



Child Care Center Business Start-up Guide



Two-Thousand Days to Make a Difference

Contents

About Child Care Aware® of Missouri _____	4
Track Your Progress _____	5
Show Me Child Care Resources _____	6
Considerations for Self-Employment _____	7
Current Child Care Landscape: Assess the Supply and Demand of Your Community _	8
Evaluate Your Space: Is It Suitable for Child Care? _____	9
Complete Trainings and Requirements _____	11
Develop Policies and Procedures _____	12
Prepare a Budget _____	13
Legal, Tax, and Insurance Considerations _____	15
Hire Staff _____	16
Market Your Program _____	17
Additional Business Supports _____	18
Website Links _____	25

Introduction

Congratulations on beginning the journey to start your own child care business!

Child care businesses and early childhood professionals are important to the success of our economy. Quality child care help prepare the next generation for success in life and allows parents to go to work and contribute to the economy. There are many things to consider when opening your family child care business. While the process takes a lot of research, planning, and time, it is well worth the effort! And we are excited you have chosen to start this journey!

This guide is a resource to help you learn what steps you will need to take to get your business going and help it be successful.

We encourage all family child care businesses to go through the steps to become licensed; however, there are two types of family child care businesses in the state of Missouri for you to consider:

Licensed Child Care Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs typically care for 20 or more children at a separate facility, often grouped by age • These programs require licensing and fire and sanitation inspections
License-Exempt Child Care Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs run by a religious organization or preschool programs that operate no more than 4 hours per day • These programs require fire and sanitation inspections but do not have licensing inspections
Licensed Group Child Care Home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs typically care for 11-20 children cared for at a separate facility or an area separate from the educator's living quarter • These programs require licensing and fire and sanitation inspections

About Child Care Aware® of Missouri

Child Care Aware® of Missouri believes every child deserves a safe, equitable, and quality early childhood education experience, which is critical to maximizing their future well-being. We impact a child's first two-thousand days by helping those who serve children. Child Care Aware® of Missouri is the state's leading source for child care information, referrals to community services, and workforce development for the child care industry. We aim to improve child care services through training, education, quality standards, coaching, business support, and policy work. Visit our website at www.mochildcareaware.org.

Mission

Child Care Aware® of Missouri impacts a child's first two-thousand days by helping those who serve children.

Vision

Missouri's children have a strong foundation to be successful in their lives.

Values

Bold & Passionate – We are courageous in our mission and dedicated to the causes that make our organization unique.

Results-Driven Accountability – We are diligent in measuring and evaluating our outcomes to gain insight to support and inform those we serve.

Servant Leadership – We are informed thought leaders who are trusted sources dedicated to transformational change in the communities we serve.

Integrity – We value honesty and operate with strong moral principles.

Humility – We are committed to our mission and purpose, which goes before our need for recognition or acknowledgment.

Fiscal Stewardship – We value organizational viability to maintain our fiscal health and the resources we manage.

Excellence – We persist with unstoppable momentum to provide inspiration, innovation, and motivation in all that we do.

Track Your Progress

Use this checklist to help track your progress while starting your Family Child Care business.

- ☐ **Decide if you're ready to open your own child care program and if you will open a licensed child care center, license-exempt child care center, or group child care home.**
 - See pg. 3 for explanations of each type of program and pg. 7 for considerations for self-employment.
- ☐ **Reach out to Child Care Aware® of Missouri's Director of Data & Analysis for your area's current child care landscape or view our county level supply reports. (pg. 9)**
- ☐ **If your program will be licensed, check licensing requirements on the Office of Childhood's website.**
 - Watch licensing video. (pg. 10)
 - Review licensing regulations. (pg. 11)
- ☐ **Submit application for licensure. (pg. 11)**
 - You will want to submit your application early in the process to be connected with a local licensing specialist who can answer your specific questions throughout the start-up process.
- ☐ **Coordinate with your licensing specialist to schedule a site visit once DESE's Office for Child Care Compliance processes your application.**
 - Fire Inspection and Health & Sanitation Inspection will also be required for licensing.
- ☐ **Evaluate if your space will be suitable for child care. (pg. 9)**
 - Check your area's zoning laws.
 - Check for any restrictive covenants with your homeowner's association, city, or county, etc.
- ☐ **Visit ShowMeResource.org to set up your 60-day free subscription to Show Me Child Care Resources. (pg. 7)**
- ☐ **Complete trainings and other requirements for licensure. (pg. 12)**
- ☐ **Set up your business structure, policies, procedures, family handbook, budget, etc. (pg. 13-17)**
- ☐ **Consider registering for the Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) (pg. 14) and the Missouri Child Care Subsidy Program. (pg. 15)**
- ☐ **Hire staff. (pg. 17)**
- ☐ **Market your program to families in your area. (pg. 18)**
- ☐ **Advance your child care career through the CDA or T.E.A.C.H. MISSOURI Scholarships. (pg. 21)**
- ☐ **Enhance your program quality through Accreditation, business resource, training, and more! (pg. 20-24)**

For questions about:

- ☐ Child Care Licensing: Call 573-751-2450 or email Childcare@dese.mo.gov
- ☐ Subsidy Registration/SOFs: Call 573-526-3011 or email CCsubsidyagreements@dese.mo.gov
- ☐ CCAMO Resources: Call 314-535-1458 or email referralcenter@mochildcareaware.org

Show Me Child Care Resources

Throughout this document, you will notice many links, templates, and information from **Show Me Child Care Resources**. This website offers many tools for the child care and early education community. Show Me Child Care Resources is a subscription-based service but Child Care Aware® of Missouri is giving you access at no cost for 60 days. Use the information, forms, and available discounts to get your new child care business started!

