



STATE CONSUMER EDUCATION WEB SITES

Of paramount concern to all parents is the health, safety, and well-being of their children while in child care. The Office of Child Care is committed to expanding high-quality choices available to parents across the range of child care settings.

Parents who need out-of-home care for their children are faced with the challenging task of learning how quality care is defined, locating a program that provides that level of quality, and securing a place for their child. Parents also look for programs that are convenient, affordable, and align with their family's philosophy of early care and education.

To meet this need, States are working to increase the demand for and availability of quality programs to ensure that parents have access to a variety of choices. These efforts are supported by the reauthorization of the *Child Care and Development Block Grant Act (CCDBG Act of 2014)*¹ that requires States to provide information to parents about a variety of topics including:

- The availability of child care services provided through CCDF and other child care services the family might be eligible for;
- The quality of providers, which can be based on a State quality rating and improvement system (QRIS), if available;
- The State process for licensing child care providers, conducting background checks, and monitoring and inspecting child care providers;
- Other programs for which families receiving child care financial assistance may be eligible;
- Special education services such as the Early Intervention Program for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities and the Part B Preschool Grants for Children with Disabilities;
- Research and best practices concerning children's development;

¹ *Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014, 42 USC 9801 (2014)*. Retrieved from <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-113publ186/pdf/PLAW-113publ186.pdf>.

- State policies regarding the social-emotional behavioral health of young children, including positive behavioral intervention and support models and policies about the expulsion of preschool-aged children in early childhood programs; and
- Developmental screening resources.

This is one of a series of four issue briefs that address CCDBG Act of 2014 requirements and provide state examples and links to state Web sites that can serve as examples for States and Territories in enhancing their own consumer education efforts.² These briefs were developed based on several regional webinars and meetings that focused on consumer education.

State Web Sites

Consumers increasingly rely on the internet to research their purchases, and the search for child care is no different. State Web sites differ considerably in the scope and content of the information provided, as well as the degree to which the Web site is consumer-friendly and easy to access and navigate. Many States post information directed to parents on state agency Web sites, CCR&R Web sites, and, when applicable, the QRIS Web site.

The following table provides links to state Web sites that, to varying degrees, help parents evaluate and choose child care and access additional family support services. The other issue briefs in this series provide descriptions of state Web sites that address these topics in greater detail.

- *Diversity and Availability of Services*: the different types (center-based, home-based, Head Start, prekindergarten, etc.) of care available to parents.
- *Provider Search*: a provider search function that parents can use to search for care using a variety of criteria (location, ages served, hours of operation, etc.). In addition, States that provide search functions based on quality indicators are noted with the following symbols:
 - * Search by quality level or star rating;
 - ^ Search by national accreditation status; and
 - + Provides information about other quality indicators.

² These issue briefs were originally produced by the National Center on Child Care Quality Improvement, a previous contract of the Office of Child Care. The National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance is disseminating the issue briefs. These briefs and other resources about consumer education can be found on the Child Care Technical Assistance Network Web site at <https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/>.

- *What is Quality/How to Choose*: characteristics of a quality program as well as guidance on what to look for when choosing care.
- *Checklist*: a checklist of things to look for or ask about when visiting potential programs.
- *Subsidy*: the availability of and the application process for child care subsidy for families who qualify for financial assistance.
- *Licensing*: the State’s processes for licensing and monitoring child care and conducting criminal background checks; provider requirements; monitoring reports; numbers of deaths, serious injuries, and substantiated child abuse in child care; how to file a complaint, etc.
- *Quality/QRIS*: the quality of programs that can be provided through the State’s QRIS, if applicable, and material on additional quality standards.
- *Family Support Services*: additional support services available to parents who are financially eligible, such as Head Start; Women, Infants, and Children (WIC); Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP); Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); and health insurance.

