



**SUMMER
CAMP**

2017

PARENT HANDBOOK

Welcome! Thank you for allowing us to care for your child(ren) this summer! This handbook has been designed to give you an overview of the Prime Time Summer Program policies, procedures, goals, and philosophies. Please feel free to meet with the Site Director or contact the Prime Time office to discuss any content listed in this handbook. Please note: you will be asked to sign a statement indicating that you have read and understand this handbook at the time of registration.

Mission Statement

Prime Time's mission is to help children develop their fullest potential by providing a safe and healthy environment which supports and strengthens family and school relationships for children in the Cumberland County Community.

Objective and Goals

Prime Time's objective is to provide a comprehensive summer camp program for children.

Our goals are as follows:

>To help children develop their fullest potential by focusing on:

- Physical and recreational skills;
- Self-awareness, confidence, and feelings of self-worth;
- Promoting creativity and self-expression;
- Promoting independence and decision making;
- Interpersonal relationships.

>To provide a safe and healthy environment where children can have fun.

>To support and strengthen the family unit and school relationships by focusing on:

- Improving communications
- Involvement through parents, clubs, and family programs.

Eligibility

Boys and girls age 5, who have completed Kindergarten, through 12 years of age.

Notice to Parents

- It is your responsibility to keep us informed of any change of employment, address, telephone numbers, hours of work, and emergency contacts. It is imperative that we are able to contact you.
- If your child requires medication during Prime Time, please fill out all necessary medication forms. These forms are available at the Prime Time Administrative Office or at your child's Prime Time site.
- Here at Prime Time, we value good customer service and interaction among staff and families. It is Prime Time's expectation that your child's Site Director personally introduce him/herself to you, as well as the counselors at your child's program. To ensure this is being done, please contact the Prime Time administrative office if you have not been personally introduced to the staff working at your child's school.

- Parents are welcome to request a tour of the Prime Time operational areas at any time. Please be sure to ask for a tour as your child's Site Director would be happy to provide you with this courtesy.
- Prime Time is not responsible for children's personal belongings that are lost or stolen. Please keep your child's valuables at home.
- The Summer Program will begin on Monday, June 12th and end on Friday, August 11th, 2017.

What to Bring to Camp

- Please label **all** clothing and belongings with your child's first and last name.
- Lunch and beverage each day.
 - The first 7 weeks of camp, lunch will be provided by Child Nutrition under the Summer Feeding Program. A non-microwavable lunch, and a beverage, will need to be provided for Weeks 8 and 9. Please label all lunch boxes and beverages with your child's name.
- Refillable Water Bottle.
- Bathing Suit & Towel – Swim days only.
- Sunscreen (Spray Preferred)
- Change of Clothes
- Backpack

What to Wear

- Comfortable and weather appropriate clothes
 - Please be mindful that children will have the option to participate in a wide variety of activities, some of which are messy.
- Socks
- Tennis Shoes
- Sandals – Swim days only.

What Not to Bring

- Cell phones and other electronic devices
- Personal toys
- Weapons – toys or real
- Glass bottles
- Food that needs heating or take-out
- Valuables or excess money

******Prime Time is not responsible for lost or stolen items.***

Activities

Each week, children will have an opportunity to participate in a wide variety of themed activities that fit into our 4 main categories: Sports and Games 'R us, Create with me!, STEM (Science,

Technology, Engineering, Math), and Chef's Corner. With our choice based curriculum, campers will embark on a journey of exploration and new experiences of their choosing.

Activity Schedule

7am – 8am	Extended Hours- Stations/Outdoor Play
8am – 8:30am	Welcome & Opening Ceremony
8:30am – 9am	Morning Snack
9am – 10:30am	Activity Choice One
10:30am – 12pm	Activity Choice Two
12pm – 2pm	Lunch / Outdoor Play / Stations/ Open Gym
2pm – 3:30pm	Activity Choice Three
3:30pm – 4pm	Afternoon Snack
4pm – 4:45pm	Wrap Up & Closing Ceremony
4:45pm – 6pm	Extended Hours- Stations/Outdoor Play

Snacks and Meals

Prime Time will provide a morning and afternoon snack for all campers. All snacks served at Prime Time meet all USDA standards. If your child has a food allergy, please ensure that a Special Diet Order Form is on file with your child's school, and notify the Prime Time staff about the allergy by listing it in the Prime Time Health Information section. Parents are encouraged to review the snack schedule located on the Prime Time Parent Information Board near the sign-out table.