As a first step, we encourage you to register for an account and access the Start-up Page designed specifically with you in mind.

Account Request Directions:

To request an account, go to www.showmeresource.org and click **Register**. You will need to fill out and submit your information on the Membership Request page. Be sure to complete the Tell Us More About How Your Heard About Us section and type **“Start Up Program.”**

Login Directions:

To login to your account, go to www.showmeresource.org. Then, enter your username (your email address) and your password. If you cannot remember your password, select ‘Reset Password’ and enter your email address. You will receive an email shortly after with instructions on how to create a new password for your account.

For questions about Show Me Child Care Resources or for more information on continuing your membership after 60 days, please contact theteam@showmeresource.org.

“As a center director, I use Show Me Child Care Resources as one of my “go-to” sources of best practices for good program management. The Forms, Policies, and Templates section is a favorite, giving me a starting point that I can tweak to meet our needs.”

-Ingrid, Child Care Director



Considerations for Self-Employment

There are many benefits to business ownership and being your own boss, and there are some considerations to plan for before beginning this journey:

Lack of Benefits

Keep in mind that in starting your own business, you will not have access to benefits like health insurance, dental/vision insurance, life insurance, retirement, or paid vacation through an employer. You will need to obtain these benefits for yourself. For health insurance, you can explore options on the [Marketplace](#) or through [Missouri's Chamber of Commerce](#) if you become a member of the Chamber.

Unpredictable Finances

Your income can be irregular, especially in the early days. You could go several months without earning a profit if enrollment isn't full, and you'll always have to pay running costs such as rent, insurance and internet access. You will need to plan for the times when this may be the case, especially during the start-up phase.

Starting from Scratch

Starting your business and then growing your enrollment can be a long, tiring and, at times, frustrating process. You'll need determination to succeed and to be able to take the initiative to keep moving forward, even if progress is slow.

Social Isolation

As a business owner, and especially during the start-up phase, you may have to adjust to the increased social isolation, where you do not have the camaraderie and support of coworkers. You may have to work harder to stay motivated and connected with a peer group. Joining the Family Child Care Network can help reduce this isolation.

Increased Responsibility

You will be in charge of all business decisions and outcomes. You will need to be prepared to address the increase in stress and workload this can bring.

Longer Hours

Your working day may be much longer and more irregular than someone who isn't self-employed. Child care can require early mornings and later evenings to ensure the success of your program and fulfillment of all business obligations.

So, Is this Right for You?

Use this [Are You Ready to Start a Child Care Business](#) checklist to analyze if this is the right decision for you. This resource is meant to help you think about the reasons why you want to open a family child care business and if it is the right choice for you. There are personal considerations for you and your family as well as professional considerations for you to think about as you start your journey.

Current Child Care Landscape: Assess the Supply and Demand of Your Community



As you begin thinking about opening your child care business, be sure to understand the needs of your community. You'll want to know the current child care options and the number of children who may need care in your area. This will be an important step in deciding if opening a child care business is the right decision for you.

Child Care Aware® of Missouri can help you better understand the current child care landscape in your community. Having this information will support you in the first stages of building your business plan and help you answer some very important questions, including:

1. What types of child care programs are already available in your area?
2. How many families with young children live in your area?
3. Is there a child care need for a specific age group?
4. Is there a need for child care during a specific time of day?
5. What are the typical fees (the market rate) for child care in your area?



View [Basic County Level Supply Data Reports](#) on our website to learn more about the current child care landscape in your county.

To look at your specific city or zip code, contact Child Care Aware® of Missouri's Director of Data & Analysis at (314) 881-4657 or Submit [Your Data Request](#) online at no cost to you!

Evaluate Your Space: Is It Suitable for Child Care?

Finding a Location

If you are considering renting, purchasing, or building a space for your business, think about selecting an area where families live or along their route to work. A local realtor may be able to help you locate properties that would be suitable for your child care business. Before entering in to a lease or purchasing a location, you'll want to be certain that it will fit your needs and be able to pass licensing, sanitation, and fire inspections.

Check Zoning Laws

Zoning laws and local ordinances may limit your ability to open a small business in your community. These laws may affect where you can open your child care business. Check with the local government agency in your area for guidance.



Check Restrictive Covenants

Housing developers can include restrictive covenants in deeds and homeowners' association agreements. These covenants may limit the kind of business activity that can be done in your home. Your homeowners' association has information on any restrictions. If you rent your property, check with the property owner or your community's homeowners' association about any rules.

