



CHILD CARE OPTIONS

Child Care Centers

- licensed by [Texas Department of Family and Protective Services \(DFPS\)](#)
- may care for children birth to 12 years
- opportunities for learning exist
- full-time and part-time care available
- some receive government funding, including Early Head Start and Head Start

Pros:

- are consistent & reliable
- are open Monday-Friday, year round
- may offer a curriculum based on principles of child development
- some have a parent involvement program
- have trained staff
- offer opportunities for children to interact with children their own age

Cons:

- may not meet needs of parents with unusual or long work schedules
- may be less able to accommodate sick children
- may have larger group sizes and fluctuations in staffing
- for part-time children, it may be difficult to form relationships and have a sense of continuity

Registered Family Homes

- registered with [Texas Department of Family and Protective Services](#)
- may care for children birth to 12 years
- opportunities for learning exist
- full-time and part-time care available
- some receive government funding including Early Head Start

Pros:

- there are fewer adults for the children to adjust to during the day
- may better meet the needs of some children because of lower ratios and being in a home-like environment
- provides the opportunity for each child to form a close bond with the caregiver
- may be more flexible for families with unusual or long work schedules
- may follow a curriculum
- may be able to accommodate sick children
- may be somewhat lower in cost than centers or in parent's home

Cons:

- back-up care will be needed for times when the caregiver is ill, on vacation, or otherwise unable to care for children
- reliability may be dependent on caregiver's health and life circumstances
- caregivers tend to be very isolated and lack support systems, leading to burnout
- conflicts may occur if values and child-rearing styles differ greatly

Camps and After-School Care

- regulation not required
- indoor and outdoor activities
- full-time and part-time available

In-Home Care (Nanny Care)

- children cared for in child's home
- no regulation required (Note: this type of care is not listed in the GetChildCareNOW.com search engine)
- individual may care for children of any age
- opportunities for learning are the responsibility of the parent

Pros:

- allows child to remain in familiar environment
- exposure to illness from other children is reduced
- provides maximum flexibility for parents with unusual or long work schedules
- can provide sick child care
- may be less costly for families with more than one child in care
- children only have to adjust to one caregiver
- may be a better option for children with special needs

Cons:

- may be more difficult to monitor quality
- consistency and reliability tend to be lower than for other types of care
- cost may be prohibitive for many parents
- back-up care will be needed for times when the caregiver is ill or unable to work
- if care is provided by live-in caregivers, communication and maintaining the relationship require a lot of effort
- higher turn over rate
- parent must screen, hire, keep records, and file all appropriate tax forms

Information provided by GetChildCareNOW.com.
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