The first 7 weeks of camp, lunch will be provided by the Cumberland County Schools Child Nutrition department under the Super Summer Meal Program (SSMP). A non-microwavable lunch, and a beverage, will need to be provided for Weeks 8 and 9. Cumberland County Schools Prime Time ***will not*** furnish lunch or supplemental food items during these weeks. We encourage parents to provide healthy and nutritious meals for their children.

All lunches, beverages, and snacks sent to camp will be kept in a cooler marked with the date and child's name. **Microwaves will not be available for student use.**

Field Trips

There is no additional charge for the field trips, however parents are welcome to send spending money with their children. Children are responsible for keeping track of their own money; staff ***will not*** hold on to any money for children. Please consider sending your child with a wallet or fanny pack on field trip days.

On field trip days, please send your child to camp in their green Prime Time field trip t-shirt. Children do not need to wear their field trip shirts on swim days, instead campers should be sent to camp in their bathing suit and have extra clothes to change into. See the schedule for field trip times and dates.

Parents will be required to provide a recent 2" x 3" photo of their child at the time of registration. Children will not be able to attend field trips without a photo.

IMPORTANT: To ensure accurate head counts at all times while off campus, children cannot be dropped off or picked-up while on a field trip.

Swimming

Your children will be going swimming at the Westover or College Lakes Recreation Center outdoor pool once per week. Your child will be bused in the Cumberland County Schools white activity buses from their camp location. Please see the field trip schedule for details regarding your child's scheduled swim day.

Prime Time staff will provide additional supervision at the pool and maintain a staff to child ratio of 1:10 or less, not including certified lifeguards. We will ensure that half of the staff is in the water with the children and the other half is on the deck scanning the pool.

Policies for Aquatic Activities

1. All children shall wear bathing suit attire and shoes to the pool. Easy slip on shoes such as flip flops are recommended.
2. Children must walk on the deck.
3. No one can enter the pool without a lifeguard on duty.
4. No child can leave the pool area without a staff member.
5. Sitting, hanging, or playing on safety ropes or ladders is not allowed.
6. Headcounts will take place every 15 minutes. The lifeguard will blow a whistle to signal a buddy check. All children will exit the pool and stand with their group while the staff complete a headcount. Once all children have been accounted for, they can continue swimming.
7. Children may not enter the water until the lifeguards blow their whistles.
8. Diving from the deck is not allowed.
9. Water toys are not permitted from home.
10. No food or drink is allowed in the pool area.
11. No rough play is allowed on the pool deck or in the water.
12. Parents must provide their child(ren) with a change of clothing for the days they go swimming. Clothing must be labeled with the child's name. Parents must also provide a towel labeled with their child's name.
13. Misbehaving in the pool or on deck will cause your child to sit out of the swimming activity for the remainder of the time on that particular day.

* The lifeguards shall have the authority to enforce all pool rules.

Sick Children

If your child becomes sick, we will isolate your child and you will be notified to pick him/her up within one hour. Parents should arrange with their employers to leave work if their child should become ill at Prime Time. If we are unable to immediately contact you, we will contact those individuals listed as emergency contacts on your child's account. Late check-out charges of

\$2.00 per minute may be assessed if your child is not picked up within one hour of notification. As stated in the North Carolina Division of Child Development's Child Care Handbook, **“Children that are too ill or cannot go outdoors are not able to participate in all the daily activities and should be excluded from care. All children must be able to participate in all the daily activities. If a child is not well enough to go outside, the child is not well enough to be at the center.”**

Medication and Procedures

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to inform Prime Time staff of their child's physician's order to take medication during Prime Time. The parent/guardian must provide medication to Prime Time staff for administration prior to enrolling in the program. We do not have access to the school's medication or paperwork. Failure to do so will result in interruption of child care service. In an emergency situation with the absence of emergency medication(s) on site, Prime Time will call 911.

