

The following requirements apply to both centers and homes.

Transportation

Child care centers or family child care homes providing transportation for children must meet all motor vehicle laws, including inspection, insurance, license, and restraint requirements. Children may never be left alone in a vehicle and child-staff ratio must be maintained.

Records

Centers and homes must keep accurate records such as children's attendance, immunizations, and emergency phone numbers. A record of monthly fire drills practiced with safe evacuation of children must also be maintained. A safe sleep policy must be developed and shared with parents if children younger than 12 months are in care.

Discipline

Each program must have a written policy on discipline, must discuss it with parents, and must give parents a copy when the child is enrolled. Changes in discipline policy must be shared with parents in writing before going into effect. Corporal punishment (spanking, slapping, or other physical discipline) is prohibited in all family child care homes and centers. Religious-sponsored programs which notify the Division of Child Development that corporal punishment is part of their religious training are exempt from that part of the law.

Parental Rights

- Parents have the right to enter a family child care home or center at any time while their child is present.
- Parents have the right to see the license displayed in a prominent place.
- Parents have the right to know how their child will be disciplined.

The law and rules are developed to establish minimum requirements. Most parents would like more than minimum care. Child care resource and referral agencies can provide help in choosing quality care. Check the telephone directory or talk with a child care provider to see if there is a child care resource and referral agency in your community. For more information visit the Resources in Child Care website at: www.ncchildcare.net. For more information on the law and rules, contact the Division of Child

Development at 919-662-4499 or 1-800-859-0829, or visit our homepage at: <http://www.ncchildcare.net>.

Reviewing Files

A public file is maintained in the Division's main office in Raleigh for every center or family child care home. These files can be

- viewed during work hours;
- requested via the Division's web site at www.ncchildcare.net; or,
- requested by contacting the Division at 1-800-859-0829.

How to Report a Problem

North Carolina law requires staff from the Division of Child Development to investigate a licensed family child care home or child care center when there has been a complaint. Child care providers who violate the law or rules may be fined up to \$1,000 and may have their licenses suspended or revoked. If you believe that a child care provider fails to meet the requirements described in this pamphlet, or if you have questions, please call the Division of Child Development at 919-662-4499 or 1-800-859-0829.

Child Abuse or Neglect

Abuse occurs when a parent or caregiver injures or allows another to injure a child physically or emotionally. Abuse may also occur when a parent or caregiver puts a child at risk of serious injury or allows another to put a child at risk of serious injury. Neglect occurs when a child does not receive proper care, supervision, or discipline, or when a child is abandoned. **North Carolina law requires any person who suspects child abuse or neglect to report the case to the county department of social services.** In addition, any person can call the Division of Child Development at 919-662-4499 or 1-800-859-0829 and make a report of suspected child abuse or neglect in a child care operation. Reports can be made anonymously. A person cannot be held liable for a report made in good faith. The operator of the program must notify parents of children currently enrolled in writing of the substantiation of any abuse/neglect complaint or the issuance of any administrative action against the child care facility.

Summary: North Carolina Child Care Law and Rules

Division of Child Development
North Carolina Department of
Health and Human Services
319 Chapanoke Road
Raleigh, NC 27603

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The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability in employment or provision of services.

What Is Child Care?

The law defines child care as:

- three or more unrelated children under 13 years of age
- receiving care from a non-relative
- on a regular basis, of at least once a week
- for more than four hours per day but less than 24 hours.

It is **only** when all of these conditions exist that regulation is required. The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services is responsible for regulating child care. This is done through the Division of Child Development. The purpose of regulation is to protect the well-being of children while they are away from their parents. The law defining child care is in the North Carolina General Statutes, Article 7, Chapter 110.

The North Carolina Child Care Commission is responsible for adopting rules to carry out the law. Some counties and cities in North Carolina also have local zoning requirements for child care programs.

Star Rated Licenses

Centers and homes that are meeting the minimum licensing requirements will receive a one star license. Programs that choose to voluntarily meet higher standards can apply for a two through five star license. The number of stars a program earns is based upon the education levels their staff meet and the program standards met by the program.

Family Child Care Homes

A family child care home is licensed to care for five or fewer preschool age children, and an additional three school age children. This includes preschoolers living in the home but the provider's own school-age children are not counted (Individuals caring for one or two children are exempt from being licensed.) Licenses are issued to family child care home providers who meet the following requirements:

- Home providers must be 21 years old with at least a high school education or its equivalent, and mentally and emotionally capable of caring for children.