Please note: If zoning laws or covenants do not allow businesses, you cannot open a child care business unless you get a variance (an exception to the law). This is true even if a child care program meets all the state licensing requirements.

Check Licensing Requirements

If you are interested in becoming a licensed child care program, it is important to evaluate your space to make sure it is safe and appropriate for children. You'll also want to understand what will be required to become licensed. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) provides a Child Care Licensing Orientation online at the link below.

- [Group Child Care Home/Child Care Center Orientation Video](#)

The Licensing Orientation is also available in-person at all Child Care Compliance (CCC) offices. Attending in-person allows you the opportunity to meet CCC staff, receive answers to questions, and network with other potential providers. Contact your [nearest CCC office](#) for available dates and times.

You will want to begin familiarizing yourself with the Licensing Rules and submit an Application for Licensure. Submit your Application for Licensure early in the process so you can get connected with a local licensing specialist who can answer your specific licensing questions. Below are a few links to get you started and to help track your progress towards licensure:

- [Licensing Rules for Group Child Care Homes/Child Care Centers](#)
- [Application for Licensure](#)
- [Child Care Licensing Checklist](#)

DESE's website also provides additional guidance and documents to help you meet the licensing requirements. Visit the [licensing resource page](#) on DESE's website to find information and resources on:

- suitable equipment,
- scheduling,
- fire safety requirements,
- sanitation requirements,
- emergency preparedness,
- meal planning, and
- other necessary requirements for licensing.



If you're considering multiple locations for your business, you'll need to submit a separate application for each location. After submitting your [application](#) to operate a child care business, a Licensing Specialist will visit the site(s) to see if it meets the requirements to become a licensed program. They can continue to guide you through the licensing process.

License-Exempt Programs

Are you considering opening a license-exempt child care program? [Click here](#) to access more information on regulations and requirements. License-exempt programs must document their exemption status with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. These programs should file a [Program Evaluation Questionnaire \(PEQ\)](#).

Check Health and Safety Requirements

Licensed facilities are required to have annual fire, sanitation, and health inspections in addition to compliance monitoring inspections each year. Learn more about the inspection processes on [DESE's website](#).

Complete Trainings and Requirements

All trainings that you will need to complete for licensure can be found on the [Missouri Professional Development System](#).

Required Trainings

Safe Sleep Training: Licensed child care programs that are licensed to provide care to children less than one (1) year of age are required to complete department-approved training on the recent safe sleep recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) every three years.

CPR/First Aid Training: Age-appropriate CPR/First Aid certification should be completed for all providers and assistants.



Optional Trainings

Additional optional trainings, including *Licensing Rules and Best Practices*, are available on the [Missouri Professional Development System](#).

Comprehensive Criminal Background Check

All licensed, license-exempt, and registered providers (SOFs) are required to have all employees background checked, as well as all household members 18 years and older. This process includes fingerprinting and registering with the Family Care Safety Registry. Visit the [Background Check Process page](#) on DESE's website to learn more.

Mandated Reporter

All child care workers are mandated to report any suspicions of child abuse or neglect. You can complete your Mandated Reporter training by visiting the [Protect MO Kids website](#).

Medical Examination and TB Risk Assessment

A medical examination and TB risk assessment must be completed for any child care provider, assistant, or volunteer who is present more than 20 hours per month.

Develop Policies and Procedures

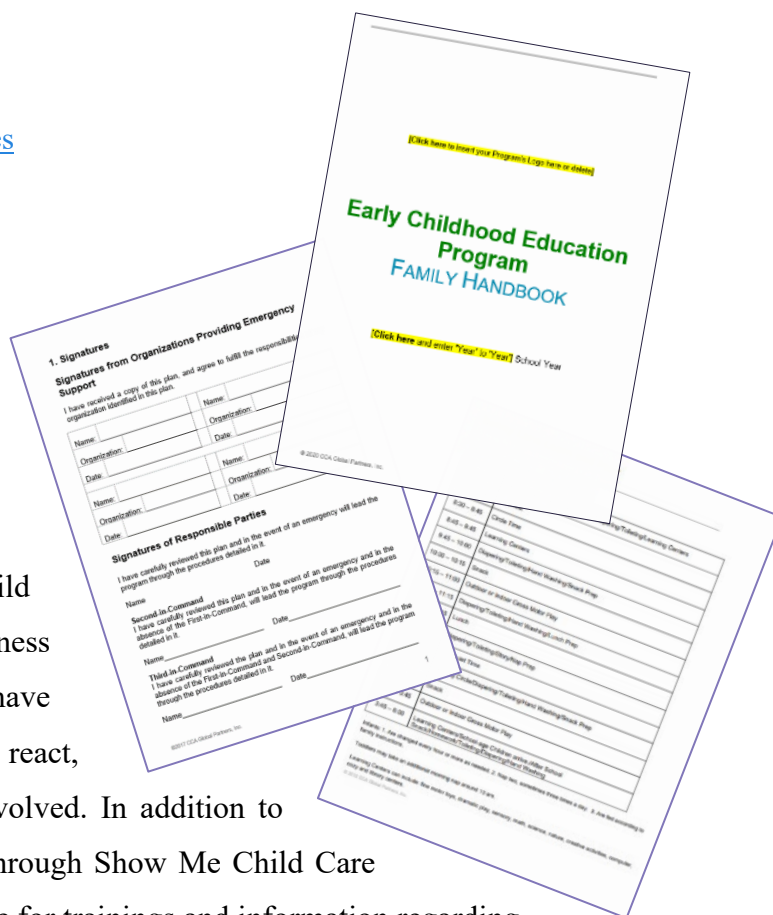
In the state of Missouri, you must have several plans and documents in place in order to become licensed. Developing strong policies and procedures allows your new program to start and run as smoothly as possible. Show Me Child Care Resources has emergency plan samples and templates, daily schedule templates and suggestions, family handbooks, and program policies.

