

Professional Family Child Care Alliance of Georgia

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<https://www.pfccag.org>



Family Child Care as a Community Resource: A Practical Help Bulletin

***PURPOSE:** To inform city and county officials, landlords, and homeowner associations that family child care is a valuable community resource worthy of support.

Why is Family Child Care Valuable to the Community?

The GA licensing law says, “A Family Child Care Learning Home is a program that operates in a private residential home for less than 24 hours per day. It provides care for three children, but no more than six, under the age of 18 for pay”. The provider may also care for up to two additional children, age three years and older, for two designated one-hour periods.

****Benefits to Children and Working Parents.** Research shows that child care benefits society in numerous ways. High-quality child care promotes the healthy development, safety, and well-being of children, regardless of parental work status. It leads to increased success in school for disadvantaged children who might not succeed otherwise and helps prevent delinquency and crime. It enhances the productivity of workers who are also parents by diminishing tensions between work and family responsibilities and broadening access to employment, thereby reducing welfare dependency. By supporting parents in their dual role as parents and workers, family child care enables children to benefit from reduced poverty and family stress. It also benefits non-traditional working parents due to the provider’s ability to have flexible hours of operation.

*****Benefits to the Neighborhood.** Family child care is an asset to the neighborhood. Providers want to be good neighbors; after all, it is their neighborhood too. Family child care gives life and character to a neighborhood. The family child care provider and the maximum of six children served, take mini field trips to a store, post office, fire station, or elderly neighbor. In some neighborhoods, the family child care provider is the last “at-home mom” on the block since all the other neighbors are away at work. So, in addition to giving close supervision to the children, the provider becomes an informal “Neighborhood Watch” volunteer.

Objections to Family Child Care in A Neighborhood. Sometimes an objection is raised about the impact of a family child care home on a neighborhood. The objection may be confusing the impact of a family child care home (provider's home and maximum of six children) with a child care center (a large number of children in a separate building). Or the objection is based on some concern about the impact of having a family child care home in the neighborhood. Typical concerns are discussed below.

Traffic. Family child care providers tend to serve all the children in a family. Some families will have two or even three siblings in care. So, even if the provider serves six children, it is unlikely that six cars will come to the home during arrival and pick-up times. Providers can actively mitigate the effect of traffic by arranging a staggered arrival/departure schedule with parents, designating a parking area, and prohibiting double parking.

Noise. A family child care home with a full enrollment of six children would make no more or no less noise than another neighbor with a large family. If, however, the sounds of children playing outside became a concern for a specific neighbor, the provider could arrange her schedule to have outside play at a more convenient time (e.g., not allowing the children to play outside early in the morning).

Density. There may be a concern about having too many family child care homes in proximity. The concern is usually stated that one home is acceptable, but more than one in the same neighborhood will influence noise or traffic. We respect the communities right to address this issue but ask that a cautious approach be used. For example, more than one family child care home in an apartment complex could be useful to working families in the complex without adding much noise or traffic. It is also important to avoid applying density restrictions intended for child care centers to the smaller family child care home setting

Property Values. Today for most families with children, a child care program close to home is an asset to the neighborhood. And a family child care provider's home is primarily a home. It is the place where the provider and her family live. Other than the creation of a safe and attractive outdoor play area, the appearance of the home will not likely change.

***More About Us-We Are Here to Help**

The **Explore-FCC** project is available to provide coaching and other support to individuals in Greater Atlanta seeking to open a Family Child Care Learning Home (FCCLH). **Explore-FCC** serves the 13 counties greater Atlanta area with priority on zip codes with low or very low scores on Child Well-being measures established by United Way of Greater Atlanta. **Explore-FCC** helps individuals who are in the early stage of exploring family child care as a career, as well as those applying for a license to open an FCCLH home. The **Explore-FCC** project is operated by the Professional Family Child Care Alliance of Georgia (PFCCAG) and funded by United Way of Greater Atlanta. For more information and to see if you qualify for one-on-one coaching, go to <https://www.pfccag.org/start>. We're here to be of service as you travel this journey of opening a Family Child Care Learning Home.

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**Adapted from A Child Care Advocacy Guide to Land Use Principles, Child Care Law Center Inc., 2003

*** Adapted from Legal Issues for Family Child Care Providers in California: Housing and Property, Child Care Law Center Inc, Revised 2005