- He or she must undergo a criminal records background check.
- All household members over age 15 who are present in family child care homes when children are in care must also undergo a criminal records background check.
- All family child care home providers must have training in CPR each year and in ITS-SIDS and first aid every three years. They also must complete a minimum number of training hours annually.

All family child care homes must meet basic health and safety standards. Providers must maintain verification of children's immunization and health status. They must provide developmentally appropriate toys and activities, as well as nutritious meals and snacks for the children in care.

Child Care Centers

Licensing as a center is required when six or more children are cared for in a residence or when three or more children are in care in a building other than a residence. Religious-sponsored programs are exempt from some of the regulations described below if they choose not to be licensed. Programs that operate for less than four consecutive months, such as summer camps, are exempt from licensing. Child care centers may voluntarily meet higher standards and receive a license with a higher rating. Centers will be visited at least annually to make sure they are following the law and to receive technical assistance from child care consultants.

Licensed centers must meet requirements in the following areas.

Staff

The administrator of a child care center must be at least 21, and have at least a North Carolina Early Childhood Administration Credential or its equivalent. Lead teachers in a child care center must be at least 18 and have at least a North Carolina Early Childhood Credential or its equivalent. If administrators and lead teachers do not meet this requirement, they must begin credential coursework within six months of being hired. Staff younger than 18 years of age must work under the direct supervision of staff 21 years of age or older. All staff must complete a minimum number of training hours annually including ITS-SIDS training for any caregiver that works with infants 12 months of age or younger. All staff must also undergo a criminal records background check.

Ratios

Ratios are the number of staff required to supervise a certain number of children. Group size is the maximum number of children in one group. Ratios and group sizes for licensure are shown below and must be posted in each classroom.

Age	Teacher : Child Ratio	Maximum Group Size
0-12 months	1:5	10
12-24 months	1:6	12
2 years old	1:10	20
3 years old	1:15	25
4 years old	1:20	25
School age	1:25	25

Small centers in a residence that are licensed for six to twelve children may keep up to three additional school-age children, depending on the ages of the other children in care. When the group has children of different ages, staff-child ratios and group size must be met for the youngest child in the group.

Space and Equipment

To meet licensing requirements, there must be at least 25 square feet per child indoors and 75 square feet per child outdoors. Outdoor play space must be fenced. Indoor equipment must be clean, safe, well maintained, and developmentally appropriate. Outdoor equipment and furnishings must be child size, sturdy, and free of hazards that could injure children.

Curriculum

The Division of Child Development does not promote or require any specific curriculum over another. Child care programs choose the type of curriculum appropriate for the ages of the children enrolled. Activity plans must be available to parents and must show a balance of active and quiet activities. Rooms must be arranged to encourage children to explore and use materials on their own.

Health and Safety

Children must be immunized on schedule. Each licensed center must ensure the health and safety of children by sanitizing areas and equipment used by children. Meals and snacks must be nutritious, and children must have portions large enough to satisfy their hunger. Food must be offered at least once every four hours. Local health, building, and fire inspectors visit licensed programs to make sure standards are met. All children must be allowed to play outdoors each day (weather permitting) and must have space and time provided for rest.

North Carolina's Standard Policy on Discipline and Behavior Management

Praise and positive reinforcement are effective methods of the behavior management of children. When children receive positive, nonviolent, and understanding interactions from adults and others, they develop good self concepts, problem solving abilities, and self discipline. **Based on this belief of how children learn and develop values, this facility will practice the following discipline and behavior management policy:**

We:

1. **DO** praise, reward, and encourage the children.
2. **DO** reason with and set limits for the children.
3. **DO** model appropriate behavior for the children.
4. **DO** modify the classroom environment to attempt to prevent problems before they occur.
5. **DO** listen to the children.
6. **DO** provide alternatives for inappropriate behavior to the children.
7. **DO** provide the children with natural and logical consequences of their behaviors.
8. **DO** treat the children as people and respect their needs, desires, and feelings.
9. **DO** ignore minor misbehaviors.
10. **DO** explain things to children on their levels.
11. **DO** use short supervised periods of "time-out"
12. **DO** stay consistent in our behavior management program.

We:

1. **DO NOT** spank, shake, bite, pinch, push, pull, slap, or otherwise physically punish the children.
2. **DO NOT** make fun of, yell at, threaten, make sarcastic remarks about, use profanity, or otherwise verbally abuse the children.
3. **DO NOT** shame or punish the children when bathroom accidents occur.
4. **DO NOT** deny food or rest as punishment.
5. **DO NOT** relate discipline to eating, resting, or sleeping.
6. **DO NOT** leave the children alone, unattended, or without supervision.
7. **DO NOT** place the children in locked rooms, closets, or boxes as punishment.
8. **DO NOT** allow discipline of children by children.
9. **DO NOT** criticize, make fun of, or otherwise belittle children's parents, families, or ethnic groups.