Below are links to some great resources to help you develop these much-needed policies and procedures for your child care program:

- [Emergency Preparedness Plan Templates](#)
- [Daily Schedule Samples and Templates](#)
- [Family Handbooks](#)
- [Employee Handbooks](#)

Note: The above links require an account with Show Me Child Care Resources. Please log in or request your free 60 day access at www.showmeresource.org.

Missouri child care licensing rules require child care providers to have an emergency preparedness plan. Child care programs that have emergency/disaster plans are better able to react, protect, and respond to the needs of those involved. In addition to Emergency Preparedness materials available through Show Me Child Care Resources, you can also review DESE's website for trainings and information regarding various disaster and emergencies that may impact child care in Missouri. Visit the [Emergency Preparedness page](#) on DESE's website.



Prepare a Budget

Preparing a budget gives you a picture of whether your expected income from your business will cover the anticipated expenses. Some pieces to consider may include how many children you plan to serve, tuition fees, staffing costs, necessary equipment and materials, and startup costs such as application fees and marketing efforts. Use some of the forms here to help guide you in creating your program's own budget.

Show Me Child Care Resources offers templates to help you develop your program budget and better understand the financial components of your child care program.

- [Budget Template](#)
- [Cash Flow Worksheet Template](#)
- [Financial Terms](#)

Note: The above links require an account with Show Me Child Care Resources. Please log in or request your free 60 day access at www.showmeresource.org.

Other Funding Opportunities to Help Support Your Business:

Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

The Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) may reimburse child care programs for the cost of offering nutritious meals and snacks. CACFP is operated by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) and funded by US Department of Agriculture. To be eligible for CACFP, a program must be licensed with DESE or be registered for the Child Care Subsidy program with the Department of Social Services. Learn more about CACFP and find your local sponsoring organization on the [DHSS website](#).

MO Source Link

Explore the funding information provided here, including types of funding to consider, grant and loan opportunities, and resources to help improve credit. Visit [MO Source Link's website](#) to learn more.

Missouri Child Care Subsidy Program

We highly encourage all child care businesses to register with DESE, so you can receive payment for child care services provided to families that are eligible for Child Care Subsidy.

There are a variety of benefits associated with registering to accept subsidy. By becoming registered to accept Child Care Subsidy, you may increase the number of families interested in your program. Programs accepting subsidy are also often eligible to participate in additional programs that help support the program, educators, and the children served!

[Click here](#) to find information on how to become a subsidy provider and use the below checklists to help you complete your registration:

- [Child Care Subsidy Provider Checklist](#)

For more information contact DESE Office of Childhood, Quality Programs Section at 573-526-3011 or CCsubsidyagreements@dese.mo.gov.

Collaborate with your local Head Start Program

Head Start provides child care services, often in collaboration with child care centers and in-home child care. To learn more about Head Start- Child Care Partnerships, visit the [Administration for Children and Family's website](#). Contact your nearest Head Start grantee to discuss partnership opportunities. The list of grantees in Missouri can be found on the [Missouri Head Start website](#).

First Children's Finance

[First Children's Finance](#) is a nonprofit lender committed to serving the unique needs of family child care and child care centers. They offer small business loans exclusively to the child care industry, with flexible, trustworthy financing that meets the needs of child care businesses. Each and every one of their loans includes technical assistance specific to child care business management.

Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs)

CDFIs are private financial institutions that provide responsible, affordable loans to small businesses underserved by mainstream finance. Find the CDFIs that serve Missouri by using this [CDFI Locator](#).

Grant Opportunities

When grants are available through the state, Child Care Aware of Missouri is here to help providers with technical assistance to complete those grant applications. Follow our weekly email to learn about technical assistance opportunities by subscribing on our [website](#).



Legal, Tax, and Insurance Considerations

Legal, tax, and insurance considerations are important pieces in building a stable business. Please keep in mind, information provided here is not legal advice. Child Care Aware® of Missouri is not a tax, insurance or legal entity. You should consult with an expert for further advice on these topics.



Legal Considerations

In Missouri, there are four different business structures a business can operate under:

- Sole Proprietorship
- Partnership – General and Limited
- Corporation
- Limited Liability Company – LLC

Research each of these business structures and determine if you will need to obtain a business license by visiting the [Missouri Secretary of State website](#).

