supervision
- Support to College Students

What is Quality First?

Quality First is a voluntary program for licensed child care centres and licensed home child care to support the implementation of overall quality in all areas of the program. It supports Early Childhood Educators in licensed child care settings and home child care providers working through a licensed agency. Participants are involved in several activities which include: professional learning, evaluation and goal setting with a Quality First Consultant.

Next time you are visiting a child care program, look for the Quality First poster displayed proudly at the entrance. This tells you the centre or home is committed to providing quality care for the children and families they serve. Ask the Supervisor and the staff how Quality First will contribute to the success of your child, and their experience in the program.

The Value of Play

Play is how children learn. Children are capable, competent and curious. They are naturally driven to play. Early learning through play often takes the form of manipulating objects, acting out roles and experimenting with different materials. Experts such as Vygotsky identify play as a leading source of social, emotional, physical, language and cognitive development. Intentional play-based learning allows children to investigate, ask questions, solve problems and engage in critical thinking. To read more, visit this website: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/OntarioEarlyYear.pdf>

Financial Supports for Child Care Expenses

Provincial, Federal and income tax supports are varied. The following websites will provide you with the most updated information for your family.

Province of Ontario..... <http://www.ontario.ca/>
Government of Canada..... www.canada.ca

Child Care Subsidy

Child care subsidy, or financial assistance with the cost of child care, is available to families who are working, training or attending school.

Some licensed child care centres and licensed home child care agencies have an agreement with the Halton Region to provide services for fee subsidized families. To find out if your family qualifies for financial assistance, contact Halton Region at 311; toll free at 1-866-442-5866 or TTY 905-827-9833.

Child Care Options – What Are Your Choices?

Decisions about child care are important and choosing the right type of care for your child takes time and planning. This guide outlines options available in Halton to help you select the type of care best for you and your family.

1. Licensed Child Care Programs

Licensed child care programs are located across the community and may provide care for infants, toddlers, preschoolers and school age children. Hours of care typically range from 7 am to 6 pm.

Child care programs are inspected and licensed annually by the Ministry of Education and follow the Child Care Early Years Act. Program Advisors from the Ministry monitor administration and supervision, curriculum, health and safety, and how the program is meeting the needs of children, using the *How Does Learning Happen? Pedagogy* (<https://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/HowLearningHappens.pdf>). This is a professional learning resource guide about learning through relationships for those working with young children and families. It is intended to support program development in early years programs across Ontario. *How Does Learning Happen?* is organized around four foundational conditions that are important for children to grow and flourish: Belonging, Well-Being, Engagement and Expression. These foundations, or ways of being, are a vision for all children's future potential, and a view of what they should experience each and every day (*How Does Learning Happen?* pages 5 and 7).

Fees vary from program to program, and are based on the age of the child. Each classroom requires a minimum of one Registered Early Childhood Educator (RECE). The ratio of teacher to children varies according to the age of the child. (see chart on page 9).

Resource support may be available for children with special needs when they are receiving care in a licensed child care program participating in Quality First.

2. Licensed Home Child Care Agency

A licensed home child care agency contracts home child care providers to provide care for infants, toddlers, preschoolers and school age children in private homes. Hours of care can be flexible and may be adapted to suit the needs of individual families.

To ensure that **Child Care Early and Years Act** standards are met and maintained, the licensed home child care agency is inspected each year by the Ministry of Education. The agency employs a qualified Home Visitor to visit the child care homes at least four times per year to ensure standards are being met and to offer support to the provider. The licensed agency collects fees from parents and pays the provider.

The home child care provider may have varying levels of prior child care experience and knowledge. This could be through years of practice, being a Registered Early Childhood Educator or by attending professional learning workshops. Ensure you understand your home child provider's qualifications and training.

Resource support may be available for children with special needs when they are receiving care in a licensed home child care setting participating in Quality First.

3. Other Child Care Options in Halton

Other child care options that are not licensed and, therefore, not inspected by the Ministry of Education or mandated to follow the Child Care and Early Years Act are: unlicensed home child care providers, nannies, and families or friends.

Unlicensed home child care providers must not care for more than 5 children, including their own children under the age of 6. This requirement should be upheld regardless of the number of adults providing care. These unlicensed homes are not required to meet Provincial health, safety, and caregiver training standards.