For all medications, including topical, rectal, oral, inhalers, and injections, parents/guardians are responsible for the completion of a current Physician's School Medication Form available at the Prime Time office or at your child's Prime Time site. The written instructions on the form will include:

- Student's Name
- Name of Medication
- Dosage
- Route
- Time to be Administered

The parent/guardian must bring the medication to the Prime Time Site Director at the child's school. **Such medication must be in the original container labeled by the pharmacy.** Parent/guardian will check-in medication, count it, and sign the medication in on the Medication Check-In Log with the Prime Time Site Director. When your child leaves the program, medication should be signed out with the Prime Time Site Director.

Prime Time staff will secure emergency medications and supporting documentation for all children with documented life threatening conditions, (i.e. asthma, seizures, and food/insect allergies). All medications will be secured and mobile for transport in emergency situations.

Prime Time staff attends medication, asthma, and diabetes professional development every two years and retain all certification in the NCDCDEE documentation notebook.

Sunscreen

Prime Time encourages parents to apply sunscreen on their child(ren) each day before arriving to camp. Parents will also need to provide us with a bottle of sunscreen that can be used to re-apply throughout the day. Please note that the following procedures must be followed:

1. A blanket Permission to Administer Topical Sunscreen Form must be completed by the parent/guardian for each child.

2. Sunscreen must be provided in its original container and labeled clearly with the child's name.
3. Staff will keep the sunscreen out of reach of children when not in use.
4. This form will only be valid between June 12th and August 11th, 2017.

We recommend that parents provide spray/aerosol sunscreen for your child's comfort as well as the ease of use for staff. Prime Time will not be liable if parents do not provide sunscreen for their child. Please keep in mind that we will spend a good deal of time outdoors each day.

Cell Phone and Small Electronics Policy

Cell phones and other small electronics continue to advance and offer multi-use functions like camera, video recording, music player, texting, web browsing, and video games. When misused, these functions can put campers at risk of exposure to age-inappropriate material and can even lead to emotional injury. In order to ensure all campers privacy and safety, Camp Prime Time will enforce a no camper cell phone and small electronics policy this summer.

Our policy is designed to:

- Reduce the stress associated with the damage to and theft of electronics- the camp environment can be hard on electronics!
- To promote socialization by allowing your children to fully embrace and "plug into" the connections they make with other campers as they "unplug" from their electronics. Camp is all about making new friends!
- Ensure that your children are not exposed to inappropriate material.
- Ensure that pictures or videos of your child(ren) are not posted on social media sites by other campers.

We understand that parents look to cell phones as a way to communicate and check on their children throughout the day, however children will still only be a phone call away without their cell phone at camp. You're always welcome to call your camper at the Camp Prime Time location. We typically have a landline number as well as two cell phones at each site. So whether we're in our designated space, swimming, on a field trip, or out in the field you will always be able to reach us. The site's contact numbers will be given to you on the first day of the program.

We want to assure you that parents and guardians will be contacted if:

- Your camper is ill.
- Your camper needs medical attention off site.
- There are questions regarding medications or healthcare of your camper.
- Your camper asks to call you.
- Your camper is unable to function within the camp rules in a healthy way.

Any cell phones or small electronics that are brought to camp will be placed in the child's cubby. Prime Time will not be responsible, for any reason, for the loss or damage to any cell phones or electronics brought to camp.

Please feel free to call the Prime Time Camp Coordinator or the Prime Time Director with questions and concerns regarding this policy.

Discipline

Appropriate behavior is expected of all children. Inappropriate behavior is dealt with by reasoning with the child, visiting the reflection table, and requesting parental reinforcement from the home. Continued behavior problems, which cause disruption of the program for other children, may be cause for a child's expulsion from the program. If a child is removed from the program due to a behavioral problem, no refund will be given for the unused week of care that has been paid by the parents. Prime Time will not tolerate fighting. Children who fight may be suspended or expelled from the program. There is a zero tolerance policy for fighting and bullying. A child's dismissal from the program will be at the director's discretion and based upon the severity of the incident(s). We do not share information regarding the discipline of other children. Parents are not permitted to approach another child in the program regarding discipline matters. If you have a concern with another child, please speak with the Site Director or call the Prime Time Administrative Office at (910) 678-2451.

Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS)

The PBIS initiative is a process for creating safer and more effective schools. The process focuses on improving a program's ability to teach and support positive behavior for all children. PBIS is not a program or curriculum. It is a team-based process for systemic problem-solving, planning, and evaluation, and is an approach to creating a safe and productive learning environment.