Registration forms for these structures along with information on other legal issues regarding operating a business in Missouri can also be found on the [Secretary of State's website](#).

Legal resources, advice, and lawyer referrals can be found through the [Missouri Bar Association](#).

Tax Considerations

As a small business, you will need to file business income tax information. Taxes should be a part of your child care business' plan and budget. You may want to consult with a tax professional, such as an accountant or a lawyer that specializes in business practices, to help you.



Some tax and employment benefits family child care providers can take advantage of may include:

- Home business tax write-offs to offset expenses
- Direct expenses such as food, toys, equipment, and insurance that are 100% tax deductible
- Indirect expenses such as real estate taxes, mortgage interest, rent, utilities, etc.

Insurance Considerations

Business insurance is not a licensing requirement, but a general recommendation is that you have appropriate business insurance and have an agent that checks in with you at least once a year to evaluate any changes within your business. You may need to consider insuring your business to cover property, general liability, and child accidents.

Property insurance covers the building, contents, and business income. Property insurance protects your property from things like fires, hail, windstorms, tornados, and water overflow and/or backup, depending on your policy and coverage selected. General liability insurance covers your business in case of things like a slips/fall of visitors, improper supervision, negligence, or leaving a child unattended. Additional options you might want to discuss with your agent is coverage in case of a slip or fall of child or other child accidents.

Find more information through the Missouri [Department of Insurance](#).

Hire Staff

The size and capacity of your child care business will help determine the number of staff members you will need. For licensed child care programs, you must follow the adult to children ratio requirements outlined in [Missouri's licensing regulations](#).

You'll also want to be sure the Director you hire meets the [Director Certification Qualifications](#) for the size of your program.

Show Me Child Care Resources offers a great deal of resources to help you through the hiring process, including:

- [Job Advertisements](#)
- [Job Description Templates](#)
- [Interview Guides](#)
- [Employee Orientation Toolkit](#)



[Acquire4hire](#) is a job board accessible through Show Me Child Care Resources that allows you to create job listings and automatically distributes them to nine job boards including Indeed, LinkedIn, Google, CareerJet, and more!

Note: The above links require an account with Show Me Child Care Resources. Please log in or request your free 60 day access at www.showmeresource.org.

Market Your Program

It is time to start marketing your program to families! It is important to start thinking about what makes your program unique and how you can meet the needs of children and families. Getting the word out about your child care program is an essential part of maintaining and growing your business. For tips and ideas on how to market your program, check out Show Me Child Care Resources for additional resources:

- [Marketing How To](#)
- [Navigating Family Tours and Phone Calls](#)
- [Marketing Templates](#)



Note: The above links require an account with Show Me Child Care Resources. Please log in or request your free 60 day access at www.showmeresource.org.

Missouri Childhood Resource and Referral Service

Child Care Aware® of Missouri operates the statewide child care referral service, where families can access a database of all Licensed, License-Exempt, and Registered child care programs in Missouri. Our service provides personalized child care search, expert guidance on what quality child care entails, and customized reports based on a family's requirements, saving them precious time.

As a Licensed, License-Exempt, or Registered child care program, your program is automatically included in the statewide child care referral database!

Updating your child care/early learning program's profile with Child Care Aware® of Missouri is a no-cost service to help market your business and help families in your community find you! It's free, so why not?! In 5 minutes or less, you'll have a robust profile showcased to families utilizing Child Care Aware® of Missouri's concierge referral service. Level up your business by also adding photos to your profile!

In addition to basic information such as hours of operation, ages cared for, and contact information, be sure to include other program details and report your current openings or waitlist times by clicking through all six sections. Upload images of your child care program for families to get a quick virtual tour and include a customized message to help families get to know more about your business.

We encourage child care providers to login and update their profile often through [the program portal](#). You may also be contacted by a Referral Specialist on behalf of families to collect information about your child care program. Contact a Referral Specialist at 314-535-1458 or referralcenter@mochildcareaware.org for login assistance or questions.

Additional Business Supports

Below are a few other entities that provide business supports.

[MO Source Link](#) provides a nine-step guide to starting a business. This guide walks you through how to evaluate your business idea, form a business plan, and offers personal support in planning out your next steps. Call 866-870-6500 to discuss your business and get a free personal action plan. You'll also find instructions on how to register with the Missouri Secretary of State, obtain an employer identification number, and register for Missouri business taxes.

[24/7 Missouri](#) provides information on how to start, manage, and grow a business on a state and federal level.

[The Missouri Business Development Program](#) provides basic courses in starting and maintaining a business.

[The IRS](#) provides guidelines for business use in your home that includes child care providers.

[The Small Business Administration](#) provides a guide to manage and grow your business.

[The Missouri Small Business Development Centers \(SBDC\)](#) offers personalized and extensive services from knowledgeable and helpful professionals focused on your business success. Missouri SBDC experts are conveniently located all across the state providing assistance and hosting events on a variety of business topics. Business specialists use their expertise to help Missouri businesses with critical business development issues. Guidance addressing topics such as management, marketing and strategic planning is available for new and existing businesses. All one-on-one counseling is confidential.

