

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. Many providers take fewer children than their licensed capacity. We hope this handout helps to clarify these regulations.

Small family child care homes are licensed to care for up to eight children; if all the children in care are under the age of 5, the limit is six children. Large family child care homes are licensed to care for up to 14 children; if all the children in care are under 5 years of age, the limit is 12 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. Don't hesitate to ask a family child care provider to see this license if it isn't in plain view. The following are examples of different configurations of children allowed in family child care situations.

SMALL FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES

A provider can care for four infants and no other children:

Four infants only
(0-24 months)



A provider can care for eight children of varying ages. However, if there are no school-age children in care, the maximum is six children with no more than three children under two years old:

One example: Three infants and three preschool children (over the age of 24 months)



If the provider in a small family child care home includes school-age children, the maximum number the provider can care for is eight children. Of the eight, there must be at least two school-age children with no more than two children under two years old:

One example: Two infants and six older children –
at least two of the older children must be of school age

(One child may be under six years old and attending kindergarten. The other must be at least six years old.)



LARGE FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES

A provider with a large family child care license must have an assistant on the premises whenever the enrollment is more than eight children.

If there are no school-age children in care, a provider can take care of a maximum of twelve children with no more than four children under two years old:

One example: Four infants and eight preschool children (over 24 months)



If a provider includes school-age children, the maximum number is fourteen children. There must be at least two school-age children with no more than three children under two years old:

One example: Three infants and 11 older children -- at least two must be of school age
(One child may be under six years old and attending kindergarten. The other must be at least six years old.)



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 two years of age. Relatives, neighbors and/or the provider's own children under the age of ten who are in the home during child care hours are counted toward the provider's licensed capacity. If you visit a family child care home where more children are in care than should be, continue your search for quality care and call Community Care Licensing, (510) 622-2602, to file a complaint.

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