Opening a Quality Child Care Center

A resource guide for starting a business and planning a child care center.

Table of Contents:

Introduction 2
First Steps: Assessment, Market Analysis, Business Plan and Child Care Licensing 3
Finding Your Facility 7
Design Considerations and Process 8
Program Administration and Curriculum 17
Appendix A: Timeline for Start-up 19
Appendix B: Agencies and On-line Resources 20
Appendix C: Resources for Developing Polices/Procedures 22
Appendix D: Classroom Equipment and Materials List 23
Appendix E: Care About Childcare Criteria 24
Appendix F: Structural Rules from Licensing 27
Appendix G: Accreditation 30
Appendix H: Resources 31

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

THE BUSINESS OF CHILD CARE

Welcome to the world and work of child care! The purpose of this manual is to provide a prospective child care center owner and/or manager with an overview of the tools needed to be successful in the business. It is organized from preliminary planning steps through the child care center licensing procedure and the actual opening of the center.

Contacting Child Care Licensing in the Utah Department of Health is your first step in this process (Appendix B). This guide will also provide you with information, websites and resources on quality standards in the industry to help make the planning of a high quality and developmentally appropriate program clear and complete. Your local Care About Childcare agency is an additional source of information and support (Appendix B).

Frequently a potential new child care center business owner is someone who enjoys children and may have a background in child development. It is a vibrant and exciting field for those dedicated to the growth and development of young children, but in the end, a child care center is a business. The success of the business will depend on the thoroughness of the plans and research done prior to the actual opening of the center. We strongly encourage you to complete your needs assessment and market analysis before the acquisition of the physical property. The business plan can be written while you are in the process of locating the site on which to build or locating an existing facility you wish to remodel. Funding sources can then be pursued while you complete the negotiations to acquire your site.

There is a tremendous need in our society for quality child care as the number of working families with children under the age of 12 continues to grow. Research tells us that the negative effects of low quality child care can last into adolescence. The need for high quality child care is emphasized in this document, and we have provided resources that will aid you in locating curriculum and materials to create a center with a stellar reputation that meets the social, emotional, physical and developmental needs of the children whom you serve. This will contribute to your long-term success in this field, and will provide the families whom you serve with assurance and confidence that they have chosen the optimum place for their children to thrive. Most of the recommendations contained in this publication exceed licensing standards and are based on best practices as found in the most recent research; licensing typically only outlines the minimum acceptable standards for children's physical health and safety.

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

First Steps: ASSESSMENT, MARKET ANALYSIS, BUSINESS PLAN and CHILD CARE LICENSING

A business can be successful when an entrepreneur fills a unique niche, having completed a needs assessment that has uncovered a market capable of supporting and growing a new business. Further, with a complete market analysis and thorough look at income-to-expense ratios and balance sheets, funding sources, start-up costs and the state of the overall economy, one can evaluate whether a potential business can survive and continue to grow. These are the critical first steps in starting a new child care center.

Personal Assessment

A good business plan begins with examining your own personal goals. Identifying the motivations you have for this type of business and your own personal experiences and skills can help you decide if this is the appropriate career choice for you. Operating a child care center consumes a great deal of time and energy and demands the ability to manage time wisely. Take some time to reflect on your own personal career goals and your reasons for choosing this field, keeping in mind both the long hours of commitment, as well as the benefits and rewards of helping children grow and develop to their full potential! The survey found on the following website can help you answer the question: Is this the right time for you and your family to commit to a large and time-consuming endeavor? This self-assessment of your strengths and weaknesses as a potential child care center owner can be found at www.firstchildrensfinance.org/sites/lalc876e-617f-4aa3-9aa0-4f030b14bbf7//uploads/Start-up Self Assessment.pdf.

Although a love for children is a strong motivation, one must also have a strong background in other areas, such as business, communications, accounting, child development, and health and nutrition, or be willing to hire competent associates with the appropriate skills to complement your own. The ability to organize and plan is paramount to managing a child care center, since there are so many facets to its opening and ongoing operation. Depending on the size of the center, an owner might have occasion to review the program and curriculum, soothe a disgruntled parent, prepare meals, order developmentally appropriate equipment, unplug a toilet, or teach the two-year-old class, all in one day! It is a challenging and exciting opportunity for creative and gratifying work, but the ability to organize and plan cannot be understated. With that in mind, you are ready to begin a needs assessment for the facility you plan to open.

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

MARKET ANALYSIS

Your market analysis should determine the need for additional child care services in the specific area in which you plan to open a center. Begin by calling your local CCR&R for information on the number of child care providers in the area, the number of calls they receive from parents, and the type of care those parents are looking for. In some areas parents prefer center-based care; in others they prefer family child care. You can also contact other centers to learn about their waiting lists and enrollment levels. Child Care Aware lists important questions to ask and answer in the "Getting Started" section of their web site at http://childcareaware.org/child-care-providers/getting-started/needs-assessment.

Census data can also be used to determine the number of families with young children in your target area. This data can be obtained by contacting the U.S. Census Bureau, local school districts and the city office of planning. A suggested list of data one might want to review follows:

- School census data
- Number of families in the area
- Income of families
- Families with children
- Number of working families with children zero to six years old
- Number of working families with children seven to fourteen years old
- Housing information
- Local businesses and sizes

Child care center businesses typically run on a very tight profit margin, so it is critical to complete the market analysis before taking any further steps towards opening a center. You will need a complete picture of the financial feasibility of opening a new center and sustaining the business over time. Some questions relevant to the analysis might be:

- What type of facility will you operate (day care, child development center, before and after school programs, extended day care)?
- Who are your potential customers (ages, ethnicity, educational level, income, etc.)?
- How will your center be unique from others in the area?
- What is the average cost of child care in the area for each of the age groups you plan to serve? Will your rates be competitive?
- What are the economic demographics of the families in the area you wish to serve? How much will the families be able to pay for child care?
- What are the trends in the child care industry (i.e. are centers or licensed family care used, or relative/friends)?
- Is the market seasonal (will the enrollment be higher during certain times of the year?)
- What are the assets of the location and facility?
- What are the liabilities of the location and facility?
- How will you market your facility and services?

Once you have completed the market analysis and have determined that a center in the area you have chosen is a viable business endeavor, you are ready for the next steps. You can utilize the Child Care Center Timeline (Appendix A) to stay on track with monthly goals and mileposts to see you through to the opening of your center.

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

BUSINESS PLAN

The United States Small Business Administration's publication "HOW TO START A QUALITY CHILD CARE BUSINESS" will provide you with essential information on the business aspects of operating a child care center. Along with a sample business plan and outline of how to begin, it covers taxes, legal structures, insurance and financing. You can find the publication at http://archive.sba.gov/idc/groups/public/documents/sba_homepage/pub_mp29.pdf. The Small Business Administration has several local offices and will meet with you individually to discuss your business plans. Go to www.utahsbdc.org to find an office near you. The following are generally included in a business plan:

- Cover Sheet
- Business Description
  - > Needs Assessment, location and competition
  - > Operating procedures
  - > Business insurance
  - > Personnel
- Financial Data
  - > Market Analysis
  - > Marketing Plan (see http://childcareaware.org/)
  - > Capital equipment and supply list
  - > Balance Sheet
  - > Break-even analysis
  - > Income and cash flow projections
- Appendices

When preparing your financial data, here are a few critical items to keep in mind:

- Be aware that the approximate cost of furnishing an infant room at a minimal level is approximately $7000.00; the cost of a fully furnished and equipped infant room is about $10,000.00.
- A minimally equipped preschool classroom costs approximately $8000.00 while a fully equipped preschool room costs around $15,000.
- You will want to have your staff participate in an in-depth orientation before the center opens. Build wages for this time period into your budget. You may also want to include time to assemble furniture and set up the individual classrooms.
- Since enrollment will build slowly, base your income estimates on no more than 70% of your full capacity in the first few months. After your business has been running for awhile, you will realize that enrollment is never consistent. Base your income projections on a maximum of 85% of your licensed capacity.
- Before you can project your income, you will need to decide if:
  - > you are going to give decreased rates to families with more than one child (this will reduce your revenue but may attract more clients)
  - > you will charge a flat rate without discounts for missed days (many centers compromise and offer parents a set number of "free" days during the year),
  - > or you will charge a higher rate for part-time care (many centers do).
- The timing of your opening will strongly affect your initial enrollment. The best time to open is late summer, before school starts.

