

# BANANAS HANDOUT

## How Many Children Can Be Cared For In Licensed Family Child Care Homes?

The numbers and ages of children who can be cared for in family child care homes has always been confusing. These numbers are determined by state law and are considered to be the maximum number of children that a provider can care for and still assure the health and safety of those children. To insure program quality, many providers take fewer children than their licensed capacity. In 1997, the law changed to allow family child care providers to take care of two additional schoolage children under certain circumstances. We hope this Handout helps to clarify the complicated regulations.

Small family child care homes are licensed to care for six or eight children. Large family child care homes are licensed to care for 12 or 14 children. The number of children a provider is licensed for is found on the state license which s/he is required to show to parents on request. Don't hesitate to ask a family child care provider to see this license if it isn't in plain view.

### SMALL FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES

If a family child care home is licensed for six or eight children, a provider can care for ONE of these five options:

Four infants only  
(0-24 months)



OR

Three infants and three older children  
(over the age of 24 months)



OR

Two infants and four older children



OR

One infant and five older children



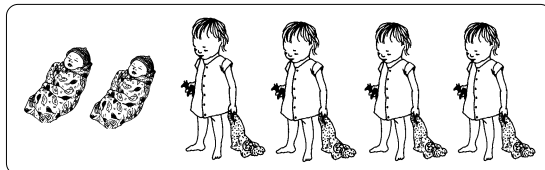
OR

Six older children



In a small family child care home, the provider can care for eight children only if the license says eight or if there is a signed addendum posted with the license. Then s/he can use ONE of the following three options:

1. Two infants and six older children – one of the older children must be at least 6 years old and another must be in Kindergarten or older (shown here:)



+



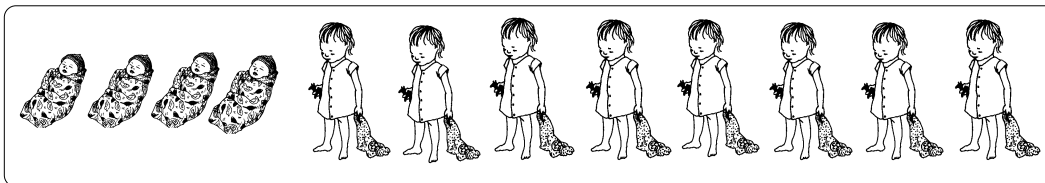
OR

2. One infant and seven older children – one of the older children must be at least 6 years old and another must be in Kindergarten or older **OR**
3. Eight older children – one of the older children must be at least 6 years old and another must be in Kindergarten or older.

## LARGE FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES

If a family child care home is licensed for 12 or 14 children, a provider can care for ONE of these five options:

1. Four infants (0-24 months) and eight older children over 2 years of age (shown here)

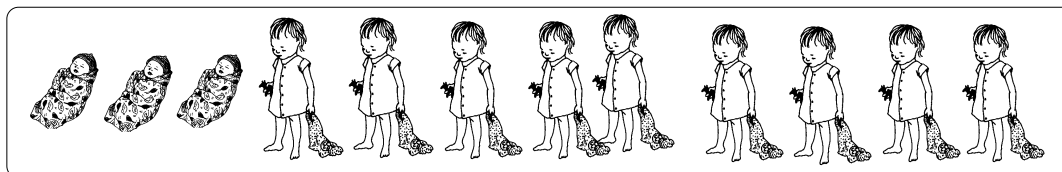


OR

2. Three infants and nine older children, OR
3. Two infants and ten older children, OR
4. One infant and eleven older children, OR
5. Twelve children over the age of 2 years.

A provider can care for 14 children only if the license says 14 or if there is a signed addendum posted with her license. Then she can care for ONE of these four options:

1. Three infants and eleven older children – one of the older children must be at least 6 years old and another must be in Kindergarten or older (shown here)



OR

2. Two infants and twelve older children – one of the older children must be at least 6 years old and another must be in Kindergarten or older OR
3. One infant and thirteen older children – one of the older children must be at least 6 years old and another must be in Kindergarten or older OR
4. Fourteen older children – one of the older children must be at least 6 years old and another must be in Kindergarten or older.

A provider is not required to have an assistant if s/he cares for six or fewer children. A provider can also care for seven or eight children without an assistant if one of the additional children is 6 years of age or older and the other is in Kindergarten and the provider meets the other qualifications to care for eight. However, an assistant is required when all of the children in a group of seven or eight are under Kindergarten age. **Once a provider has more than eight children in care, s/he is required without exception to have an assistant.**

The overall quality of child care is directly related to the number of children cared for by each adult. A provider should never care for more children (not even one!) than the number on the license. This is especially crucial when infants and toddlers are in care. When you visit a home, you need to count both the total number of children and the number of children under 2 years of age. All children under the age of ten who are in the home during child care hours are counted toward the provider's licensed capacity. This includes relatives, neighbors and/or the provider's own children. If you visit a family child care home where more children are in care than should be, continue your search for quality care.

BANANAS believes that these state regulations are too confusing and, in some circumstances, allow too many children in family child care homes. If you would like to work with us to change the law, speak with any member of the BANANAS staff.