FAMILY CHILD CARE
CONSUMER AWARENESS INFORMATION

Family Child Care (FCC) is provided by the home of a licensed provider for up to eight children with one adult or up to 14 children with one adult and one assistant. FCC homes provide a home like setting. Making sure that the licensed FCC homes are providing safe care is the job of the licensing agency, the parents and the provider.

HEALTH and SAFETY CHECKLIST

You should check for basic health and safety practices in the home. Your FCC Provider, by state law and regulation, must do the following:

- ☐ Get a license from the local licensing agency.
- ☐ Provide care to no more than eight children (with no more than two children under age 2) or 14 children with an assistant (with no more than 3 children under age 2).
- ☐ Make sure the home has heat in cold weather and is cool in hot weather.
- ☐ Keep detergents and cleaning products out of children's reach.
- ☐ Make sure swimming pools are fenced or have a pool cover.
- ☐ Baby gates must block stairs in facilities when children less than five years old are in care.
- ☐ Store guns, other weapons, and poisons in locked areas.
- ☐ Have an emergency plan in case of fire or earthquake.
- ☐ Keep an emergency information card on every child in care.
- ☐ Keep a fire extinguisher and working smoke alarm in the FCC home.
- ☐ Provide a smoke free environment.
- ☐ Not use baby walkers, bouncers or similar items.

WHAT SHOULD THE FAMILY CHILD CARE HOME PROVIDE?

You should get answers to these questions before placing your child in the home:

- Is the home clean and safe?
- Are there enough toys and games?
- How will my child be disciplined? **(Spanking, hitting, slapping, shaking and so forth are not permitted in licensed homes.)**
- What meals will my child be given?
- How will the food I bring be stored and prepared?
- Is there enough room *(indoor and outdoor)* for my child to play?
- What activities are planned for my child?
- How will my child be cared for when he or she gets sick?
- How many other children will be in care?
- What ages are the other children?
- What are the sleeping/napping/rest arrangements?
- How will I find out if my child is hurt or injured while in care?

DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING WITH THE PROVIDER:

- **Setting times** for arrival and pickup.
- **Bringing items** from home *(food, toys, change of diapers, change of clothes, toothbrush, infant furniture, and so forth)*.
- **Providing instructions** for giving medicines or special food.
- **Providing telephone numbers** for home, work, spouse's work, doctor and neighbor.
- **Providing a list of names** and telephone numbers of people who may pick up your child.

GOOD CHILD CARE INCLUDES THESE THINGS:

- **A provider** who provides warm and loving care and guidance for your child, and who works with you and your family to make sure your child grows and learns in the best way possible.
- **A home** that keeps your child safe, secure, and healthy.
- **Activities** that help your child grow mentally, physically, socially and emotionally.
- **Your involvement** in your child's care.

WHAT ARE PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES?

The California Department of Social Services licenses homes to provide child care, and wants you to understand the licensing laws and the ways in which you can check the quality of care your child receives.

WHAT SHOULD PARENTS DO?

- **Ask** to see the FCC home license. Homes caring for children from more than one family must be licensed.
- **Check** the condition of the FCC home frequently. Parents have the legal right to "drop in" at any time care is being provided.
- **Know** your rights as a parent by reading and keeping the Notification of Parents' Rights form.
- **Make sure** the Parents' Rights Poster is displayed in the home.
- **Watch** how your child acts in the home.
- **Listen** to what your child tells you about the care received in the home.
- **Talk** with the provider about any problems. Inform the provider of anything in the home which could hurt your child.
- **Call or write** the licensing agency if the provider fails to fix a hazard or if you believe your child has been harmed while in the provider's care. (See "How to file a complaint")
- **Ask** to see the licensing reports on file in the home.
- **Call or visit** the licensing office and ask to look at your provider's licensing file
- **Ask** if there are any adults in the home that have a criminal background.

PARENTS OF BABIES SHOULD ENSURE THAT:

- The baby receives **good nutrition** and is fed at the proper times.
- **A stimulating environment** is provided.
- The provider gives **emotional support**, and holds the child regularly.
- The provider cares for **no more than four babies**.
- Babies are **placed on their backs** when put down to sleep or nap.

HOW TO FILE A COMPLAINT ABOUT A FAMILY CHILD CARE HOME

COMPLAINT PROCESS

1. If you think a FCC provider is breaking the licensing laws, you may file a complaint with the local licensing office. You can find the address and telephone number in the following ways:
   - the provider's license
   - your copy of the Parents' Rights Notification form
   - the telephone book under:

     STATE OF CALIFORNIA
     DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
     COMMUNITY CARE LICENSING

     OR

     COUNTY OF _____
     WELFARE OR SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT
     CHILD CARE LICENSING

   - The California Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing Division's website at **www.ccld.ca.gov**
2. Call or write your local licensing office and explain your complaint. Your name will remain anonymous unless you give us permission to use it. You will be notified of the results when the investigation is done.
3. If you believe your child is being physically or sexually abused, you should also report it to your local Police Department or Sheriff's Department.
4. Contact the local licensing office about any issues or questions you may have.
5. To learn more about the Child Care Licensing program and services, please visit our website. There you will find child care licensing updates, regulations, and information about the child care advocate program.

WHEN YOU REPORT SUSPECTED VIOLATIONS YOU NOT ONLY PROTECT YOUR CHILD BUT ALSO PERFORM A SERVICE TO YOUR COMMUNITY.

WHAT THE LICENSING AGENCY DOES

- Visits each FCC home before issuing a license to operate.
- Does criminal background checks and child abuse index checks on all adults in the home.
- Requires tuberculosis (TB) tests of providers.
- Investigates complaints.
- Makes unannounced visits to the FCC home.
- Denies applications and revokes licenses when necessary.