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

CHILD CARE LICENSING

Child Care Licensing at the Utah Department of Health will provide you with the regulations, application forms, checklists, and preliminary start-up information. Go to their website (www.health.utah.gov/licensing). Appendix F compares Licensing Structural Rules (minimum standards) with best practices recommendations. Whenever possible, you will want to follow the best practice recommendations.

Licensing Requirements

In order to complete your child care center license, Child Care Licensing will require you to attend an orientation session that will help you complete the licensing process. Contact Licensing at 801-584-8292 to register for an orientation session. To obtain a Child Care Center License you will need the following:

- Child Care Center Application for License
- A director who meets the minimum education requirements
- Business license from your city or county
- Sanitation approval from the local Health Department
- Fire occupancy and inspection approval from the local city or county
- Meal/snack menu approval
- Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) applications/clearance for all staff (some staff may need fingerprinting)
- Written policies and procedures for center
- Inspection of the facility by a Licensing Specialist

The licensing regulations provide for physically safe and healthy environments for children and support their families and providers in their efforts to safeguard children. It is important to develop a close working relationship with Licensing to make the process of opening and operating a center a smooth one, as free of stress and complications as possible. Licensing Specialists have a vast store of helpful information and are prepared to support you in your efforts to comply with the regulations.

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

FINDING YOUR FACILITY

Leasing vs. Buying

There are several ways to obtain a facility in which to operate your program. You can buy or lease an operating child care facility and remodel and alter the program to match your needs and program philosophy. You can lease an existing building that is either empty or being used for a different kind of business. Or you can buy or lease a vacant property and build your facility from the ground up. There are benefits and challenges to each one of these choices.

Leasing an existing business offers you the option of trying out the business of child care without the added start-up costs and the financial burden of owning the property outright. It gives you some time to test the waters and see if this is the business for you. In addition, you are leasing an existing business that is already up and running with an existing clientele. Down sides to this choice are that the facility will rarely fit your perception of the "ideal" facility; the building may need some upgrading or remodeling; you may not be able to make changes to the facility; you will be inheriting the previous owner's reputation and clients may have difficulty adjusting to the changes that come with new owners.

Leasing an existing facility that is either empty or which has been used for other purposes may have design challenges – trying to create a child-centered environment that meets all the structural guidelines for licensing standards may be difficult. Limited plumbing options are often a significant problem. There may be environmental hazards (lead, radon, pollution, etc.) or structural problems that will need to be addressed before the building will pass inspection. The cost may or may not be lower than purchasing, and the remodel may or may not take less time than building from scratch. The importance of a thorough inspection and analysis before leasing cannot be overstated.

Purchasing a currently operating child care center has the benefit of both an existing clientele and staff and offers the opportunity to make changes to the building over time. You will inherit the center's reputation, which may be a bonus or a challenge, and you will need to support staff and parents through an adjustment period. Owning the center will likely mean slightly higher insurance costs.

The freedom to design the most up-to-date facility, one that will meet your expectations as an "ideal" center, exists when you buy the property and build from the ground up, using an architect and contractor. This option will likely take the greatest amount of time and will require the greatest up-front investment in equipment and materials.

When making your decision about your facility, it is helpful to interview center owners to find out how they began and get recommendations from them. Your own finances will probably be the most important consideration in your choice.

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS AND PROCESS

Overall Design – Working with an Architect or Contractor

The earlier you meet with an architect and begin the process of designing your center, the more cohesive your design will be. You should have already met with a Licensing Specialist so you are able to provide your architect with the structural requirements for the building. Since very few architects have experience designing child care centers, you should spend time becoming familiar with the best practices in design. If you are not using the services of an architect, you will be working closely with a contractor. You should be able to explain your program goals and needs to the architect and/or contractor. It is their job to create your dreams, not determine what that dream should be.

You will want to have a clear idea of how you want your center to operate and what you want it to look like. You will need to be involved in actual design choices for the center, such as color schemes, placement of classrooms, storage, activity areas, plumbing and bathroom facilities for children and adults, and the outdoor play area and entrance.

Some of the most complete and helpful publications can be found at the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) http://www.lisc.org/section/ourwork/national/cick/resource_guides. They have six volumes of Resource Guides, each addressing various pieces of developing early childhood facilities. Volume Two, Designing Early Childhood Facilities, discusses design principles, indoor and outdoor spaces for children and adults, construction materials, and accessibility. It also includes specific suggestions for the use of color and lighting, an often neglected aspect of center design. Reviewing the Guides with your architect and/or contractor is highly recommended.

The overall design of the center should be attractive and welcoming with bright and airy play spaces that are more home-like than school-like. It should meet the needs of all who use it - the children, the staff and the parents. A well-designed center takes into account the needs of each age group that will be served, each stage of development and play, children's need for freedom to explore, and the importance of a welcoming and nurturing atmosphere. Remember to create spaces that meet the needs of parents who may wish to sit quietly with their child for a few minutes, meet privately with a caregiver or store a car seat. Considering the needs of the adult caregivers and staff will help the center run more smoothly and help adults do their jobs more effectively.

The design of your center must take into account the population you desire to serve, keeping in mind future growth and expansion. It should have features that support both best practices and developmentally appropriate practices as discussed in the Program Administration and Curriculum section, while incorporating all the recommendations and requirements of various governmental regulating agencies. It is important to note that all new centers must be in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Utah has created a QRIS (Quality Recognition and Information System) system called Care About Childcare. Care About Childcare is an online system intended to promote quality child care and help parents make informed choices for their children. When you are designing your facility, you will want to incorporate as many of the criteria from the Indoor and Outdoor Environment sections as possible. Appendix E lists the criteria or you can visit CareAboutChildcare.utah.gov.

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS AND PROCESS

Square Footage

Adequate space for growth and exploration is crucial since most enrolled children spend about nine hours per day at the center – the majority of their waking hours. The quality of their experiences at the center will impact them for years to come. Although the licensing regulations require only 35 square feet of indoor space for each child, it is extremely challenging to provide a high quality environment in such limited space. Experts now recommend 50 to 75 square feet per child for quality programming. The research on overcrowding for both children and adults demonstrates the negative impact that the lack of sufficient space has (i.e., increased aggression, conflicts and stress).

Your business plan will help you decide the level you can afford, but the best practices approach is recommended whenever possible. Any improvement over the 35 square foot minimum is worthwhile. Keep in mind the ratios and maximum group sizes, both required and recommended, while you design your center. Once the plans have been drawn and solidified, you will need to seek preliminary approval from a Licensing Specialist before proceeding with actual building plans.

Recommended outdoor space is 35 to 50 square feet per child for infants and 75 square feet per child for preschool and school-age children. You will want to plan for the largest space possible. Your goal should be to create as many outdoor learning and play options as possible. While a large climbing/slide unit may seem necessary, children do very well without one. The space needed for a use zone around such a structure often takes up the vast majority of an outdoor play area, leaving children with fewer choices. (In addition, the cost of the structure and the required cushioning in the surrounding area is quite expensive.) A bike path, large sand area, open space for games, natural areas, dramatic play options, music and art areas offer children a much wider range of choice, often for less money.

Construction Materials

Floors

Construction materials should be selected that are appropriate for activities for which the area will be used. Vinyl or tile should be used wherever water or liquids will be spilled on the floor or counters. For example, the use of these materials on kitchen and bathroom floors and walls, counters and splashguards, and in classroom art (or messy activity) areas will promote easy cleanup and the ability to sanitize properly. You will want to pay special attention to bathroom floors and walls to remove any potential source of odors. Remember that tile is much harder than vinyl or laminate flooring.

All classrooms should have a significant amount of soft flooring – either wall-to-wall carpeting with padding or plush area rugs. Carpets and rugs are comfortable, absorb noise, and add coziness to the area. If possible choose commercial grade carpeting with a moisture barrier and antimicrobial enzymes. In the infant and toddler areas where much of their time is spent on the floor, padded carpet is a must. In areas where children are engaged in small muscle activities, the choice between a short-nap carpet and vinyl floor coverings is somewhat equal; each has advantages. Other options for classroom floors include laminate, cork or wood flooring.

