



Rhode Island Department of Human Services

Consumer Statement

There are many factors to consider when selecting a child care provider for your child. This consumer statement provides you with information to help make an informed choice. Please note, this is not a complete list of the resources available to families receiving child care services. Please contact BrightStars by phone at **(401) 739-6100** or **1-855-398-7605**, by email at info@BrightStars.org or search the web at <https://exceed.ri.gov/> for a full review of resources available to families accessing child care in Rhode Island. Services are available in both English and Spanish.

Assistance to help families afford high-quality care:

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP):

The Child Care Assistance Program can subsidize the cost of child care for families that reside in Rhode Island, are US citizens or legal residents and under the age of 13. The age can be extended to 18 if the child has special needs.

Child Care Assistance is available to:

- Low income families who meet guidelines and are working a minimum of 20 hours per week and above RI minimum wage.
- Families participating in training, apprenticeship, internship, on-the-job training, work experience, work immersion sponsored by the Governor's Workforce Board, who need child care in order to take part in these job readiness/training opportunities.
- Families participating in the RI Works program.
- Pregnant/Parenting Teens participating in DHS' Youth Success program

Also available to families is Transitional Child Care:

Allows families already participating in the CCAP program to remain eligible for the subsidy program if their income increases and does not exceed 225% of the federal poverty level.

If you have questions regarding your existing CCAP case or accessing/applying for CCAP, you can contact the Department of Human Services at 1-855-MY-RIDHS (1-855-697-4347) or visit, <https://healthyrhode.ri.gov/HIXWeb13/DisplayRIServices>.

Choosing a Child Care Provider:

Families that qualify for the CCAP program can choose their own child care provider. The CCAP program will reimburse authorized child care providers up to a certain amount. Most eligible families share in the cost of care, called a co-payment, based on their income, family size and the number of children receiving child care subsidies. This fee is paid directly to the child care provider.

Families can select the child care provider of their choice and, if necessary, may use more than one provider to meet their child care needs so long as the hours of care do not overlap. Options for child care include:

- A DCYF licensed child care center or before/after-school program
- A DCYF licensed family child care home
- A license-exempt provider (relative) that has received approval from DHS

For a list of providers approved to participate in the DHS Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP,) please contact BrightStars by phone at (401) 739-6100 or 1-855-398-7605, by email at info@BrightStars.org or search the web at <https://exceed.ri.gov/>. Services are available in both English and Spanish.

The 211 Helpline is available to assist anyone with a disability who contacts BrightStars. The 211 Helpline, also listed on the Exceed website, can access hearing relays. The 211 Helpline can refer individuals with a disability to The Point, which manages the Center for Disabilities.

Rhode Island's Quality Rating Improvement System, BrightStars:

Rhode Island has a quality rating improvement system, BrightStars, for all its licensed child care providers. A QRIS is a method used in almost all states in the U.S. to assess, improve and communicate the level of quality in early care, education and school-age settings.

Through the star rating system, BrightStars helps early learning, education and school-age programs that care for children learn about best practices and apply them to the care children receive. BrightStars recognizes program quality and gives parents information to make choice about their children's care and education.

Families can search for a licensed child care provider at exceed.ri.gov. The consumer website assists families in searching for an early learning program by a variety of elements, including zip code, contact information, enrollment capacity, languages spoken, quality rating, monitoring reports, setting, financial assistance, meals served, hours of operation, availability and private pay rates.



Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families' Child Care Licensing Unit:

The Child Care Licensing Unit ensures that all children attending Rhode Island child care programs are in safe, healthy environments and are provided with care, supervision and developmentally appropriate activities that meet each child's physical and emotional needs.

The Child Care Licensing Unit monitors family child care providers (including group family child care providers,) center-based providers, public school early learning programs, and school age programs. A complete listing of Rhode Island's Licensing Regulations for these programs can be accessed at <http://www.dcyf.ri.gov/licensing-child-care/>.

Parent Complaint Process & Hotline (Child Protective Services at the Department of Children, Youth and Families):

Complaints regarding licensed child care providers are handled by the state's Child Care Licensing Unit at Department of Children Youth and Families (DCYF.) The Child Care Licensing Unit maintains information regarding all complaints received, investigative action taken and resolutions.

All persons in Rhode Island are required by law (RIGL 40-11-3) to report known or suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect to the Department of Children, Youth and Families within 24 hours of becoming aware of such abuse/neglect (1-800-RI-CHILD.) If an individual has a concern that is regulatory in nature that person should call the DCYF Licensing Unit at 401-528-3624.

A substantiated parental complaint can be viewed on the DCYF website, <http://www.dcyf.ri.gov/>.

Early Developmental Milestones and Screenings:

Resources to understand childhood developmental milestones and screenings can be accessed here:

<https://exceed.ri.gov/earlydevelopment/default.aspx>.

Suspension and Expulsion Policy for Children Served in CCAP-Approved Early Learning Programs:

Suspension and expulsion are practices which are not supported in CCAP programs unless all other options have been exhausted. Suspension and expulsion are generally not considered to be in the best interest of children and families. In general, when CCAP providers have a child they are concerned about, they must first work with the child's teacher and community supports, such as SUCCESS, in order to formulate a plan for supporting the child in the classroom. During this time the program should maintain communication with the DHS CCAP Office. Providers are encouraged to articulate suspension and expulsion policies in their Family Handbooks. Resources which can be used to develop these documents can be found here, <https://pdg.grads360.org/#communities/pdc/documents/11605> .

SUCCESS:

Success is a free service that pairs early learning programs with Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants to support the social, emotional and behavioral health needs of identified children.

If you have concerns about a child's development, social and emotional skills, or behavior in the classroom, consider referring to SUCCESS. Families are important partners in our efforts to support young children and will be a part of the consultation process; therefore, families must agree to all referrals. To learn more about our services or to make a referral, please call 401.793.8700.

For a complete listing of all resources available to families accessing CCAP, please visit <https://exceed.ri.gov/>.