[United 4 Children](#)'s Inclusion Specialists offer on-site or telephone technical assistance, short term observations, consultation, and training specific to the needs of a particular child to assist you as you work to meet the needs of children with special needs in your child care program. This service is provided free of charge.

[First Children's Finance](#) provides business-development assistance specifically for child care businesses.



Resources for Advancement and Engagement

Below you will find programs, certifications, and resources that may be beneficial to you! Contact us at 866-892-3228 to learn more.

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Missouri Scholarship Program



As a licensed child care provider, you may be eligible to participate in The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Missouri Scholarship program, which provides scholarships for early childhood educators to get their Associates or Bachelors degree! The goal of T.E.A.C.H. MISSOURI is to increase the quality of child care delivered by educating and empowering the child care professional. You could have the opportunity to grow your business and be compensated! Learn more at <https://advanceyourchildcarecareer.org/>.

Child Development Credential (CDA) Scholarship Project

Another benefit of registering for The Child Care Subsidy Program is the opportunity to earn your Child Development Credential (CDA) for absolutely no cost! Whether by earning training clock hours or college credit hours in early childhood education, this unique project is designed to support you through the entire process and even award you with a bonus upon earning your national CDA credential! Visit <https://advanceyourchildcarecareer.org/> to learn more.



Professional Development Opportunities

Each year, licensed child care providers are required to complete 12 clock hours of training. Effective June 2023, The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), Office of Childhood is launching a new Missouri Professional Development System. Visit <https://earlyconnections.mo.gov/MOPD>.

Child Care Aware® of Missouri Action Center

Want to make a difference? Sign up for our Action Center today and receive notifications when there are opportunities to take action on issues that support Missouri's children and families, and child care professionals! Sign up for the [Action Center](#) and ensure your voice is heard.

CCAMO Partner Publication: Your Partner in Being Child Care Aware



[Sign up](#) to receive our weekly email Partner Publication to learn more about opportunities and updates from our organization, as well as relevant information from our partners and the state.

DESE Office of Childhood- Early Connections

DESE Office of Childhood operates the [Early Connections](#) website. Early Connections is a central place for families and professionals to access resources and information about what young children need from the Early Care & Education (ECE) system in Missouri. Visit their website and join the mailing list to receive email updates from the Office of Childhood regarding licensing, subsidy, grant opportunities, and more.

Kids Win Missouri

[Kids Win Missouri](#) is a coalition of organizations and individuals dedicated to improving the well-being of Missouri children through advocating for policies that support the health, education, safety and development of children and their families, especially those who are at



risk because of poverty, abuse, neglect, racial inequities or other risk factors. Visit their website to stay informed on topics that affect you and the families you serve and get involved.

Accreditation

Once licensed, consider working towards program accreditation. Accreditation shows families that you meet quality standards well-above the minimum standards of licensing.

[Missouri Accreditation of Programs for Child and Youth \(MOA\)](#)

Missouri was the first state to establish and apply quality accreditation standards for programs providing care and education for children. Missouri Accreditation (MOA) works to enhance the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual growth opportunities available to children in early learning and school age programs across Missouri. MOA provides ongoing monitoring, evaluation, and recognition of programs who have met and maintained Missouri Accreditation standards. Accreditation criteria include the areas of children's relationships and interactions, physical environment, programming and curriculum, family and program connections, administration, as well as health, safety, and nutrition.

[National Association for the Education of Young Children \(NAEYC\)](#)

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) works to support high-quality, research-based education to provide a solid foundation for all children's future success by implementing quality-improvement resources, research on best practices, training, and technical assistance to licensed child care centers. NAEYC addresses three core areas within its accreditation process—children, teaching staff and administration, and families and community relationships. In looking closely at these three areas, NAEYC examines the way children are influenced by their educational leadership and family and community relationships. Each piece is evaluated at the NAEYC standard level in order to determine their accreditation achievement.

[National Association for Family Child Care \(NAFCC\)](#)

For over 25 years, the National Association for Family Child Care has worked to promote high-quality early childhood experiences and prioritize access, affordability, and quality of early care and education specifically in the licensed family child care environment. The NAFCC strives for progress in the investment and implementation of the Child Care and Development Block Grant, Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships, and the Child and Adult Care Food Program in the Child Nutrition Reauthorization. Other core focuses include strengthening the early childhood workforce and increasing the availability of high-quality child care in rural communities, for infants and toddlers, and for families who work non-traditional hours.

[National Early Childhood Program Accreditation \(NECPA\)](#)

National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA) can be applied to family child care and center-based programs who are licensed for seven or more children. It works to improve the quality of early care and education programs. NECPA standards are based on 30 years of research in the area of early care and education. NECPA standards aim to address the whole child by assessing relationships between the child and teacher, the program and family, and the program and the community.

[Commission of Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities \(CARF International\)](#)

The Commission of Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF® International) works with diverse environments through an accreditation process and ongoing progress review that focuses on improving the lives of the individuals served. CARF works with different health and human service institutions like rehabilitation programs, treatment programs for addiction and substance abuse, home and community services, and retirement living. CARF accreditation requires institutions to meet its standards related to business and service delivery and to commit to ongoing improvement. Accreditation

is evaluated annually based on standards set forth collaboratively by professionals and consumers of different viewpoints.