Understanding Child Care Numbers – Chart subject to change based on Ministry guidelines.

	Licensed Child Care Centre		Licensed Home Child Care Agency (provider)	Unlicensed Home Child Care Provider	Nanny
Licensed	Yes		Yes	No	No
Setting	Centre		Home	Home	Your home
Subsidy assistance	Yes		Yes	No	No
Ratios/ # of child care children	Infants Under 18 months	1 Educator to 3 children	6 children under the age of 13 This includes provider's children under the age of 6 Maximum of 2 children under 2 years of age (including their own)	5 children under the age of 13 This includes provider's children under the age of 6 Maximum of 2 children under 2 years of age (including their own)	No Ratio
	Toddlers 18 months to 2.5 years	1 Educator to 5 children			
	Preschool 2.5 years to 5 years	1 Educator to 8 children			
	Kindergarten 3.8-5.8 years	1 Educator to 13 children			
	Primary/Junior School Age 5.8-13 years	1 Educator to 15 children			
	Junior School Age 9-13 years	1 Educator to 20 Children			
Resource Supports for children with Special needs	Yes		Yes	No	No

An unlicensed provider must inform parents that they are unlicensed in writing (either hardcopy or electronic). A provider must keep proof of their disclosure for two years. The disclosure must say: "This child care program is not licensed by the Government of Ontario."

All providers, both licensed and unlicensed, are required to provide receipts for payment of services upon request. With specific expectations, all providers, both licensed and unlicensed, are required to allow parental access to the premises of their child.

An unlicensed provider cannot operate in more than one location.

If You Have a Concern About a Licensed Child Care Centre or an Unlicensed Home Child Care Provider:

If you are concerned about a licensed child care centre or see more than the maximum number of children that are allowed to be within care, call the Ministry of Education at 905-897-5333 or 1-877-510-5333

To Search for Unlicensed Child Care Violations:

Visit www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/unlicensed.html

If You Have a Concern About Health Conditions:

For example: unclean food serving areas, poor animal cleanliness, and environmental hazards

Call: Halton Region Health Department 311

If You Have a Concern About Unattended Children or the Safety of the Children:

For example: children left alone inside or outside, verbal abuse, inappropriate discipline

Call: Children's Aid Society 905-333-4441 or 905-876-1682

**If you are not sure who to call or need help to make a complaint, contact CCDIL and we will direct you ** 905-875-0235

How Do You Find Quality Care?

Step 1: Determine your Family's Needs

1. What is your child's age?
2. What are your child's interests, abilities and needs?
3. Do you have more than one child requiring care?
4. What fee can you afford?
5. Are you eligible for a government subsidy?
6. Do you prefer centre-based or home-based child care?
7. What hours do you need care?
8. What location do you prefer? Near your child's school, your home, your work?
9. Are there any special considerations? e.g. allergies, special needs

Step 2: Create a List of Child Care Options

A list of licensed child care options can be obtained through THRC's Child Care Directory and Information Line (CCDIL) 905-875-0235 or by filling out a search request form at www.thrc.ca

Once you have a list of licensed child care options you can research the latest licensing inspections at <http://www.iaccess.gov.on.ca/LCCWeb/childcare/search.shtml>

Step 3: Make Phone Calls to Locations

Interviewing child care centres or home providers is an important step towards choosing the type of care that best suits your child. Talking to the child care providers over the phone can be a good way to gather more information before you begin visiting the programs.

Use the following questions as you begin the telephone screening process. You can select the questions that address your family needs. It may be a good idea to review the questions before contacting the child care providers.

Program

- Are you part of Quality First? Y/N If so, how long have you participated?
- How long has your program been in business?
- What hours are you open?

- What will my child experience during the day?
- Are you an inclusive program/Does your program welcome children of different cultures and abilities? How do you accommodate all the children's needs?
- Are you willing to work with other professionals such as a Resource Consultant?
- What does play mean in your program?
- Is television viewed by the children? If so, what is viewed, and how much time is spent watching television?
- Do you go on field trips? If so, are families invited to help?
- Tell me about your daily schedule?
- Describe your sleep area, schedule, and how children are monitored during sleep hours?
- What will the children do for physical activity if they can't go outside?

