

Do all programs need to be licensed?

License-Exempt Child Care is care that does not require a license from the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to operate. Facilities or programs exempt from licensing include:

- Care provided in the child's own home with three or fewer children present, including the child care provider's own children under the age of thirteen, or one sibling group.
- Family child care for up to three children, including the provider's own children under the age of thirteen, or the children of one other family.
- Programs serving children three years of age and older are operated by public or private elementary schools, or schools registered and/or recognized with the Illinois State Board of Education or a school accredited by a national organization.
- Part-day programs operated by a religious organization or social service agency in which no child is cared for more than ten hours in a seven-day week.
- Programs conducted on federal government premises.
- Special activities programs operating on a short-term basis.
- Programs providing care for transient children while the parents are on the premises.

There are no licensing agencies that regulate license-exempt child care programs. This means no one makes monitoring visits to ensure that minimum health and safety standards are being met.

A parent's role in monitoring this type of child care is even more critical.