[Council on Accreditation \(COA\)](#)

The Council on Accreditation (COA) is an international peer accrediting body that works with human service programs and organizations, including child and youth development programs, to produce high-quality, measurable results focusing on growth, stability, health, and safety. COA considers the consumers, staff, board, and donors, funders, and regulators to be the four key groups to examine when establishing accreditation.

[Cognia \(Formerly AdvaceED\)](#)

Cognia (Formerly AdvancEd) works with early childhood institutions to improve teaching and learning as well as health and safety to better support early learning, growth, and development. It utilizes research-based and evidence-based principles to examine how the policies, practices, learning conditions, and cultural setting work together to reach the program's vision and meet the needs of every learner. It focuses heavily on a program's ability to sustain an exemplary commitment to continuous progress and learner outcomes.

Breastfeeding Friendly Recognition



Breastfeeding gives moms and babies many health benefits—yet many moms worry that going back to work will make it hard to breastfeed. Helping moms continue to breastfeed can be done with just a little time and resources. Becoming a [Breastfeeding Friendly Child Care](#) is a voluntary recognition program available to Missouri child care facilities to show your support of breastfeeding mothers.

MOve Smart Child Care Recognition

Physical activity is important for children's bodies and brains. [MOve Smart Child Care](#) is a program that offers recognition for child care facilities that follow best practices in physical activity for young children.

MOve Smart recognition is available for any early care and education facility including child care centers, Head Start sites, family child care homes and group homes.



Follow Us on Social Media, Too!

Follow Child Care Aware® of Missouri on social media to hear about what's going on and engage in conversations:



www.facebook.com/ChildCareAwareofMissouri



www.instagram.com/MoChildCareAware



www.linkedin.com/company/Child-Care-Aware-of-Missouri



www.twitter.com/MOChildCare



www.youtube.com/user/ChildCareAwareMO

Website Links

In case you were unable to open any of the links throughout this document, we've provided each of those here. Please copy and paste these into your browser to access each site.

Page 6

Show Me Child Care Resources: www.showmeresource.org

Page 7

Marketplace: <https://www.healthcare.gov/>

Missouri's Chamber of Commerce: <https://mochamber.com/membership/missouri-chamber-benefit-plan/>

Are You Ready to Start A Child Care Business:

<https://info.childcareaware.org/hubfs/Provider%20Site%20Update/02%20-%20Are%20You%20Ready.pdf>

Page 8

County level supply data: <https://mochildcareaware.org/data-and-reports3/mo-county-supply-reports/>

Your Data Request: <https://mochildcareaware.org/data-and-reports3/data-request-form/>

Page 9

Group Child Care Home/Child Care Center Orientation Video: <https://dese.mo.gov/childhood/child-care/child-care-licensing-orientation>

Child Care Compliance Offices: <https://dese.mo.gov/childhood/child-care/district-offices>

Page 10

Licensing Rules for Group Child Care Homes/Child Care Centers:

<https://sl.sos.mo.gov/cmsimages/adrules/csr/current/19csr/19c30-62.pdf>

Application for Licensure: <https://dese.mo.gov/media/pdf/mo500-3293-application-license-operate-child-care-facility>

Child Care Licensing Checklist: <https://dese.mo.gov/media/pdf/group-child-care-home-and-child-care-center-licensing-checklist>

Licensing Resource Page: <https://dese.mo.gov/childhood/child-care/family-child-care-homes>

License-Exempt Program Regulations: <https://sl.sos.mo.gov/cmsimages/adrules/csr/current/19csr/19c30-60.pdf>

Program Evaluation Questionnaire: [Program Evaluation Questionnaire \(PEQ\)](#).

Health and Safety Inspection Requirements: <https://dese.mo.gov/childhood/child-care/inspection-process>

Page 11

Missouri Professional Development System Information: <https://earlyconnections.mo.gov/MOPD>

Background Check Process: <https://dese.mo.gov/childhood/child-care/background-check-process>

Mandated Reporter Training: <https://www.protectmokids.com/>

Page 12

Emergency Preparedness Plan Templates: <https://www.showmeresource.org/successful-program-management/nutrition-health-safety/safety/emergency-preparedness/>

Daily Schedule Sample and Templates: <https://www.showmeresource.org/in-the-classroom/teacher-resources/daily-schedule/>

Family Handbooks: <https://www.showmeresource.org/engaging-families/admin-tools/family-handbook/>

Employee Handbooks: <https://www.showmeresource.org/successful-program-management/becoming-an-hr-expert/employee-handbook/>

DESE Emergency Preparedness: <https://dese.mo.gov/childhood/child-care/emergency-preparedness>

Page 13

Budget Template: <https://www.showmeresource.org/successful-program-management/financial-management/budget-tools/for-family-child-care-programs/>

Cash Flow Worksheet Template: <https://www.showmeresource.org/successful-program-management/financial-management/budget-tools/for-family-child-care-programs/>