Guiding Children's Behaviour

- How will you help my child be successful each day?
- What will you do if my child acts out?
- What experience do you have with children with special needs?
- What will happen when there is a difficult situation with my child?
- How do you incorporate the Developmental Assets into your program?
<http://www.search-institute.org/research/developmental-assets>

Health & Safety

- How many adults are First Aid/CPR trained?
- Is your liability insurance up to date?
- How is the outdoor play area monitored for safety?
- Do you provide cribs/playpens?
- Will you be transporting my children in a vehicle?
- Are there sufficient car seats and seat belts? Who provides the car seat? How is the car seat adjusted for my child's needs?
- How often are fire drills completed?
- How do you develop your menu plan?
- If my child has special dietary needs, can you support them?
- How sick does a child have to be before they cannot attend?
- How and when do you inform parents of other children's illnesses?
- What happens if the Educator or provider gets sick?

Parental Involvement & Communication

- How and what do you communicate to parents?
- Are any other adults in the home during the day? (home child care only)
- How are parents and their ideas included in the program?
- Who do I speak to if I have a question/problem?
- How do you make adaptations for children's individual or special needs?
- How do you deal with the various cultural needs of the families in your program?
- What do you do if I send someone else to pick up my child?
- What are your overtime and late pick up policies?
- What happens if my child gets hurt? What and how will you let me know?

Organization and Staffing

- What qualifications do staff have?
- How many years of child care experience do you have or how long has the program been running?
- Can you provide me with references? (if home child care)
- Describe what type of support you receive from the licensed home child care agency? (if home child care)
- Describe the type of professional learning activities attended by staff within the past year?
- Are there times when you will not be able to care for my child or the program is closed?

Cost

- How much do you charge and when are fees due?
- What is included in your fee?
- What is your policy regarding fees for holidays and vacation time?
- What are your overtime and late pick up policies?
- What happens if my child is ill? Do I pay?

**Child care costs can vary widely, depending on the type of care, the days and hours you need, and the town or city you live in, etc. In addition to the daily fees for care, check into the additional costs that may be required such as trips, transportation, food, diapers etc.

Step 4: Visit the Child Care Program

After the telephone interviews you will need to decide which programs you want to visit. Make an appointment for you and your child to visit the licensed child care centre or licensed home child care location. This will give you the opportunity to check out the programs and observe the child care in action.

Complete this checklist on your visit to the licensed child care centre or home, observe the environment and the child care provider, ask questions.

Does the Child Care Staff/Provider:

- Behave in a warm and friendly manner?
- Remain calm and gentle?
- Comfort the child when he/she is distressed?
- Have a relaxed, caring, genuine relationship with each child?
- Show inclusion of all children and their families?
- Understand what children can do at different stages of growth?
- Have open-ended materials and equipment on hand to help the children learn and grow mentally, physically, socially and emotionally?
- Patiently help children solve their problems?
- Have developmentally appropriate expectations?
- Provide activities that encourage children to think things through?
- Encourage independence in play, and work alongside child to build on his/her interests?
- Incorporate materials from the natural environment and loose part materials which children may manipulate independently?
- Encourage good health habits, such as washing hands before eating?
- Talk to the children and encourage them to express themselves through words and language or an adapted communication system?
- Encourage children to express themselves in creative ways?
- Interact with all children in the group?
- Help the children to know, accept and feel good about themselves?
- Help the children learn to get along with and respect different cultural backgrounds and special needs?
- Take the children on community field trips?
- Take time to communicate with parents regularly?
- Support families by providing information about community services for children and families?
- Display a flexible and non-judgmental approach with the children?
- Adapt the program or setting to meet the needs of all children in care?