Prime Time has established a matrix that serves as the framework of the initiative. The matrix breaks down the expectation and where this expectation should be demonstrated. All expectations fall under a specific category and goal. These goals are called, the "Prime Time 4." The "Prime Time 4" consists of: Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be Responsible, and Be Engaged. As children demonstrate appropriate behavior, they will be rewarded with a bead to place on their Prime Time dog tag given at the beginning of the program. Children will be earning many beads over their week(s) at Prime Time. A form listing all the beads and how they are earned will be given at the time of registration.

Pick-Up of Children

Only authorized persons 16 or older whose names appear on the emergency forms will be allowed to pick up children. NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS RULE. Please be prepared to retrieve your child from their current activity and present a valid photo ID at all times when picking up. We care about your child and never want to release them to an unauthorized person. Please help us by cooperating. If you need to make a change or add someone to the pick-up list, please notify the Prime Time office. All children attending the program MUST be signed in and out each day by their parent or guardian. It would be helpful if all parents would provide pictures on the parent portal. This will help us identify quickly who is allowed to pick up a child.

Absences

If your child will be absent from camp please notify the camp staff at the school site. There are NO refunds, credits, or transfer of payments for absences, sickness, mishaps, or holidays. Whether your child attends all of a week, part of a week, or none of a week, full payment for the

week is still due if a **10 business day notice** is not given. This includes both your reservation and weekly fee. **You must contact the Prime Time administrative office to withdraw your child from the program. Registration fees are non-refundable.**

Payments

Payments are due Friday before the week of care. All programs run on a pre-payment basis. Parents have the option of choosing which weeks their child(ren) will attend for the summer. Our office must receive payments before your child can attend each weekly session. No child will be allowed to stay in the program unless the payment has been received. Payments can be made online through the parent portal (24 hours a day), or mailed, brought into our administrative office during business hours, or put in the drop-slot in the front of the building. Please note that payments placed in the drop-slot will be processed the next business day. There is a 4.95% processing and handling fee for all credit/debit card transactions and a \$1.50 processing and handling fee for all e-check transactions. Prime Time accepts cash, money orders, checks, debit (with logo on it), Visa, or Master Card. Bill Pay: Check with your bank's website to set up an account. We ask that parents list their account number on all checks and money orders.

We highly encourage all parents to review their parent portal on a regular basis.

*****Your reservation fee(s) and weekly fee(s) can only be applied to another week of camp if the Prime Time Administrative Office receives a 10 business day notice. (See under "Absences" for rule.)**

Return Check Policy

Prime Time will gladly accept your checks (paper or e-check), however in the event your check is returned; you (parent/guardian) will be responsible for the face amount plus a \$30.00 NSF fee and any late payment fees that may incur. In addition, your check writing privileges will be revoked. If you do have a check that is returned, you will be contacted by the Prime Time office and you must make your payment in person at the Prime Time Administrative Office. Payments for returned checks can be made with cash, money order, or cashier's check only; no credit/debit or personal checks will be accepted. Please include the following on your check: Your Prime Time Account #, DL # and State, Full Name, Address, & Phone Number. Prime Time does not resubmit returned checks. **In the event that your check is returned, check writing privileges will be revoked for 1 year.**

Partial Weeks

Prime Time does not pro-rate weeks with the exception of the inclement weather policy and pre-determined special rate weeks. If the program is closed for part of a week, payment for the week must still be paid to the Prime Time office. The week July 3rd – July 7th will be a special rate week due to camp being closed on Tuesday, July 4th. Please see the special rate listed under Summer Fees for this week's fee.

Late Check-out

Parents will be charged a \$2.00 per minute per child late fee if they pick-up their child after the designated pick-up time. Regular camp hours end at 5:00PM each day. Parents will have the option of choosing extended care in the afternoon until 6:00PM. Payment for a late check-out is due within 48 hours. After a second late check-out a child may be dismissed from the program.

Special Discount for Active Military

Please contact the Prime Time Administrative Office for more information.

Child Care Subsidies & Financial Assistance

Prime Time accepts child care vouchers from DSS and other subsidy providers. Please contact the Prime Time to verify that we accept subsidy from a specific provider.