Walls

Painted drywall is the least expensive choice for walls, but will require more frequent maintenance in areas used by the children. In classrooms and hallways, it is best to use other choices on the lower portions of the walls. Possible choices include wood paneling, vinyl wall coverings, homosote, brick, stone or tile that will allow you to easily display items (photographs, children's art work, posters, etc.) at the children's eye level, another indicator of a quality classroom.. White boards, mirrors, cork boards and Forbo wall panels provide easier surfaces to work with. While adding carpet to the lower portion of classroom walls has some advantages (it reduces noise and looks nice for a longer time), it will also harbor a significant amount of germs and dirt.

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS AND PROCESS

Drywall is not a good choice for bathroom walls. Fiber Reinforced Panels (also known as FRPs) are inexpensive choices for bathroom walls. If tile is used, the grout must be sealed or it will stain and retain odors.

Acoustics

The acoustics of the children's spaces are often overlooked when buildings are being designed or remodeled. High levels of noise causes stress for children, who have not yet learned to tune out or cope with excessively high sound levels. Noisy classrooms affect infants and young children's ability to hear their caregivers' voices, hampering their ability to master language. Exposure to stressful sounds (other children crying, loud activities, etc.) from other areas of the center also cause stress for children and caregivers. Full walls, from floor to ceiling, greatly reduce these sounds. The addition of windows and "Dutch" doors provide an open feel that many prefer.

To reduce the sound levels in children's areas, you should plan ample amounts of soft sound absorbing materials within the room. Ideally, both the ceilings and floors are treated with sound-absorbing materials. Acoustic tiles can be used on ceilings, acoustic "clouds" can be hung from ceilings and padded carpets installed on floors. Acoustic materials can also be located on the walls (acoustic panels, cork boards, textured materials). Some centers choose to carpet the lower part of the wall, while others think that carpeted walls are too difficult to keep sanitized. There are pluses and minuses to both options.

Color

Walls: Using warm neutral colors such as soft grays, beiges, ecru or eggshell works best in children's classrooms. Since so many of the toys, equipment, children's clothing and the display items in classrooms are bright primary colors, more neutral or muted colors on the walls will reduce sensory overload. Avoid the use of large amounts of clear or pure colors. For example, rather than a lemon yellow, choose a light golden or creamy yellow. Choose colors from nature to create a less institutional and more homelike feeling.

Floors: Choose mixed hue carpets rather than solid colors. Avoid bright busy carpeting that will add to sensory overload, dark carpets that will make the space look smaller and light colors that show dirt.

Sink placement

If possible, the activity sinks in each classroom should be placed in the messy zone of the room, where the vinyl/tile floors are located. Ideally, this is close to the entrance to the room, so children can easily wash their hands as they enter. Try to avoid placing the sink in a corner; you will want to save your corners for quieter activity areas.

Lighting

A high quality classroom space receives plenty of sunshine and natural light and has windows low enough for children to see outside. If you are building from scratch, install as many low windows as you can. If you are remodeling a space, you may choose to install lofts or platforms that allow the children to see outside at least one of the windows. You will need to use tempered or safety glass in any window less than 36 inches off the floor. Another option when you are remodeling is to replace an exterior door with one that has glass on the bottom half to allow children to see outside. It is also recommended that you have ways to control the amount of light coming into the room through the use of blinds, shades or passive methods such as overhangs and awnings on the outside of the building.

Rather than relying exclusively on rows of fluorescent ceiling lights that are controlled by a master light switch, install a variety of types of lights controlled by more than one switch. Use both direct and indirect light. Options include track lighting, recessed task lights, cove lights, pendants, and wall sconces. Dimmer switches allow caregivers to control the light, creating different moods within the classroom.

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS AND PROCESS

Equipment and furniture

Furniture: The use of wood furniture creates a more home-like atmosphere in a classroom and reduces the amount of bright primary colors and sensory overload. If you are using colored furniture stick to all one color (all blue chairs and shelves, etc.) and choose non-primary colors whenever possible. Avoid the "teaching tables" – they take up too much space. Do not purchase infant "group feeding tables," tables that have several seats for children built into them. Because the children are seated too closely together, these tables create health problems (they can eat each other's food) and safety problems (they are able to hurt each other and they cannot get away from the child who is hurting them).

Purchase the best quality that you can afford so you don't find yourself replacing items within a year or two. Purchase furniture and materials/toys from early childhood catalogs. This will ensure you are buying items designed to hold up to the constant heavy use they will receive in a center. Materials designed for home use will break quickly and you will find yourself replacing them over and over. Catalog companies generally give good discounts and/or waive shipping cost when you are buying large quantities; talk with several to find the best prices.

The following section briefly describes the aspects of each of the areas found in a typical child care center.

Adult Spaces

The areas which will be occupied mainly by adults should be designed with the tastes and needs of adults in mind. Color schemes and décor should be simple to convey a sense of calm and order. Well-organized spaces that are free of clutter, with shelves and dispensers for materials and papers help everyone find needed materials and contribute to a sense of well-being. Colorful bulletin boards with current information (free of clutter and old news) keep adults aware of center events and schedules and help with communication. In the long run, organized bulletin boards help save time.

Areas specifically for adults needing special attention as you begin your overall center design are noted below:

Security. There should be one entry point with a reception desk. If the door isn't secured, there should be a receptionist present at the entry at all times.

Reception area. The area in front of the reception desk should have plenty of space and seating for waiting visitors and parents, as well as a bulletin board with current information posted. Shelves and desk organizers for parent notes, notices, and resource information can be built in. At the reception desk, there should be plenty of room for comfortable parent check-in and check-out.

Office. The director's office should be located near the reception area so the director is readily available to visitors and parents. It should provide privacy for sensitive communications with both staff and parents.

Staff lounge. Building a place for staff to come together informally and to have a place to relax during breaks helps to build community between staff members. The design can be simple, but it should offer staff a stress-free zone for adults only - a place to unwind from the demands of the classrooms. Adding a kitchenette and soft seating augments the space meant specifically for staff and conveys the message that they are valued members of the child care team.

Staff restroom. A restroom that is designated specifically for staff adds to the general feeling of respect for their privacy and a sense that there is consideration for their needs by the administrator(s).

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS AND PROCESS

Staff workroom. This area can provide storage for classroom materials, equipment, theme-based materials that can be shared, and office machines and materials for staff to prepare curriculum materials. A locker or cabinet where staff can secure their personal belongings could be placed here or in the staff lounge.

Storage

Well planned storage areas allow more floor space for play areas and reduce the clutter in the center.

- Built-in storage such as wall shelves, cubbies and overhead bins may save money on furnishings for storage.
- Adequate classroom storage for supplies and materials that can be easily accessed by the classroom teachers is fundamental; overhead storage, as well as long closets for oversized items is best.
- An area for cot storage should be considered when planning the play space so cots don't take away from the square footage needed for quality care.
- Be sure to plan adequate storage for children's individual belongings (cubbies)
- Include some locked storage for cleaning supplies in each classroom
- The office will need secure storage for children's personal records and center business records

Bathrooms

The minimum number of restrooms for the size of your center (number of children and adults) will be determined by the Utah State Health Department licensing regulations. Extra toilets for younger children are highly recommended, especially if you are building from scratch.

- If you are planning future growth and/or expansion, it would be wise to add additional facilities.
- Separate adult and staff restrooms are important to figure into your overall plan.
- The children's toilets should be lower, with a seat height of ten to twelve inches.
- For children five and under, having bathrooms in the classrooms will allow caregivers to monitor all children at all times. Easy access to toilets will reduce the number of accidents for younger children. Having restrooms that are shared between classrooms will lower plumbing expenses.
- With older children (six and up), having bathrooms that are adjacent to the classroom or in very close proximity works fine. Older children will need more privacy in the bathroom.