"Time-Out"

"Time-out" is the removal of a child for a short period of time (3 to 5 minutes) from a situation in which the child is misbehaving and has not responded to other discipline techniques. The "timeout" space, usually a chair, is located away from classroom activity but within the teacher's sight. During "time-out," the child has a chance to think about the misbehavior which led to his/her removal from the group. After a brief interval of no more than 5 minutes, the teacher discusses the incident and appropriate behavior with the child. When the child returns to the group, the incident is over and the child is treated with the same affection and respect shown the other children.

Adapted from original prepared by Elizabeth Wilson, Student, Catawba Valley Technical College

Asheville Montessori School

Code of Conduct

Asheville Montessori School believes that all children desire to be productive, and in control of themselves. We also believe discipline should include acknowledging the child's contributions, respecting his achievements, and praising his progress. To that end, our discipline policy is designed to help our students develop self-discipline and self-respect.

Beginning with orientation and throughout the school year, the children are made aware of appropriate and considerate behavior, and why these are necessary for the enjoyment and harmony of the group. Through gentle reminders and consistent modeling, the children become sensitive to the needs of others, and develop a respect for their learning environment. When a gentle reminder is not enough, the teacher will intervene respectfully, but firmly, to stop the behavior. The teacher will redirect the child towards more positive, productive activity, so that he is able to feel proud of himself and his accomplishments.

If used consistently, this positive approach to discipline is extremely effective with most children. If a child does not respond, parent(s) or guardian(s) will be called for a conference. Through close cooperation between home and school, effective solutions can usually be found.

If a child becomes too disruptive to remain in the classroom, her parent(s) will be notified. In the event that a child becomes extremely disruptive, the child's parent or guardian will be notified and expected to retrieve the child as soon as it is feasible.

While a Montessori environment is normally successful with a very wide range of students, nothing is right for every child. One of our greatest challenges is to be objective, compassionate, yet realistic in considering the needs of each child as a unique individual. When we fail, despite our best efforts to work with the child to help him/her meet appropriate behavioral expectations, we sadly and reluctantly must counsel the family to seek out another school setting in which the child can be successful.

Policy on Biting: It is our belief that a young child who bites *usually* does so without malice. It is often as an expression of anger and frustration. Nonetheless, biting is extremely dangerous. A child who bites will be excluded from the group, then soothed and comforted, and shown ways to express his/her feelings safely. Because biting is an unacceptable behavior, both sets of parents will be notified immediately, and a plan of remediation will be enacted. A meeting with the director and parents will follow if further biting occurs.

As a parent of a child enrolled at AMS, I agree:

1. To support the staff in helping my child to develop appropriate classroom behavior and self-discipline.
2. If my child does not respond to the school's discipline policy after the best efforts of the parents and staff, she/he must be withdrawn from the school.
3. Grounds for immediate action include dangerous behavior, deliberate destruction of the learning environment, and severe disruption of the class.
4. To support the policies, goals and overall well being of AMS through positive communication with staff and other parents.
5. To help maintain an atmosphere of peace by bringing matters of concern to the attention of the staff through appropriate channels of communication, and by recognizing that the Director will be the final arbiter of all matters.

Asheville Montessori School
RELEASE POLICY

Children are released only to those individuals so designated by their parents or other legal guardian on the child's Release & Emergency Contact Information form. On that form, parents or legal guardians give the names, addresses, and phone numbers of those who are authorized to pick up the child. The following procedure will be used:

1. Under normal conditions, cars form a line in front of the school, taking turns driving up to the door, where a teacher will be waiting to assist each child out of the car, and walk them inside to their classroom.

2. Upon dismissal during normal carline, children will exit through the front door and a teacher will escort them to their car. The teacher will buckle the child into their car seat, as long as there is an appropriate child restraint, and the parent/guardian has initialed the AMS Car Seat Waiver.

3. If another individual arrives to pick up a child, and they have been previously authorized to do so by a parent / guardian on the Release & Emergency Contact Information form, he or she will be asked to show a picture I.D to verify their identity, unless known by the teacher.

4. If the parent or guardian needs to have someone pick-up their child, and that individual has not been authorized on the Release & Emergency Contact Information form, the teacher must be informed ahead of time by the parent or guardian. When the person arrives, he or she must remain outside until the teacher has confirmed their identity with a picture I.D. Only then may the child be released into that adult's care.