Financial assistance is available to working families that qualify. Applications are available on the Prime Time website or can be picked-up at the Prime Time Administrative Office. After completing the application, please call the office at (910) 678-2451 to set-up an appointment.

Summer Fees

Registration Fee \$15.00

The registration fee is non-refundable and per child. Registration fee includes one t-shirt, one drawstring backpack, and one dog tag with lanyard.

Reservation Fee \$10.00

The reservation fee is required to reserve your child's spot for each week. The fee will be deducted from your weekly fee. The reservation fee will only be refunded, credited, or transferred to another week if the Prime Time office receives a 10 business day notice.

AM Extended Care \$10.00

From 7:00AM – 8:00 AM

Regular Program \$100.00

From 8:00AM – 5:00 PM

*Special Rate Week: July 3rd – July 7th- \$80.00
(Camp Closed July 4th)

PM Extended Care \$10.00

From 5:00PM – 6:00 PM

There are NO refunds, credits, or transfer of payments for absences, sickness, mishaps, or holidays. Whether your child attends all of a week, part of a week, or none of a week, full payment for the week is still due if a **10 business day notice is not given**. This includes both your reservation and weekly fee. **You must contact the Prime Time administrative office to withdraw your child from the program. Registration fees are non-refundable.**

Inclement Weather Policy

During the threat of inclement weather, the superintendent will determine the operating hours of Prime Time. The superintendent or designee will notify parents as early as possible and will take the safety of the students and staff into consideration. We acknowledge that the decision may in some cases lead to an inconvenience, but the decision is made with safety in mind. Families should refer to the CCS website or local news channel for up-to-date information regarding delays, early releases, or closures. If camp is closed one day or children are released early, there is no discount. Discounts apply as follows:

- Two consecutive days in one week – 15%
- Three consecutive days in one week – 35%
- Four consecutive days in one week – 55%
- Five consecutive days in one week – 75%

If camp is closed on Friday of one week and on the Monday of the next week, the days are not considered consecutive days. Camp must be completely closed for two full days in the same week for the discounted rates to apply. Listen to the radio, watch television, and please check the Cumberland County Schools home page when there is a threat of inclement weather.

Insurance Information

The safety and well-being of our students is of utmost importance to us. Notwithstanding our intense efforts at risk prevention, there will be some accidents that will result in injury to some of our students during the program. Please be advised that the school system does not provide insurance coverage for injury to students at school; however, CCS has contracted with The Young Group to bring you affordable optional accidental student insurance. You may contact The Young Group at 1.888.574.6288 for coverage options, or to purchase coverage directly you may go online to www.k12studentinsurance.com. It is essential that you make arrangements for insuring your child against accidents.

*****If you do not have insurance, you will need a notarized statement saying Prime Time is not liable for accidents concerning my child if Prime Time was not negligent.**

Confidentiality and Ethics in Reference to Children's Records

Prime Time employees working at the Prime Time locations and the Administrative office will be privileged to confidential information as they work with children and their families. A strict code of ethics must be maintained to ensure the private nature of divulged information.

Confidentiality of Records

1. All records about children and families are locked up when the program is not in operation.
2. Often files are kept in two areas-One with the confidential family information, to which only Cumberland County Schools, and Prime Time employees and Administrative

personnel have access via Cumberland County School's Power School & EZ Child Track software systems, the other with materials such as emergency contacts, phone numbers and other pertinent information to which any Prime Time staff can have instant access on site, during the hours of program operation, these files are kept in a file box. Emergency Information is kept in a binder near the phone for quick access.

3. All children's files must be available for review by a North Carolina Division of Child Development representative at all times per NC General Statute 110-91(9).
4. Children's files do not leave the Prime Time locations except for on field trip days and when signed out by an authorized Prime Time employee for a specific purpose. The sign-out sheet will state the child's name, reason for use, date and time taken and the date and time it will be returned. Records should never be removed from a Prime Time location unless being returned to the Prime Time Administrative office to be destroyed or summoned by a court of law.
5. At the end of each school year, all children's files are returned to the Prime Time Administrative office. All files are destroyed/shredded and discarded securely by Cumberland County Schools.