Kitchen

The type of kitchen you include in the design of your center will depend on the kind of food service you will provide. You will need to work closely with your local health department to ensure you meet their regulations for a Food Service Establishment. If meals are prepared on-site, the kitchen will need some commercial grade equipment and will need to meet strict health department sanitation rules and fire protection codes. The requirements vary based on the size of the center and the type of food service you will be providing. If children are bringing their own meals from home, you will not need to meet all of the requirements of a full-fledged kitchen.

Individual Classrooms

When designing each of the classrooms you will want to think about how the furniture, learning centers and equipment will fit and flow together. Keep in mind the following:

- Divide each room into two "regions" – one for wet play and another for dry play.
- The wet play region should be located where your sinks are and have flooring that is easily washed.
  - > This wet play region is used for art, water play and eating.

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS AND PROCESS

> The wet region also includes the high traffic entry area with space for cubbies and a parent area.

- The dry play region should contain two areas – one for quiet play and one for active play. The quiet area involves a lot of floor play and is usually carpeted to reduce noise and provide a comfortable surface for play. Padded carpet will also provide some softness in active play areas.

- Try to place the quiet areas in the protected corners, away from doors. If you are building from scratch, keep doors and busy areas out of at least two of the corners in your room.
- Activities for the quiet area include:
  > Reading and writing
  > Space to be alone (resting and hanging out)
  > Math
  > Manipulatives
  > Group meeting
  > Science

- Activities for the active area:
  > Dramatic play
  > Unit blocks
  > Music and movement
  > Puppets
  > Large motor play (wheeled toys, climbers, etc.) * if you do not have more than 35 square feet of space in your classroom, your large motor play options will be extremely limited or impossible

- Provide direct access from each classroom to the outdoor play area. The younger the children, the more difficult it is to transition them to the outdoors. Direct access is critical for infant, toddlers and two year old classrooms.

Infant/Toddler Rooms

Play space. The needs of infants and toddlers are unique and the space they will occupy should be designed to be warm and nurturing. Ample space for a variety of activities with a home-like atmosphere needs to be provided. They will need a design that is stimulating as well as a space that is restful which provides ample opportunities for positive interactions with adult caregivers. Three or four low shelves (no more than 24 inches tall) should create separate play areas. A toddler loft with stairs and a ramp provides opportunities for more active play.

Crib or sleeping area. The infant sleeping area should be a calm, quiet place within the infant room where infants are visible to caregivers at all times. It should not be separated from the infant room as a whole by solid partitions or walls. If your space is limited stacking or double decker cribs will help conserve the floor space infants need. Only commercial grade cribs should be used.

Diapering area with sink. This area should be oriented so that all children are still visible to the staff who is diapering. There should be a commercial diaper table and a compartment or cubby in close proximity for each infant's diapers and wipes. The sink should be designated for hand washing for diapering ONLY.

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS AND PROCESS

Food preparation area with sink. There should be a sink, a small refrigerator, and a counter located a significant distance from the diapering area to prepare food and formula for infants. This sink should be used for food preparation and hand washing for food preparation. If it isn't possible to place this sink away from the diapering sink, a barrier can be installed between the sinks.

Storage. Infants have clothing, blankets, supplies (diapers, bottles, etc.) and favorite toys, usually brought in a diaper bag. A cubby or built in storage area for their belongings should be provided and clearly labeled for each infant. Diaper bags should not be accessible to the children since they often contain hazardous items. Space is also needed to safely store car seats where they are not a tripping hazard and can't fall on children.

Two Year Old Classroom

Play space: Two year old children are learning independence and self-help skills such as feeding themselves and potty training. They need to be able to choose the toys they wish to play with and the activities that interest them. Four or five low shelves (no more than 24 inches tall) should create separate play areas. A toddler loft with stairs and a ramp provides opportunities for more active two year olds to climb and move.

Napping area: A separate nap area is generally not needed for this age group, though a quiet corner where a mat or cot can be set is very useful.

Storage: It is important to have individual cubbies for each child who is enrolled to store their belongings. During months of inclement weather, the space should be large enough to accommodate their boots, coats, mittens, change of clothing, etc. You can order free-standing cubbies or you can have them built in to the existing walls. A locking cabinet for teacher storage of supplies and materials for curriculum and teacher reference is also necessary.

Diapering and restrooms: Two-year-old children should be able to use the restroom without leaving their classroom since toileting and potty training is a major part of their developmental growth. The bathroom can be in their room or shared with the room next door. Since most two year olds are still in diapers, there should be a commercial diaper table and storage for diapering supplies close by. As in the infant/toddler room, the diapering area should be set up so that the caregiver can easily supervise the other children while diapering.

Food Preparation area with sink: Two year olds are happier when they are in a familiar space, eating home-style with their designated caregivers. Having to leave their room to eat in a shared cafeteria when they are hungry and tired will cause stress for both children and adults. The transition from lunch to nap time will be significantly more stressful than if children eat in their own rooms. A counter and sink near the tables is helpful.

Preschool Classrooms

Play space. The play space for preschoolers should be inviting and stimulating, but also planned with flexibility in mind so it can be used for a variety of activities. Having adequate space to accommodate both large and small groups, as well as active and quiet activities is one of the key elements in this area. The shelves and area dividers should not be higher than 32 inches.

Napping area. Since preschool children generally nap at the same time, the activity area can also be used for a rest or napping area. If your classroom has more than the required 35 square feet per child, you should have enough room to place cots or mats around the room with the required two feet of space between them. Include space for a quiet play area for the children who do not nap.

Storage. There must be adequate storage provided for children to keep their personal belongings separate from others. During months of inclement weather, the space should

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS AND PROCESS

be large enough to accommodate their boots, coats, mittens, change of clothing, etc. You can order free-standing cubbies or you can have them built in to the existing walls. A locking cabinet for teacher storage of supplies and materials for curriculum and teacher reference is also necessary.

Restrooms. Ideally, restrooms for this age group should be attached to the individual classrooms. If that is not possible because of financial restrictions or existing building limits, having the restrooms as close as possible to each classroom is the next best choice. All fixtures (toilets, sinks, etc.) must be child height.

Food service area. Children in preschool benefit from meals served family style in the classrooms. Self-help skills are maximized when children learn to serve themselves. More opportunities for conversation and the development of language skills and vocabulary can take place in this setting.

School Age Classrooms

The children in this age group have differing needs from the other groups since they are no longer in need of a nap time, are enrolled in an academic elementary program (either in or outside the center), and have needs for larger activity areas to accommodate their larger body size and group sizes.

Play space. The free choice area for these students should be designed so that the space, furniture and storage take into account their larger and taller bodies. The games and materials and art supplies should be easily accessible for self-selection and the space should be aesthetically pleasing with an easy traffic flow. Use of this space for large muscle activities is sometimes not practical, so it is best if you have a separate area set aside for large muscle games and activities.

Academic/cognitive/homework area. If you have before and after school care, a quiet area that is designated specifically for homework and activities that require concentration should be included in your design. When children are present all day, during summer and school breaks, this area can double as a quiet activity area.

Storage. The requirements for this area are much the same as for the preschool-age children, making sure that enough space is allowed for the larger backpacks, sports equipment, musical instruments, etc. that school-age children may be transporting from home to school and back.

Restrooms. Having gender specific restrooms in the school-age area is required, but it is not necessary to have the restrooms located within the classrooms. However, the closer the proximity to the classrooms the easier they will be to supervise.

Food service. School-age children can also be served snacks and meals in the classroom for the same reasons as preschoolers.