Table 1. Consumer Education Topics on State Child Care Web Sites

State	Agency	Web site	Diversity/ Availability of Services	Provider Search	What is Quality/ How to Choose	Checklist	Subsidy	Licensing	Quality/ QRIS	Family Support Services
Alabama	State Agency	http://dhr.alabama.gov/services/child_care_services/Parent_Guide.aspx	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
	CCR&R	Varies Across Multiple CCR&R Agencies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies
Alaska	State Agency	http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/ccare/default.aspx	Yes	Yes			Yes	Yes		
	CCR&R	http://www.threadalaska.org/	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		

State	Agency	Web site	Diversity/ Availability of Services	Provider Search	What is Quality/ How to Choose	Checklist	Subsidy	Licensing	Quality/ QRIS	Family Support Services
Arizona	State Agency	http://www.threadalaska.org/			Yes			Yes		
	CCR&R	http://www.arizonachildcare.org/	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
	Quality First	http://qualityfirstaz.com/parents-and-families/		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		N/A	
Arkansas	State Agency	http://humanservices.arkansas.gov/dccece/Pages/default.aspx	Yes	Yes*			Yes	Yes	Yes	
	CCR&R	http://humanservices.arkansas.gov/dccece/dccece_documents/ccrb-rochure.pdf	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies
	Better Beginnings	http://arbetterbeginnings.com/parents-families	Yes	Yes*	Yes	Yes	Yes		N/A	
California	State Agency	http://www.first5california.com/parents/learning-center.aspx?id=14			Yes		Yes	Yes		
	CCR&R	http://www.rnetwork.org/parents			Yes		Yes		Yes	
Colorado	State Agency	http://www.coloradoofficeofearlychildhood.com/!parent-resources/c1qzc		Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes	

State	Agency	Web site	Diversity/ Availability of Services	Provider Search	What is Quality/ How to Choose	Checklist	Subsidy	Licensing	Quality/ QRIS	Family Support Services
	CCR&R	http://www.qualistar.org/child-day-care-resources.html	Yes	Yes*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
	Qualistar	http://www.qualistar.org/home.html	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		N/A	
Connecticut	State Agency	http://www.ctcare4kids.com/		Yes^	Yes		Yes	Yes		
	CCR&R	http://www.211childcare.org/	Yes	Yes^	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Delaware	State Agency	http://kids.delaware.gov/occl/parents.shtml		Yes*	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	
	CCR&R	http://www.cffde.org/services/FamilyResources/childcarereferral.aspx		Yes*	Yes				Yes	
	Delaware Stars	http://www.delawarestars.udel.edu/families/		Yes			Yes	Yes	N/A	Yes
District of Columbia	State Agency	http://osse.dc.gov/service/early-learning-services-parents	Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes		
	CCR&R	http://www.learnndc.org/earlychildhood/dc-programs-and-services/child-care	Yes	Yes			Yes			

State	Agency	Web site	Diversity/ Availability of Services	Provider Search	What is Quality/ How to Choose	Checklist	Subsidy	Licensing	Quality/ QRIS	Family Support Services
	Going for the Gold	http://www.learnnc.org/childcarefinder							N/A	
Florida	State Agency	http://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/child-care/parent-resources		Yes*	Yes			Yes	Yes	
	State Agency	http://www.floridaearlylearning.com/parents.aspx			Yes		Yes	Yes		
	CCR&R	http://www.floridaearlylearning.com/parents/find_quality_child_care/locate_a_child_care_resource_referral_program/countys_early_learning_coalition.aspx	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies
Georgia	State Agency	http://www.decal.ga.gov/BftS/SearchingForAProgram.aspx	Yes	Yes				Yes		
	CCR&R	http://www.gaccrra.org/parent.html		Yes^				Yes		
	Quality Rated	http://qualityrated.org/		Yes	Yes				N/A	
Hawaii	State Agency	http://humanservices.hawaii.gov/bessd/child-care-program/ccch-subsidies/					Yes	Yes	Yes (pilot)	