- Have previous experience or training in working with children including children with special needs?
- Understand the emotions of young children?
- Help your school age child follow through on projects, help with homework, and suggest interesting things to do?
- Provide stimulation by pointing out things to look at, touch, and listen to?
- Provide dependable and consistent care so the child can form an attachment?
- Help children develop language skills by talking with him or her, naming things, reading aloud, describing what she or he is doing, and responding to your child's words?
- Provide a variety of activities?
- Attend regular training in various aspects of child care?
- Set consistent limits that help the child gradually learn to make their own choices?
- Recognize the value of play and encourage your child to be creative and use his or her imagination?
- Help children feel good about themselves by being attentive, patient, positive, warm, and accepting?
- Allow children to do things for themselves?
- Work with therapists or consultants that might be involved with the child?
- Allow the children to make choices and gradually take responsibility?
- Listen to the child's problems and experiences?
- Respect the child when they express new ideas, values or opinions?
- Cooperate with parents to set clear limits and expectations about behaviour?
- Model appropriate behaviour for children?

Does the Licensed Child Care Centre or Home Child Care Provider have:

- A valid license provided by the Ministry of Education? **License should be posted for parents to view easily. Ask about any concerns you see on the licensing inspection. There should be a visible green sticker which states "Licensed Child Care" display?
- Enough space indoors and outdoors for all the children to move freely and safely?
- Provide places to store personal belongings?
- Provide a place where children can be alone? (yet supervised)
- Enough furniture, materials and toys, and other equipment for all the children in care?
- Equipment that is safe and in good repair?
- Equipment and materials that are suitable for the ages of the children in care?
- Enough room for cots or cribs so the children can take naps?
- Enough clean washrooms for all the children in care?

- Safety caps on electrical outlets?
- A locked storage place to store medicines, household cleaners, poisons, matches, sharp instruments, and other dangerous items?
- An alternate exit(s) in the event of fire?
- A safety plan posted to follow in emergencies?
- An outdoor play area that is safe and fenced?
- Adequate heat, light, and ventilation?
- Nutritious meals, snacks and a menu posted?
- A first aid kit?
- Fire extinguishers, smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors?
- Covered radiators and protected heaters?
- Strong screens on windows above the first floor?
- Safety locks and gates?
- A clean and safe place to change diapers, which is sanitized after each use?
- A clean and safe place for toileting?
- Sinks and toilets at preschool/toddler height or a stepstool in the bathroom?
- Cribs which are CSA approved?
- Separate crib/cot(s) and sheets for each child in care, which are laundered regularly?

Step 5: Choose a Suitable Child Care Option

After reviewing your phone and face-to-face interview checklists it is time to decide which child care option works best for you and your family. Once you have made this decision, contact the child care provider you have selected and confirm that a space is available for your child. Wait times for accessing a child care space can vary between programs and may depend on the age of your child.

Request a written contract or ensure your agreement is clarified in writing. Make a follow-up appointment to review arrangements and to sign any necessary forms. You may want to schedule a two week trial arrangement. If you take this extra time up front, you will be less likely to experience any unpleasant surprises later.

The Importance of a Contract

The contract between a parent and child care centre/provider is a key part of the partnership. Once you have finalized the agreement with the child care centre/provider, it is very important to confirm all details of the arrangement in writing. This step will ensure that the parent and child care provider both understand and accept the

arrangement. The centre/provider will keep a copy of the contract/paperwork on file and issue a copy to the parent.

Some of the Key Areas to Consider in a Contract Are:

- Payment arrangements
- Sick Policy
- Late fees
- Holidays
- Termination or Withdrawal Policy
- Hours of Service
- Medical/Medications
- Communication Policy
- Transportation Consent Forms
- Policies and Procedures including Health/Safety Policy, Program Philosophy, and Inclusion Policy

Introducing Your Child to Child Care

Adjusting to Child Care

Depending on your child's age, personality, stage of development and special considerations, feeling comfortable in child care may take anywhere from a few days to a few weeks. Each child will adapt to his/her own pace. Children who seem to adapt immediately may go through a period of adjustment a week or two after starting child care.

How You Can Help

You can help your child by preparing yourself and your child before starting child care. Provide information about your cultural practices, as well as your child's routines and activities at home to the Educator.