In most cases, a parent's written and signed authorization is required before information concerning a child can be disclosed to individuals outside of Cumberland County Schools Prime Time Before and After School Care. Below are some of the cases in which the law dictates that a parent's signed authorization may not be required in order for Cumberland County Schools Prime Time Before and After School Care to release information:

- If a Cumberland County Schools Prime Time staff believes that the student is likely to harm himself/herself and/or another person, the staff may take action necessary to protect the student or others by contacting the appropriate authorities or medical provider.
- If a Cumberland County Schools Prime Time staff has cause to believe that the student has been or may be abused or neglected, the staff is required to make a report to the appropriate state agency.
- If a child's records are requested by a valid subpoena or court order, Cumberland County Schools Prime Time must respond.

In cases where Prime Time receives a request for information to be released, the Director will verify validity as well as ensure if necessary, with the Cumberland County School Board Attorney that Prime Time is acting within the legal limits of the law. A copy of any request will be provided to parents and maintained in the child's file.

Ethical Considerations

1. Prime Time will get written permission to photograph or video children. The permission informs parents that the images of children may be used in slides, videos, or as illustrations in newsletters, training materials, annual reports, marketing materials or news stories.
2. Without written permission from the parent, information regarding students enrolled in Prime Time will not be released unless Prime Time is required to do so by law.

3. Prime Time will only break a strict code of confidentiality when a child is endangered, within areas of health, neglect, or abuse. Prime Time may need to report heretofore confidential facts without permission to the authorities, only in the child's best interest.
4. When children impart information to a Prime Time employee that implies neglect or abuse, Prime Time is legally obligated to report the information to the appropriate authorities.
5. Prime Time employees will not discuss one family with another family.
6. Both children and parents have the right to be spoken to in private. Prime Time employees will not correct or speak of personal matters in front of other staff members, visitors, parents, caregivers or children. Incorrect behavior should be discussed privately with parents.
7. Children have the right to display feelings. If children lose control, they have the right to be allowed a private place for expressing their emotions, with a Prime Time employee nearby to give reassurance when needed.
8. It is unethical for a Prime Time employee to pursue personal business while being paid to supervise children.
9. Questions that a Prime Time employee may have regarding policy or personal matter of a child's family should be asked of the supervisor or the Director of Prime Time rather than of a Prime Time co-worker, to avoid the potential for gossip.
10. Prime Time employees working with children should refer to their supervisors or the policies set forth in the Employee Handbook to avoid inappropriate discipline of a child.
11. Personal information about families such as a newly instituted separation or divorce, an arrest, a serious illness, or job loss, should be divulged to other Prime Time employees working with the specific child being affected however only to the extent of what they need to know to support the child. Those who seldom have contact with that child may not need to know family details. Careful judgment must be made by the supervisor.
12. Prime Time employees will avoid repeating stories about families that children share. This information should always be treated as privileged information. Prime Time employees are encouraged to document such information and this documentation should be kept confidential and secured at all times.
13. Prime Time employees will avoid judging a family or imposing his or her own values on a child if there is a difference between the staff's beliefs and that of the child's family.
14. Prime Time staff will follow the National Afterschool Association Code of Ethics.

Summary of North Carolina Child Care Laws and Rules

Division of Child Development

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

319 Chapanoke Road

Raleigh, NC 27603

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. 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.

Discipline

Corporal punishment (spanking, slapping, or other physical discipline) is prohibited in all family child care homes and centers. 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. 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 about quality child care, parents can call 1-800-CHOOSE-1 or 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 website 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.

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.

Child Care Centers

Licensing as a center is required when six or more preschool 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 to meet the standards of the Notice of Compliance rather than the Star Rated License. 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 center must meet requirement in the following area:

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 including ITS-SIDS training for any caregiver that works with infants 12 months of age or younger. At least one person on the premises must have CPR and First Aid training. All staff must also undergo a criminal records background check initially, and every three years thereafter.

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 licenses for size to twelve children may keep up to three additional school-age children, depending on the ages of the other in care. When the group has children of different ages, staff-child ratios and groups sizes 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 and Early Education does not promote or require any specific curriculum to get a quality point for star-rated license. 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, and indoor and outdoor 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 hunger. Food must be offered at least once every four hours. Local health, building, and fire inspectors visit licensed program m to make sure standards are met. All children must be allowed to play outdoors each day (weather permitting) for at least an hour a day for preschool children and at least thirty minutes a day for children under two. They must have space and time provided for rest.