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	CCR&R	http://www.patchhawaii.org/	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes		
Idaho	State Agency	http://www.healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/Children/ChildCare/tabid/292/Default.aspx		Yes^	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
	CCR&R	http://idahostars.org/?q=parents		Yes^	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
	IdahoSTARS	http://idahostars.org/?q=welcome-parents		Yes*	Yes	Yes			N/A	
Illinois	State Agency	http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=29720			Yes		Yes		Yes	
	CCR&R	https://www.inccrra.org			Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	
	ExceleRate Illinois	http://www.exceleRateIllinois.com/		Yes*	Yes	Yes			N/A	
Indiana	State Agency	http://www.in.gov/fssa/2552.htm		Yes*			Yes	Yes	Yes	
	CCR&R	http://www.iaccrr.org/default.cfm?page=parents-families			Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	
	Paths to Quality	http://www.in.gov/fssa/pathstoquality/3732.htm		Yes*					N/A	

State	Agency	Web site	Diversity/ Availability of Services	Provider Search	What is Quality/ How to Choose	Checklist	Subsidy	Licensing	Quality/ QRIS	Family Support Services
Iowa	State Agency	http://dhs.iowa.gov/node/1003	Yes	Yes*			Yes		Yes	
	CCR&R	http://www.iowaccrr.org/families/		Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	
	Iowa Quality Rating System	http://dhs.iowa.gov/iqrs/							N/A	
Kansas	State Agency	http://www.dcf.ks.gov/services/ees/Pages/Child_Care/Child-care-and-early-education.aspx	Yes				Yes			
	CCR&R	http://www.ks.childcareaware.org/for-parents-families/search-for-child-care/	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
	KQRIS	http://www.ercrefer.org/pages/family.html	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A	

State	Agency	Web site	Diversity/ Availability of Services	Provider Search	What is Quality/ How to Choose	Checklist	Subsidy	Licensing	Quality/ QRIS	Family Support Services
Kentucky	State Agency	http://chfs.ky.gov/dcbs/cc/Information+for+Parents.htm	Yes	Yes*	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	
	CCR&R	http://www.kentuckypartnership.org/childcaresearch.aspx		Yes*	Yes				Yes	
	STARS for KIDS NOW	http://chfs.ky.gov/dcbs/dcc/stars/starsparentinfo.htm			Yes				N/A	
Louisiana	State Agency	http://www.louisianabelieves.com/early-childhood	Yes	Yes			Yes	Yes		
	Quality Start	http://www.qrslouisiana.org/parents		Yes*	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	
Maine	State Agency	http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/ec/occhs/infoparents.htm	Yes	Yes*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
	Quality for ME	http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/ec/occhs/qualityforme.htm							N/A	

State	Agency	Web site	Diversity/ Availability of Services	Provider Search	What is Quality/ How to Choose	Checklist	Subsidy	Licensing	Quality/ QRIS	Family Support Services
Maryland	State Agency	http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/child_care/child_care.htm		Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes	
	CCR&R	http://mdchildcare.org/mdcfc/network/mainnumbers.html		Yes	Yes		Yes			
	Maryland EXCELS	http://marylandexcels.org/231927		Yes*+	Yes		Yes	Yes	N/A	
Massachusetts	State Agency	http://www.mass.gov/edu/birth-grade-12/early-education-and-care/	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	
	CCR&R	http://machildcareresourcesonline.org/families/	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
	MA Quality Rating and Improvement System	http://www.mass.gov/edu/birth-grade-12/early-education-and-care/qr/s/			Yes				N/A	

State	Agency	Web site	Diversity/ Availability of Services	Provider Search	What is Quality/ How to Choose	Checklist	Subsidy	Licensing	Quality/ QRIS	Family Support Services
Michigan	State Agency	http://www.michigan.gov/lara/0,4601,7-154-63294_5529_7143---.00.html		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
	CCR&R	http://greatstarttoquality.org/parents		Yes*	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	
	Great Start to Quality	http://greatstarttoquality.org/parents		Yes	Yes		Yes		N/A	Yes
Minnesota	State Agency	http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/main/idcplg?IdcService=GET_DYNAMIC_CONVERSION&RevisionSelectionMethod=LatestReleased&dDocName=id_000151					Yes	Yes	Yes	
	CCR&R	http://m.childcareawaremn.org/families/choosing-child-care/interview-questions	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes			
	Parent Aware	http://parentaware.org/	Yes	Yes*	Yes	Yes	Yes		N/A	