Outdoor Space/Playgrounds

The ideal outdoor space includes many of the learning centers and activity areas contained in the indoor classroom. Large climbing/slide/swing structures may be part of your plan, but you will not want to limit yourself to only large motor activities. Research tells us that time spent outdoors in environments that include nature reduces behavioral problems and ADD/ADHD symptoms while it increases children's cognitive skills, creativity, language skills and social skills. Plan your outdoor area to encourage staff and children to spend a significant amount of time outdoors. You will need a shed or other storage option for portable equipment and accessories. Include as many of the following choices as possible:

- Properly cushioned climbing structures
- A garden area

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS AND PROCESS

- Shade trees and sunny areas
- Grassy areas
- Water play areas
- Large sand area. If possible, place a water source close by.
- Bike/trike path or riding area
- Covered play area for permanent shade and protection from rain and/or snow
- Dramatic play – a playhouse and props
- Art area with easels or tables to work on
- Quiet spaces for a few children
- Large open space for group activities
- Music area with outdoor instruments
- Basketball standards
- Hills for climbing, sliding or rolling down
- Picnic tables
- Seating for both children and staff
- Restroom directly accessible from the outdoor play area (door opens into playground)

Infants/Toddlers/Two Year Olds Playgrounds. Best practices require separate outdoor play areas for infants and toddlers. This space is often the ideal for two year olds if the main playground contains higher climbing structures or the space is shared with much older children. The outdoor play space should encourage and allow independent exploration and stimulating gross motor play. Most of the choices listed above are appropriate for this playground.

- If a sandbox is included, you will need to choose one with a cover to keep animals out.
- In addition, if you need cushioning under any play structures or swings, you will want to use cushioning tiles. Sand is not sanitary and pea gravel, shredded bark or rubber are choking hazards.
- A grass area for infants is very important, as is a shaded area.
- Placing the outdoor play area directly outside the door to the infant/toddler classroom makes it easier to move children from one area to the other.
- A covered area right outside the door provides shade and protection from snow.
- Some adult seating will make the space easier for caregivers to use.

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION AND CURRICULUM

Program Administration

The caregivers and teachers are the heart and soul of the child care center. Hiring the right people and training and orienting them to the center's philosophy and goals are a critical step. Before hiring, you will need to develop job descriptions and a staff handbook. APPENDIX C, Resources for developing Policies and Procedures, lists several resources to assist you with the handbook. If you are new to child care management, you will also want to utilize some of the resources listed in Appendix H.

The CCR&R agencies have a set of DVDs titled "New Staff Orientation" that can be used for staff training and orientation. NAEYC, Redleaf Press (redleafpress.org) and Gryphon House (gryphonhouse.com) also have many excellent DVDs that can be used to help your staff get off to a good start.

Appendix C also lists resources for developing your emergency plan and a parent handbook. While licensing requires you to have a basic emergency plans and parent handbooks, the more developed your plans and handbooks are, the better prepared you will be.

There are several computer programs designed for child care bookkeeping. Most centers now use one to simplify billing, food program record keeping and other records. The website http://www.childcaresoftwarestore.com/ compares the most popular programs. Maggey software is another popular product in Utah (www.maggey.com). You will want to make sure the system you choose will work well with your accountant's system. Also make sure the system meets the needs of the Child Nutrition Program.

Curriculum and the Care About Childcare criteria related to programming

Before you prepare staff manuals, parent materials, daily schedules and activity plans, you will need to make decisions about your center's philosophy, goals for children and curriculum. Your curriculum refers to the plans you make and carry out with the children in the classroom and on the playground each day. It should begin with the center's mission statement and/or philosophy, and take into account the materials and equipment used at the center for all activities.

The saying, "If you don't know where you're going, you'll never know if you get there," holds true for early childhood programming. The curriculum you use will be your road-map to help guide the development of the children you serve. It should include all areas of child development (cognitive/intellectual, language/literacy, social, emotional and physical), strategies to increase reasoning or problem-solving skills, and inclusion of cultural awareness. Your curriculum includes:

- Mostly child-directed activities with some caregiver-directed activities
- Materials and equipment
- Interactions between caregivers and children and between the children themselves.

Quality child care begins with planning activities carefully to meet the needs of each child and help each one reach his or her full potential. Developmentally appropriate practice means teachers alter the curriculum and activities to match the child's needs and interests rather than expecting the child to fit into a set curriculum. Informal assessments such as anecdotal records, as well as formal assessments such as the Ages and Stages Questionnaire, should be used to help caregivers plan activities based on the needs, strengths and interests of the individual children. It is recommended that you choose a curriculum that has been developed by early childhood experts and is research-based (meaning the research shows the curriculum results in positive outcomes for children).

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION AND CURRICULUM

NAEYC's (National Association for the Education of Young Children) position statement on curriculum, assessment and program evaluation lists the following characteristics of an effective curriculum:

- Children are active and engaged.
- Goals are clear and shared by all.
- Curriculum is evidence-based.
- Content is learned through investigation and focused, intentional teaching.
- Curriculum builds on prior learning and experience banks.
- Curriculum is comprehensive (addresses all areas of development).
- Professional standards validate the curriculum's subject-matter content.
- The curriculum is likely to benefit children.

There are several curriculums that are highly respected and are usually on the list of "approved" curriculums in states that formally approve curriculums. The table below provides basic information on these curriculums.

Creative Curriculum Teaching Strategies, Inc.	www.teachingstrategies.com	You can purchase the basic books, the curriculum and associated materials, and/or hire trainers to come to your center 4 day workshops
High Scope Curriculum	www.highscope.org	You can purchase the basic books, the curriculum and associated materials, and/or hire trainers to come to your center to conduct workshops
Bank Street Curriculum	http://bankstreet.edu/theory-practice/	Explorations with Young Children: A Curriculum Guide from Bank Street College of Education and companion video;
Montessori Method	North American Montessori Center http://montessoritraining.net/	The center offers on-line training, college credit, curriculum materials

In addition to the curriculums listed above, any books purchased from Gryphon House (gryphonhouse.com) or Redleaf Press (redleafpress.org) will provide you with good quality and developmentally appropriate curriculum. Both companies carry many books from the most trusted experts in early childhood education, including Pam Schiller, Margie Carter, Karen Miller, Deb Curtis, Jim Greenman, Diane Trister Dodge, Laura Colker and High Scope staff. Choose "curriculum" books that integrate knowledge of child development, how to meet individual children's needs, and appropriate activities.

Some centers choose to spend thousands of dollars on "canned" curriculums that arrive in the mail with scripts for teachers to follow, art activities and props. Many of these include inappropriate activities and are difficult to tailor to the needs and interests of individual children. Creating a sound library of excellent resource books for your caregivers to use will provide you with a solid base to work for years at a fraction of the cost and result in a higher quality programming.

Both Creative Curriculum and High Scope have curriculums for infants and toddlers. Other excellent choices are Innovations, by Kay Albrecht and Linda Miller, and Prime Times by Jim Greenman, Anne Stonehouse and Gigi Schweikert.

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

APPENDIX A TIMELINE FOR CENTER START-UP

It will take approximately six to nine months to organize and prepare to open a quality child care center facility. This timeline will help to keep the process on track and organized.

Month One

1. Research websites and resources to become familiar with the start-up process and regulations that will affect the business.
2. Search for property or facility. Conduct needs assessment. Complete market analysis.
3. Acquire financial resources and create bank account.
4. Complete a business plan. Check with city/county planning department for zoning and other regulations.
5. Sign a lease for use of existing facility or acquire property site.
6. Meet with architect; develop design of facility
7. Select contractor (obtain competitive bids)
8. Submit request for building permit
9. Draw up incorporation papers or other legal documents
10. Select a center name
11. Arrange for insurance
12. Begin the licensing process: attend child care provider orientation; contact appropriate government offices for preliminary approval (child care licensing, fire, health, nutrition)

Month Two

1. Obtain building permit to modify existing facility
2. Begin construction of new facility or remodel of existing facility
3. Arrange for fire clearance of existing facility

Months Three-Four

1. Develop statement of purpose and goals for center
2. Create job descriptions for director and staff
3. Draw up personnel policies
4. Create policy and procedures manual
5. Review safety standards for outdoor play equipment
6. Order large indoor and outdoor equipment

Months Four-Five

1. Prepare staff and parent handbooks
2. Prepare contracts for staff
3. Prepare enrollment forms and contracts
4. Advertise and pre-enroll children

Months Five-Six

1. Advertise for and hire director
2. Begin ordering classroom furniture and equipment
3. Order small toys and supplies
4. Prepare menus and seek nutritionist approval
5. Schedule final local health and fire inspections
6. Schedule inspections by licensing personnel