To gain confidence with your child care arrangement and help your child become accustomed to a child care setting:

- Make sure you feel good about the child care program. If you feel anxious about your decision, your child will sense it and become anxious too. Talk to your child care provider about any lingering doubts or questions you may have as soon as

- possible. Often questions can be easily answered. Speak positively about the child care setting and the people who will be there before care begins. Your child's attitude is likely to reflect your confidence and enthusiasm.
- Visit the centre or home with your child ahead of time and more than once if possible. Your child can meet the child care provider and other children and become familiar with what happens there. You will also be able to ask questions and observe activities in the child care setting.
 - Arrange a time when the child care provider is available to meet with you to talk about your child's needs.
 - Leave your child with others occasionally and increase the amount of time as your child care start date approaches. It is important for you to be able to trust someone else with your child.
 - Begin care gradually, if possible. For example, on the first day, take your child for an hour or so, and then leave together. For the next few days stay for a few hours. As your child becomes more comfortable, leave for a short time. Gradually increase the time away until your child is spending the full day in care.
 - Allow your child to take a favourite toy or object such as a teddy bear or blanket that will be a reminder of you or of home. These items may comfort your child when everything else is new. Ask the program how this works so you can support your child.
 - Pick up your child at the time you said you would, your child is counting on you coming. Use words such as “after snack time” or “after nap time” that they will understand.
 - Say “goodbye”, even if your child is playing happily. State clearly when you will be back, using words your child understands. For example, “I will be back after you finish your snack and play outside.” Your child needs to feel certain that you will return and is counting on your to return at the time given. If you disappear without saying anything, your child may get upset.
 - Keep going, once you have said goodbye. If you hesitate, you may confuse your child.
 - Greet your child warmly. At the end of the day your child may be tearful or simply ignore you. Understand that this is a normal part of getting used to child care.
 - Have realistic expectations. It will take time to adjust to the new schedule.
 - Breastfeeding mothers may continue to breastfeed even after care starts. Some mothers are able to pump milk, and provide it to the Educator in a bottle or cup. You may wish to discuss breastmilk policies with the Educator. You may also discuss your breastfeeding options by Halton Region at 311 to speak with a Public Health Nurse.
 - Plan ahead and simplify your life for the first few months e.g., stock your freezer, set up routines.

- Arrange for back-up care in case of emergency. Introduce your child to the back-up situation once he/she has settled into the program.

Supporting Children with Special Needs

A child with special needs may require extra supports when attending a child care program. The following information will support your family and child with special needs.

My Child Attends a Licensed Child Care Program

Children's Developmental Services (Halton Region), provides intervention and supports for children birth to 5 years who are born with a disorder, are at risk for delays or demonstrate a developmental delay. A variety of services are available to assess development and support intervention in licensed child care program and nursery schools. Resource Consultants assist in the coordination of services between your home and child care program. Halton Region Children's Services, Community Living Burlington and Community Living North Halton all provide Inclusion Services in our community. To ask about services, please call 311.

My Child Does not Attend a Licensed Child Care Program

Infant and Child Development Services (Halton Region), provides intervention and service coordination for children birth to 5 years who are born with a disorder, are at risk for delays or demonstrate a developmental delay and are not attending a program. For more information, please call 311.

My Child is Diagnosed with a Developmental Disability and Lives at Home

Central West Specialized Developmental Services (CWSDS) is the initial contact point for children up to the age of 18 years and their families to access services, resources, and support from the children's developmental services sector in Halton. For more information, call 905-844-7864 or check online at <http://cwsds.ca/our-services/halton-support-services/>.

My Child Has Social, Emotional, Behavioural or Developmental Difficulties

Reach Out Centre for Kids (ROCK) is an accredited children’s mental health centre. A multi-disciplinary approach is provided in the assessment and treatment of children and families in difficulty. Most services for children 0 to 17 years and their families can be accessed by attending the walk-in therapy clinics offered in various locations across Halton, or for children ages 0 to 6 years, by calling the numbers below:

Milton/North Halton.....	905-875-2575
Burlington	905-634-2347
Oakville	905-339-3525
ROCK crisis line	905-878-9785

More information can be found online at: www.rockonline.ca

My Preschool Child has Physical, Developmental and Communication Disabilities

ErinoakKids Centre for Treatment and Development is one of 21 accredited children’s treatment centres in Ontario, offering services for children with autism, spina bifida, cerebral palsy and other developmental challenges. It also has programs for children with blindness or low vision, hearing loss and speech delays. ErinoakKids serves almost 10,000 children in Peel, Halton, Dufferin and for some programs in Wellington and Waterloo. For more information, call 905-855-3557 or toll-free at 1-877-374-6652 or visit their website <http://www.erinoakkids.ca/>

My Child Has a Developmental Disability or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ages 2-21 years)

Family and Community Behavioural Services (Halton Region) provides assessment, consultation and intervention. Services are provided by Behavioural Consultants in family homes, child care programs, schools or recreation programs. For more information, call 311.