State	Agency	Web site	Diversity/ Availability of Services	Provider Search	What is Quality/ How to Choose	Checklist	Subsidy	Licensing	Quality/ QRIS	Family Support Services
Mississippi	State Agency	http://www.mdhs.state.ms.us/early-childhood-care-development/for-parents/		Yes*	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	
	CCR&R	http://msucares.com/childcare/index.html			Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	
	Quality Stars	http://www.earlychildhood.msstate.edu/programs/qualitystars/index.php							N/A	
Missouri	State Agency	http://dss.mo.gov/cd/childcare/		Yes			Yes	Yes		
	CCR&R	http://mo.childcareaware.org/parents-families/	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Montana	State Agency	http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/hcsd/childcare/		Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes	
	CCR&R	http://mtchildcare.org/For_Families.html		Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes		
	Best Beginnings STARS to Quality	http://dphhs.mt.gov/hcsd/ChildCare/STARS.aspx							N/A	

State	Agency	Web site	Diversity/ Availability of Services	Provider Search	What is Quality/ How to Choose	Checklist	Subsidy	Licensing	Quality/ QRIS	Family Support Services
Nebraska	State Agency	http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/chs_chc_chcindex.aspx	Yes	Yes			Yes	Yes		
	CCR&R	https://nrns.ne.gov/therightplace/	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Nevada	State Agency	https://dwss.nv.gov/					Yes		Yes (pilot)	
	CCR&R	http://www.childrenciabinet.org/child-care-resources/for-parents/	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
	Silver State Stars	http://www.nvsilverstarestars.org/search-for-care		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		N/A	
New Hampshire	State Agency	http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dcyf/cdb/index.htm		Yes			Yes		Yes	
	CCR&R	http://nh.childcareaware.org/families/	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
	Licensed Plus	http://www.dhhs.state.nh.us/dcyf/licensedpluses/index.htm							N/A	
New Jersey	State Agency	http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dfd/programs/child/choosing/	Yes		Yes		Yes	Yes		
	CCR&R	http://www.njaccrra.org/parents.shtml	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies

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New Mexico	State Agency	https://www.newmexicokids.org/			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
	CCR&R	https://www.newmexicokids.org/content/parents_and_families/	Yes	Yes*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
	FOCUS	https://www.newmexicokids.org/content/care_givers_and_educators/focus/							N/A	
New York	State Agency	http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/childcare/infoforparents.asp	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
	CCR&R	http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/childcare/referralagency.asp	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies
	QualitystarsNY	http://qualitystarsny.org/families-home.php	Yes	Yes (links to outside searches)	Yes	Yes			N/A	

State	Agency	Web site	Diversity/ Availability of Services	Provider Search	What is Quality/ How to Choose	Checklist	Subsidy	Licensing	Quality/ QRIS	Family Support Services
North Carolina	State Agency	http://ncchildcare.dhhs.state.nc.us/parents/pr_sn2_ov.asp		Yes*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
	CCR&R	http://www.childcareresourcesinc.org/parents-families/	Yes	Yes*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
	Star Rated License	http://ncchildcare.nc.gov/parents/pr_sn2_ov.asp			Yes				N/A	
North Dakota	State Agency	http://www.nd.gov/dhs/services/childcare/					Yes	Yes		
	CCR&R	http://www.ndchildcare.org/parents/		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Ohio	State Agency	http://ifs.ohio.gov/cdc/families.stm	Yes	Yes*	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	
	CCR&R	http://www.occrra.org/families.php		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
	Step Up to Quality	http://www.earlychildhoodohio.org/sutq.php							N/A	