Months Six-Seven

1. Advertise for and hire staff
2. Move in and set up furniture
3. Set up files and enrollment/accounting data system

Months Seven-Eight

- Prepare for open house

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

APPENDIX B Agencies and On-line Resources

AGENCY	PURPOSE/RESOURCES AVAILABLE	WEBSITE
State of Utah Child Care Licensing	This is the first agency you should contact. A Child Care Center License from them is required. Attendance at an orientation is required. Call 801-584-8292 for an appointment. The center rules are on the web site, along with other helpful information.	www.health.utah.gov/licensing phone: 801-584-8294
Care About Childcare (CAC) Local Agencies	This is the second agency you should contact. Each CAC agency is familiar with the needs for child care in their area. They can provide you with number of child care providers in your target area and the child vacancy rates. They are also available for discussion and advice. The CAC Agencies provide child care referrals to parents and training and consultation services to child care providers. Training to meet Licensing's Director Qualifications requirement is available.	https://careaboutchildcare.utah.gov/contactRegions.aspx
Utah Small Business Development (SBDC) Centers	The goal of the SBDCs is to facilitate the success and prosperity of small business endeavors. The generally free services are provided throughout the state. A "Developing Your Child Care Business" course is available for a fee (a scholarship may be available through CCPDI). The How to Start a Quality Child Care Center publication is an excellent resource though the curriculum/programming section is somewhat outdated.	www.utahsbdc.org
Developing Your Child Care Business - training	This training is available through the SBDC at Salt Lake Community College. Visit the website or call Carrie Menzel at 801-957-4763 for more information.	www.utahsbdc.org carrie.menzel@slcc.edu
National Administrator's Credential (NAC) – training	The NAC is a forty hour course for directors/administrators of child care programs. For more infomation go to www.ccpdi.usu.edu	
Child Development Associate (CDA)	The CDA is a nationally recognized competency based certificate for those who work with young children. The CDA can be used to help meet center director qualifications and to progress on the Utah Career Ladder. Contact your local CCR&R for more information and support in obtaining a CDA certificate.	www.cdacouncil.org
Care About Childcare	Care About Childcare provides parents with more detailed information about child care providers and a variety of quality child care information. Also offers child care providers with a platform for creating their own website.	http://careaboutchildcare.utah.gov
US Census Bureau	Data on the number of young children in geographic areas	www.census.gov
Child Care Aware	Child Care Aware is an excellent source of information for those who are thinking about opening a child care center.	www.childcareaware.org
First Children's Finance	Financial calculators for child care centers	http://www.firstchildrensfinance.org/businessresourcecenter/centers-2/finance/
Child Care Professional Development Institute	Located at Utah State University, CCPDI manages the Professional Development Award System and scholarships.	http://ccpdi.usu.edu/

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

APPENDIX B Agencies and Online Resources

Utah Office of Business Licensing	By using this system you will be able to register your business with the Utah State Tax Commission, the Utah Labor Commission, the Utah Department of Commerce, the Utah Department of Workforce Services and the Utah Department of Environmental Quality. After completing the online registration process, you will receive all of the necessary licenses and account numbers for your business. In addition, you will receive all of the information necessary to go to your local municipality to apply for a business license.	www.corporations.utah.gov
USDA Food and Nu trition Service (Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)	The CACFP helps centers provide nutritious meals and snacks to children from low-income families.	www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/care Utah office: 801-538-7513
Utah Office of Child Care (OCC)	OCC is the home of the Utah Child Care Assistance Program, a program that helps lower income families pay for child care services. Contact OCC to set up payment for these services and to view the maximum monthly payments. OCC also offers periodic quality improvement grants to licensed child care centers.	jobs.utah.gov/occ
White Hutchinson Leisure & Learning Group	Design and consulting firm specializing in early childhood settings. The web site contains helpful information.	- www.whitehutchinson.com - www.whitehutchinson.com/children/childcaremistakes.shtml - www.whitehutchinson.com/children/playgroundmistakes.shtml
Community Investment Collaborative for Kids	Guides for designing facilities, furnishing classrooms and designing outdoor play areas	www.lisc.org
National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)	NAEYC's mission is to serve and act on behalf of the needs, rights and well-being of all young children with primary focus on the provision of educational and developmental services and resources. Also accredits child care centers. Excellent source of information.	www.naeyc.org
National Institute on Out-of- School Time (NIOST)		www.niost.org
Utah Afterschool Network	UAN offers resources and training opportunities to programs that serve afterschool children.	www.utahafterschool.org
INCCRRA Quality Counts Project	Booklet exploring options for employer supported child care	Illinois Child Care Options for Employers http://www.ilqualitycounts.org/docman/programs/22-developing-center-based-programs/file

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

APPENDIX C Resources for developing Policies and Procedures

While Child Care Licensing will provide you with templates to create basic policies and procedures, they are minimal level policies. Developing more in depth policies and procedures, based on best practices, will provide you with far better outcomes. Below are some resources for developing all the policies you will need.

PARENT HANDBOOK

North Dakota CCR&R Staff Handbook Sample	http://www.ndchildcare.org/start/center.html
Child Care Center Management Guide	Clare Cherry, Barbara Harkness, Kay Kuzma and DeborahBates, McGraw-Hill Children's Publishing

STAFF HANDBOOK

North Dakota CCR&R Guide to Developing a Staff Handbook	http://www.ndchildcare.org/start/center.html
Child Care Center Management Guide	Clare Cherry, Barbara Harkness, Kay Kuzma and Deborah Bates, McGraw-Hill Children's Publishing

EMERGENCY PLANS

Child Care Center Management Guide	Clare Cherry, Barbara Harkness, Kay Kuzma and DeborahBates, McGraw-Hill Children's Publishing
Head Start Disaster Preparedness Workbook	http://toolkit.ineesite.org/toolkit/INEEcms/uploads/1056/Headstart_Disaster_Preparedness.pdf
FEMA: Earthquake Preparedness What Every Child Care Provider Needs to Know	http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/1795
FEMA: Sample Childcare Emergency Action Plan	https://emilms.fema.gov/is36/assets/EAP_Sample.pdf

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

APPENDIX D Classroom Equipment and Materials Lists

AGE	LIST
Infant	http://ccpdi.usu.edu/htm/c-a-c/care-about-childcare-grant-information
Toddler	http://ccpdi.usu.edu/htm/c-a-c/care-about-childcare-grant-information
Two Year Old	http://ccpdi.usu.edu/htm/c-a-c/care-about-childcare-grant-information
Preschool -Kindergarten	http://ccpdi.usu.edu/htm/c-a-c/care-about-childcare-grant-information
School Age	http://ccpdi.usu.edu/htm/c-a-c/care-about-childcare-grant-information

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

APPENDIX E Care About Childcare Criteria - to see the current criteria go to www.ccpdi.usu.edu click on Care About Childcare

ADMINISTRATION	FAMILY INVOLVEMENT	HEALTH AND SAFETY	THE PROGRAM	INDOOR ENVIRONMENT	OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENT
Program has a signed contract with each family	Families are invited to visit the program prior to enrollment	Drinking water available both indoors and outdoors throughout each day	Program has curriculum plans that include activities that support individual children's developmental goals and interests	Each classroom offers at least 3 different activity or learning centers	Program has an outdoor art area
Liability insurance that covers the child care program	Written monthly calendar of events, posted and given to every family	Program has a curriculum that promotes good safety practices	The program has curriculum plans that support children's social and emotional development	Each classroom offers at least 5 different activity or learning centers	There is a grass area
Non-discrimination policy for both staff and families	Program provides a take home family handbook	Soap and paper towels in program are at child height	Programs have activities in their curriculum that support children's physical development	Tables and chairs are child height	At least 1/3 of play area is covered in natural material
Director has Leadership Credential and/or Endorsement	Program conducts a pre-enrollment meeting for new families	Program has a curriculum that promotes good health practices	Programs have activities in their curriculum that support children's cognitive development	Each room has additional materials available to add or to change learning centers	There are musical materials available in the outdoor area
Written employee handbook	Family conferences are held at least twice a year.	Program serves fresh fruits and vegetables daily	Programs have activities in their curriculum that support children's language and literacy development	Classrooms have some vinyl or tile areas for dining and art/ messy play	Program has a stationary play structure
Internal training opportunities that go beyond topics required by licensing	Program provides opportunity for families to share knowledge about their children	Outdoor activity play time is scheduled daily for at least 60 minutes	Programs have activities in their curriculum that support children's creativity	At least 50% of each classroom room has carpet	There is a covered play area
Program reviewed annually by staff	Families are given written information about their child	Outdoor Safety Checklist done daily	Caregivers help promote self regulation by having program rules posted in a child friendly manner	Learning centers are available at least two hours a day	Portable play equipment to move on