Local Parenting Support and Conversation

Halton Parents: an online resource and community for parents with children of any age. A team of Public Health Nurses and Child Development staff from Halton Region are available to talk to you about your parenting questions: your child's physical, mental or oral health, development or behaviour. Through Halton Parents, you will find: helpful parenting news and tips, resources, events, health information and links.

Website www.haltonparents.ca
Email haltonparent@halton.ca
Twitter www.twitter.com/haltonparents
Blog <http://haltonparents.wordpress.com>
Phone..... 311

Families and Child Care Working Together

When families arrange for child care, they agree to share responsibility for their child's well-being with a child care provider. It is important that the child care provider is someone you trust and that you see as a partner working with you for the benefit of your child. The relationship should be one of mutual respect, trust and cooperation. When you choose a child care provider who recognizes the importance of families and takes a genuine interest in your child, it will be easy for you to be open and honest about your expectations.

Building Relationships

Since this is an important relationship outside of the family, a special bond may develop between your child and the child care provider. You can also help your child have a positive experience by acknowledging and supporting that relationship. Take the time to communicate with the staff or home provider every day. To help develop and maintain a good relationship with your child care provider, take the following steps:

1. Clarify Your Expectations

It is important for you and your child care provider to clarify your mutual child care expectations. It will be helpful to discuss your expectations with the child care provider as you review the contract, as well as the policies and procedures. Confirm additional

expectations and arrangements by adding them to the contract or letter of agreement. It can save unnecessary misunderstandings in the future.

2. Share Information

Regular communication between the family and child care provider is an essential part of quality child care. It is important to take every opportunity to share information about your child with your child care provider. You will also want to ensure that you have the opportunity to hear about your child's development from the child care provider.

Allow enough time in the morning and at the end of the day to exchange information.

This will help you and your child care provider to understand the needs of your child.

For example, tell your child care provider if your child had a poor night's sleep, seems to be eating very little, or has had a change to their regular routine.

3. Discuss Concerns

You have spent a lot of time and energy searching for a child care provider to meet the needs of your family. If you or your child care provider have concerns about your child, it is important to discuss them promptly. When too much time passes, problems can grow bigger and become more serious. Ensure you talk openly about your child with the provider. When you do have a concern, take some time to think carefully about the concern and make an appointment to discuss it with your child care provider. You and your child care provider have a valuable relationship, and can work toward reaching a solution together.

4. Maintain the Partnership

A willingness to share information and listen carefully is the key to maintaining a good relationship with your child care provider. While it is important for you to find a child care provider who takes a genuine interest in your child, it is also important for your child care provider to feel respected and appreciated. When you look upon your child care provider as a committed, competent partner in your child's care and express your appreciation, you are helping to create and maintain a higher quality of care for your child.

The Importance of the EarlyON Child and Family Centres

EarlyON Child and Family Centres provide an opportunity for parents and caregivers to obtain information about programs and services that are available for children 0 – 6 years. Parents and caregivers can use the centres to meet and talk to early years professionals, other parents and caregivers in the community. EarlyON provides a selection of free and registered programs which include: drop-ins, parent and tot programs, parent education and information, resource library, early learning and literacy programs. For further information call:

EarlyON – Oakville	905-849-6366
EarlyON – Burlington	905-632-9377
EarlyON – Milton	905-876-1244
EarlyON – Georgetown, Acton	905-873-2960



**Licensed Child Care
Early Years Programs**



www.mcrc.on.ca (905) 876-1244




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**Halton Region's
Children's Services**



We provide:

- Assistance with the cost of child care
- Child care at Regionally operated centres
- Services for children with special needs
- Community program supports

SCS-14033

**CCDIL (Child Care Directory &
Information Line)**

905-875-0235

Are you looking for child care in Halton?




The Halton Resource Connection

905-875-4600

For further information refer to
www.thrc.ca

Access to Child Care Information