Financial Terms: <https://www.showmeresource.org/successful-program-management/financial-management/budget-tools/more-financial-tools-resources/>

CACFP Sponsoring Organizations:

<https://health.mo.gov/living/wellness/nutrition/foodprograms/cacfp/index.php>

MO Source Link: <https://www.mosourcelink.com/>

Page 14

Child Care Subsidy Information: <https://dese.mo.gov/become-subsidy-provider>

Child Care Subsidy Provider Checklist: <https://dese.mo.gov/media/pdf/child-care-subsidy-provider-application-checklist>

Head Start- Child Care Partnership Information: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/local-early-childhood-partnerships>

Missouri Head Start Grantees: <http://www.moheadstart.org/Contact%20Us.aspx>

First Children's Finance: <https://www.firstchildrensfinance.org/>

Community Development Financial Institutions: <https://ofn.org/cdfi-locator>

Page 15

Subscribe to CCAMO's Partner Publication: <https://partnerpublication.mochildcareaware.org/partner-publication>

Business Structure Descriptions: https://www.sos.mo.gov/business/outreach/startup_guide

Business Registration Forms: <https://www.sos.mo.gov/business/corporations/forms>

Missouri Bar Association: <https://missourilawyershelp.org/find-a-lawyer/>

Page 16

Missouri Department of Insurance: <https://insurance.mo.gov/>

Page 17

Missouri Licensing Regulations: <https://s1.sos.mo.gov/cmsimages/adrules/csr/current/19csr/19c30-62.pdf>

Director Certification Qualifications: <https://dese.mo.gov/childhood/child-care/director-qualifications>

Job Advertisements: <https://www.showmeresource.org/successful-program-management/becoming-an-hr-expert/job-ads/>

Job Description Templates: <https://www.showmeresource.org/successful-program-management/becoming-an-hr-expert/job-descriptions/>

Interview Guides: <https://www.showmeresource.org/successful-program-management/becoming-an-hr-expert/interview-guides/>

Employee Orientation Toolkit: <https://www.showmeresource.org/successful-program-management/becoming-an-hr-expert/employee-orientation-toolkit/>

Aquire4hire: <https://www.showmeresource.org/successful-program-management/becoming-an-hr-expert/show-me-jobs/>

Marketing How To: <https://www.showmeresource.org/successful-program-management/marketing-your-program/how-tos/>

Navigating Family Tours and Phone Calls: <https://www.showmeresource.org/successful-program-management/marketing-your-program/family-tour-phone-best-practices/>

Marketing Templates: <https://www.showmeresource.org/successful-program-management/marketing-your-program/templates/>

Page 18

Child Care Aware® of Missouri's Program Profile Update Portal:

<https://stage.worklifesystems.com/program/11>

MO Source Link: <https://www.mosourcelink.com/guides/start-a-business>

Page 19

24/7 Missouri: <https://openforbiz.mo.gov>

Missouri Business Development Program: <https://extension2.missouri.edu/find-your-interest/business-and-community/business-development>

IRS: <https://www.irs.gov/publications/p587>

Small Business Administration: <https://www.sba.gov/business-guide>

Missouri Small Business Development Centers (SBDC): <https://sbdc.missouri.edu/>

United 4 Children: <https://united4children.org/>

First Children's Finance: <http://www.firstchildrensfinance.org/>

Page 20

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Missouri Scholarship Program: <https://advanceyourchildcarecareer.org/>

CDA Scholarship Project: <https://advanceyourchildcarecareer.org/>

Professional Development Opportunities: <https://earlyconnections.mo.gov/MOPD>

Child Care Aware of Missouri Action Center: <https://mo.childcareaware.org/action-center/>

Page 21

Subscribe to CCAMO's Partner Publication: <https://partnerpublication.mochildcareaware.org/partner-publication>

Early Connections: <https://earlyconnections.mo.gov/>

Kids Win MO: <http://kidswinmissouri.org/>

Missouri Accreditation of Programs for Child and Youth (MOA): <http://www.moaccreditation.org/>

Page 22

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC):

<https://www.naeyc.org/accreditation/early-learning-program-accreditation> National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC): <https://www.nafcc.org/Accreditation>

National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA): <https://necpa.net/page/NECPAStandards>

Commission of Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF International): <http://www.carf.org/Accreditation/>

Page 23

Council on Accreditation (COA): [Council on Accreditation \(COA\)](#)

Cognia (Formerly AdvaceED): <https://www.cognia.org/>

Missouri Breastfeeding Friendly Child Care:

<https://health.mo.gov/living/wellness/nutrition/breastfeedingfriendlychildcare/>

MOve Smart Child Care Recognition:

<https://health.mo.gov/living/wellness/nutrition/movesmartguidelines/application.php>

Page 24

Facebook page: www.facebook.com/ChildCareAwareofMissouri

Instagram page: www.instagram.com/MoChildCareAware

LinkedIn page: www.linkedin.com/company/Child-Care-Aware-of-Missouri

Twitter page: www.twitter.com/MOChildCare

YouTube page: www.youtube.com/user/ChildCareAwareMO