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

APPENDIX E Care About Childcare Criteria - to see the current criteria go to www.ccpdi.usu.edu click on Care About Childcare

ADMINISTRATION	FAMILY INVOLVEMENT	HEALTH AND SAFETY	THE PROGRAM	INDOOR ENVIRONMENT	OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENT
The program offers financial incentives for increased education	Program has a written plan addressing how the transition to public school will occur	Program has been accessed for lead, radon, asbestos, and fiberglass	The program has predictable but flexible daily schedule that encourages purposeful play and shows that the majority of the day is child directed	Learning centers are available at least three or more hours a day	There is a hard smooth path or surface for wheeled toys
Program reviewed annually by parents	Program provides opportunities for families to share their culture and family traditions	Indoor Safety Checklist done weekly	Program uses observations to assess children's strengths and interests	The room arrangement does not interfere with traffic patterns	The program has natural landscaping
Merit raises are given to program staff	Program accommodates Individualized Family Service Plans(IFSP) or Individualized Education Programs(IEP)for those children with special needs.	Caregiver keeps a log of accidents and incidents at the program to watch for patterns	The program schedules time to work with children in small groups or individually	Space is set aside in each classroom to allow one or two children to play undisturbed by others	Dramatic play items are available in the outdoor environment
The program has a business plan	Families have the opportunity to volunteer in the program	Adults and children wash hands upon arrival and when re-entering the program or classroom	Program supports those children who have a rest time as well as those children who do not	Each room has natural lighting that can be controlled	Water play activities are available in the outdoor environment
Formal staff professional development plans	Families receive a monthly newsletter from the program	Disaster drills are conducted at least quarterly	Caregivers sit with children during meals and snacks	There is storage space for teacher materials and equipment	There is a hill or berm at least 3 feet high that is accessible to children.
Regular staff meeting	Program has a family bulletin board used for information sharing	Screen time is limited for children	Program has a plan in place to accommodate children with special needs	There is indoor space for active physical play	Quiet spaces protected from active play
Director has a Early Childhood or related Bachelors Degree	Program provides the opportunity for family social activities outside of the typical business day	Program has partnerships with outside agencies that promote health and well being	The program has transition activities prepared in order to facilitate smooth changes between activities	Each classroom has a cozy area available to the children throughout the day	There is a sand play area

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

APPENDIX E Care About Childcare Criteria - to see the current criteria go to www.ccpdi.usu.edu click on Care About Childcare

ADMINISTRATION	FAMILY INVOLVEMENT	HEALTH AND SAFETY	THE PROGRAM	INDOOR ENVIRONMENT	OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENT
Program offers paid health benefits for full time staff	Families are given the opportunity to participate in the planning of activities, and/or menu options for the children	The facility, toys and equipment are free of flaking paint	The Director or Owner of the program is a member of a Professional Organization	There is a window at child level	One large tree or several small trees
Staff and family records are securely kept for at least 3 years	Program offers families opportunities for educational workshops	Program has a procedure for cleaning up bodily fluids	Program uses a screening tool at least twice a year to help create individual development goals	There is at least one child height sink in each room	Garden area
An Advisory Board that includes staff and parents	Photos of the children and their families are displayed in appropriate spaces		Schedule shows a balance of active and quiet activities	Some of the eye level room display is changed quarterly	
Annual staff evaluations	Families who do not speak English as a first language have the opportunity to share their language with the childcare program		The program has 25 books and/or professional articles on child development and early care and education that address all of the age groups served	The program has sound reducing materials on the ceilings and/or walls	
Written staff recruitment and retention plan				There is an individual storage space for each child's belongings	
Director Designee that has director qualifications				Children's art work and other appropriate materials are displayed at children's eye level	
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	The professional development indicator will allow parents to see the training, credentials and degrees of center staff and family child care providers, including:	Levels and Endorsements providers have achieved on Utah's Office of Child Care Career Ladder	Degrees and Credentials providers have earned (if they have been submitted and verified by Utah's Child Care Professional Development Institute (CCPDI))	Number of clock hours providers have completed of Career Ladder training	Longevity in the field

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

APPENDIX F STRUCTURAL RULES FROM LICENSING Compared with RECOMMENDED STRUCTURAL GUIDELINES

INDOOR ENVIRONMENT

Licensing Rule	Rule Number	Recommended/Best Practice Guidelines
1. If constructed prior to1978, the building or playground structures must be tested for lead if there is any peeling, flaking, chalking or failing paint. If lead based paint is found, procedures from the local health department must be followed to correct the problem.	100-4(1)	
2. There must be one toilet and one sink for every fifteen non-diapered children.	100-4(2)	Provide restrooms within rooms or between classrooms so children never have to leave the room. This will mean that staff don't have to take the whole group down the hall when one child has to use the bathroom or let that child leave the room alone. Provide one toilet if the room capacity is ten children or less. For rooms with 10 to 20 children, provide two toilets. Research shows that when restrooms are within the classroom, overall quality increases. Staff are able to devote more attention to interactions when they don't have to spend time moving groups of children around the building.
		For toddlers and preschoolers, the recommended toilet height is twelve inches. The recommended sink height for toddlers is 18 inches and 22 inches for preschoolers. Kindergarteners should have 15 inch high toilets and 30 inch high sinks.
		If possible, place a restroom on the playground wall and add an outside door. This allows staff to supervise one child while the rest of the group plays outdoors.
		Install soap dispensers, paper towel and toilet paper holders within reach of children. Preschool children are usually unable to reach soap dispensers installed above countertops.
3. School age children must have privacy while using the bathroom.	100-4(3)	
4. Buildings constructed after July 1, 1997 must have a hand washing sink in each classroom.	100-4(4)	You will want at least one sink in every classroom, regardless of when your building was constructed. This will allow children to easily wash their hands based on best-practices guidelines (upon arrival, before/after meals, etc.). Consider hands free faucets on sinks used for toileting purposes. Hands free paper towel dispensers also cut down the spread of germs. Make sure that the children can reach the soap dispensers independently – if the counter is too deep and the dispenser is on the wall, the children won't be able to reach it. You may also want to install two water heaters for the center – one for the kitchen/laundry and another for the sinks the children use. The hot water in the children's sinks cannot be above 120 degrees. Another option is to install mixer valves on each sink.

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

APPENDIX F STRUCTURAL RULES FROM LICENSING Compared with RECOMMENDED STRUCTURAL GUIDELINES

5. Infant & toddler areas must meet one of the following criteria: a. There must be two sinks in the room. One used for food and bottle preparation, and the other for hand washing after diapering and non-food activities. b. There must be one working sink in the room used only for hand washing. All food and bottle preparation must be done in the kitchen and brought to the infant and toddler room by a non-diapering staff member.	100-4(5)	See the information on handless faucets, soap dispensers and towel dispensers. This is more important in rooms where children are being diapered.
6. Infant and toddler areas must not be used as access to other areas or rooms.	100-4(6)	
7. There must be ventilation in all rooms. This can be mechanical (heat and AC) or by open, screened windows.	100-4(7)	
8. Windows, glass doors, and glass mirrors within 36 inches from the floor must be made of safety glass, or have a protective guard. This must be document by a seal on the glass or written documentation from the manufacturer.	100-4(10)	At least one window in each classroom should be placed low enough for the children to see outside independently. Ideally, this window provides a view of a natural area with grass, trees, shrubs, etc.
9. There must be 35 square feet of space per child in each classroom. Bathrooms, closets are not included when calculating square footage for children. Indoor space per child may include floor space used for furniture, fixtures, or equipment if the furniture, fixture, or equipment is used: (a) by children; (b) for the care of children; or (c) to store classroom materials.	100-4(11)(12)(13)	Fifty square feet of space per child will allow you to provide quality child care. Infants and toddlers will have enough space to move around in while others sleep in a quiet area. Biting in rooms with toddlers and two year olds will be substantially reduced. Preschool rooms will have enough space for all the learning centers needed for a quality program without crowding.
10. Classroom may not exceed group size even if there is enough square footage.	100-11(4)(7)	Utah's Child Care Licensing sets group size limits (and caregiver: child ratios) that exceed those of Accreditation Standards. If you wish to become accredited in the future, you may want to consider this when determining classroom size.
11. Large rooms may be subdivided with furniture of temporary walls. Large rooms that are subdivided into sections that children do not have freedom of movement will be considered a separate classroom. Child care ratios and group sizes must be met and maintained in each separate area. When large rooms are subdivided each area will be treated as a separate classroom and must meet all of the classroom rules.	100-11(4)(7)	When large rooms are subdivided with partial walls, the noise from the entire area is shared. Research shows that the higher noise level has a negative effect on infants' and toddlers' ability to hear and learn language. It also creates stress for children and staff. Though staff often become used to the noise level, young children have not learned to tune it out and more affected by loud noise.