State	Agency	Web site	Diversity/ Availability of Services	Provider Search	What is Quality/ How to Choose	Checklist	Subsidy	Licensing	Quality/ QRIS	Family Support Services
Oklahoma	State Agency	http://www.okdhs.org/programsandservices/c/pnts/default.htm		Yes*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
	CCR&R	http://www.oklahomachildcare.org/node/339	Yes	Yes*^	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
	Reaching for the Stars	http://www.okdhs.org/programsandservices/c/stars							N/A	
Oregon	State Agency	http://www.oregon.gov/OCC/Pages/ForParents.aspx	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes		
	CCR&R	http://trouw.org/projects/cccr/families	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes		
Pennsylvania	State Agency	http://www.dhs.state.pa.us/forchildren/childcareearlylearning/index.htm		Yes*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
	CCR&R	http://www.dhs.state.pa.us/foradults/helpfultelephone numbers/childcareinformation services/index.htm	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies
	Keystone STARS	http://www.pakeys.org/pages/get.aspx?page=Programs_STARS_Families		Yes	Yes				N/A	

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Rhode Island	State Agency	http://childcareaware.org/node/1402?field_categories_value_many_to_one=All&field_state_select_value_many_to_one=RI		Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	BrightStars	http://families.brightstars.org/	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	
South Carolina	State Agency	http://www.scchildcare.org/	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes		
	CCR&R	http://www.sc-crr.org/	Yes	Yes				Yes		
	ABC Quality Child Care	http://www.scchildcare.org/parents/what-is-abc-quality.aspx			Yes				N/A	
South Dakota	State Agency	http://dss.sd.gov/childcare/	Yes				Yes	Yes		
	CCR&R	http://www.sdstate.edu/tll/frn/choosing-child-care.cfm	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes			

State	Agency	Web site	Diversity/ Availability of Services	Provider Search	What is Quality/ How to Choose	Checklist	Subsidy	Licensing	Quality/ QRIS	Family Support Services
Tennessee	State Agency	http://www.tn.gov/humanservices/topic/child-care-services		Yes*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
	CCR&R	http://tnccrr.org/index.php							Yes	
	Star-Quality Child Care Program	http://www.tennessee.gov/humanservices/article/child-care-report-card-star-quality-program						Yes	N/A	
Texas	State Agency	http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/Information_for_Parents/default.asp	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes		
	CCR&R	http://www.taccrra.net/services/	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies
	Texas Rising Star Provider Certification	https://texasrisingstar.org/							N/A	
Utah	State Agency	https://jobs.utah.gov/oc/	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
	CCR&R	http://careaboutchildcare.utah.gov/parent/default.aspx	Yes	Yes+	Yes		Yes	Yes		

State	Agency	Web site	Diversity/ Availability of Services	Provider Search	What is Quality/ How to Choose	Checklist	Subsidy	Licensing	Quality/ QRIS	Family Support Services
Vermont	State Agency	http://dcf.vermont.gov/child_care		Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	
	CCR&R	http://www.vermontchildcare.org/parents/parents.shtml	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	
	STep Ahead Recognition System	http://dcf.vermont.gov/cdd/stars/			Yes		Yes		N/A	
Virginia	State Agency	http://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/cc/publications.cgi	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
	CCR&R	http://va.childcareaware.org/?option=com_content&view=article&id=139&Itemid=125	Yes	Yes^	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
	Virginia Star Quality Initiative	http://www.smartbeginnings.org/home/star-quality-initiative/about-virginia-quality.aspx		Yes*	Yes				N/A	
Washington	State Agency	http://www.del.wa.gov/parents-family/	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
	CCR&R	http://www.childcarenet.org/families	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes		
	Early Achievers	http://www.del.wa.gov/care/qrifamilies.aspx		Yes	Yes				N/A	

State	Agency	Web site	Diversity/ Availability of Services	Provider Search	What is Quality/ How to Choose	Checklist	Subsidy	Licensing	Quality/ QRIS	Family Support Services
West Virginia	State Agency	http://www.wvdhhr.org/bcf/ece/		Yes			Yes	Yes		
	CCR&R	http://www.wvdhhr.org/bcf/ece/earlycare/rr.asp					Yes			
Wisconsin	State Agency	http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/family_resources.htm	Yes	Yes*	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	
	CCR&R	http://supportingfamilies.together.org/child-care-resource-referral-agencies/	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies
	YoungStar	http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/parents.htm		Yes	Yes	Yes			N/A	
Wyoming	State Agency	https://sites.google.com/a/wyo.gov/early-childcare-and-licensing/	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		

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