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

APPENDIX F STRUCTURAL RULES FROM LICENSING Compared with RECOMMENDED STRUCTURAL GUIDELINES

12. The outdoor play area shall have at least 40 square feet of space for each child using the playground at the same time as other children. The outdoor play area shall accommodate at least 33 percent of the licensed capacity at one time or shall be at least 1600 square feet.	100-6(2)(3)	The recommended square footage for outdoor play areas is: • 75 square feet for each preschool child using the space at one time • 33 square feet for infants • And 50 square feet for toddlers. Refer to page 17 and 18 for a list of features and activities to include in your outdoor area. The more space you have, the higher quality your outdoor experience can be.
13. The outdoor play area shall have a shaded area to protect children from excessive sun and heat.	100-6(8)	While large trees can protect children in the summer, a covered structure can provide children with the ability to go outside in all kinds of weather. A covered porch right outside the classroom door is an excellent way to allow children to experience rainy days and to use wheeled toys even when it has snowed. Gazebos, covered platforms/decks or shade sails are other good choices.
14. (d) Protective cushioning is required in all use zones.	100-6(10)(d)	The only safe protective cushioning for infant/toddler areas is ASTM cushioning tiles or pour-in-place cushioning. The less expensive options (shredded materials or sand) all create choking hazards or health risks.
15. Stationary play equipment that has a designated play surface less than the height specified in Table 3, and that does not have moving parts children sit or stand on, may be placed on grass, but shall not be placed on concrete, asphalt, dirt, or any other hard surface.		

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

APPENDIX G ACCREDITATION

An accredited center meets higher quality standards than those required by Child Care Licensing. Accreditation standards address all quality areas, including staff:child ratio, group sizes, the curriculum, caregiver qualifications, etc. The two major accrediting organizations are listed below. If you plan to have your center accredited at some point in the future, it is helpful to become familiar with the accreditation standards as you design your center and develop your policies.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)	www.naeyc.org/accreditation
The National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA),	http://www.necpa.net/stepbystep.php

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

APPENDIX H RESOURCES

Overview of Child Care Center Management:

The Art of Leadership: Managing Early Childhood Organizations (revised), Bonnie and Roger Neugebauer, editors. Redmond, WA: Exchange Press, 2003.

The Business of Child Care - Management and Financial Strategies, Gail H Jack. Cengage Learning, 2004

Child Care Center Management Guide: A Hands-On Resource (3rd Edition), Clare Cherry, Barbara Harkness, Kay Kuzma. Torrance, CA: Fearon Teacher Aids, 2000.

Developing and Administering a Child Care Center (7th Edition), Dorothy June Sciarra and Anne G. Dorsey. Albany, NY: Delmar Publishers, 2009.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs (3rd Edition), Washington, DC: NAEYC, 2009.

Opening and Operating a Successful Child Care Center, Dorothy June Sciarra and Anne G. Dorsey. Albany, NY: Delmar Thomson Learning, 2002.

The Practical Guide to Quality Child Care, Pamela Schiller and Patricia Dyke. Beltsville, MD: Gryphon House, 2001.

The Visionary Director: A Handbook for Dreaming, Organizing, & Improvising in Your Center (2nd Edition), Margie Carter and Deb Curtis. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 2009.

Staff Management

Creating Better Child Care Jobs: Model Work Standards for Teaching Staff in Center-Based Child Care (2nd Edition), Washington, DC: Center for the Child Care Workforce, 1999.

Leaders and Supervisors in Child Care Programs, Dorothy June Sciarra and Anne G. Dorsey. Albany, NY: Delmar Publishers, 2002.

The What, Why, and How of High-Quality Early Childhood Education: A Guide for On-Site Supervision (Revised Edition), Derry G. Koralek. Washington, DC: NAEYC, 1995.

Financial Management

The Bottom Line for Children's Programs: What You Need to Know to Manage the Money, Gwen G. Morgan. Beltsville, MD: Gryphon House, 2009.

The Business of Child Care - Management and Financial Strategies, Gail H Jack. Cengage Learning, 2004.

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

APPENDIX H RESOURCES

Facility Design:

CICK (Community Investment Collaborative for Kids) Resource Guides, http://www.lisc.org/. *Extremely helpful for designing and equipping a center. This website has a library of publications (six volumes) that thoroughly address all the various aspects of quality child care, from start-up and design to curriculum and program.*

Caring Spaces, Learning Places: Children's Environments That Work (2nd Edition), Jim Greenman. Redmond, WA: Exchange Press, Inc., 2005.

Child Care Design Guide, Anita Rui Olds. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2001.

Designs for Living and Learning: Transforming Early Childhood Environments, Deb Curtis and Margie Carter. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 2003.

Community Playthings Collage Newsletter http://www.communityplaythings.com/resources/articles/index.html

Curriculum:

The Creative Curriculum for Preschool (4th Edition), Diane Trister Dodge, Laura J. Colker, Cate Heroman. Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies, 2002.

Educating Young Children: Active Learning Practices for Preschool and Child Care Programs (2nd Edition), Mary Hohmann and David P. Weikart. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope, 2002.

The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers & Twos (2nd Edition), Diane Trister Dodge. Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies, 2006.

Innovations, the Comprehensive Infant Curriculum: A Complete, Interactive Curriculum for Infants from Birth to 18 Months, Kay Albrecht and Linda G. Miller. Beltsville, MD: Gryphon House, 2000.

Innovations, the Comprehensive Toddler Curriculum: A Complete, Interactive Curriculum for Toddlers from 18 to 36 Months, Kay Albrecht and Linda G. Miller. Beltsville, MD: Gryphon House, 2000.

Prime Times: A Handbook for Excellence in Infant and Toddler Care (2nd Edition), Jim Greenman. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 2008.

Before and After School Programs: A Start-up and Administration Manual, Mary McDonald Richard. Nashville, TN: School-Age Notes, 1991.

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012

APPENDIX H RESOURCES

Half a Childhood: Quality Programs for Out-of-School Hours (3rd Edition), Judith Bender. Nashville, TN: School-Age Notes, 2005.

School-Age Ideas and Activities for After School Programs (revised), Karen Haas-Foletta. Nashville, TN: School-Age Notes, 2005

Health and Safety

Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care (3rd Edition), Elk Grove Village, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics, 2011.

Model Child Care Health Policies (4th Edition), Susan Aronson. Washington DC, NAEYC, 2002.

Forms

The Complete Book of Forms for Managing the Early Childhood Program, Kathleen Pullan Watkins and Lucius Durant. West Nyack, NY: Center for Applied Research in Education, 1990.

The Practical Guide to Quality Child Care, Pam Schiller, Patricia Carter Dyke. Gryphon House, 2001

The Redleaf Complete Forms Kit, Redleaf Press

The Ultimate Guide to Forms for Early Childhood Programs: Hundreds of Forms Prepared by Nationally Accredited Programs, Wendy Biasetto. Aurora, CO: Learning Expo Publishing, 1995.

State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care © 2012