

# Family Child Care Newsletter

October 2022

Wright County Health & Human Services



## Mission Statement

- *Strengthen*
- *Support*
- *Serve*

*our  
Community...*

The Child Care Wayfinder is a collaboration between the MN Department of Human Services and Child Care Aware of MN with the goal of creating a one-stop navigation network for starting and growing child care programs. If you are interested in growing your business by changing your license class to increase capacity, we encourage you to reach out to a navigator to see what resources are available to you to make this transition.

[Home - CCA Wayfinder \(childcarewayfinder.org\)](http://childcarewayfinder.org)

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## 2022 Legislative Changes

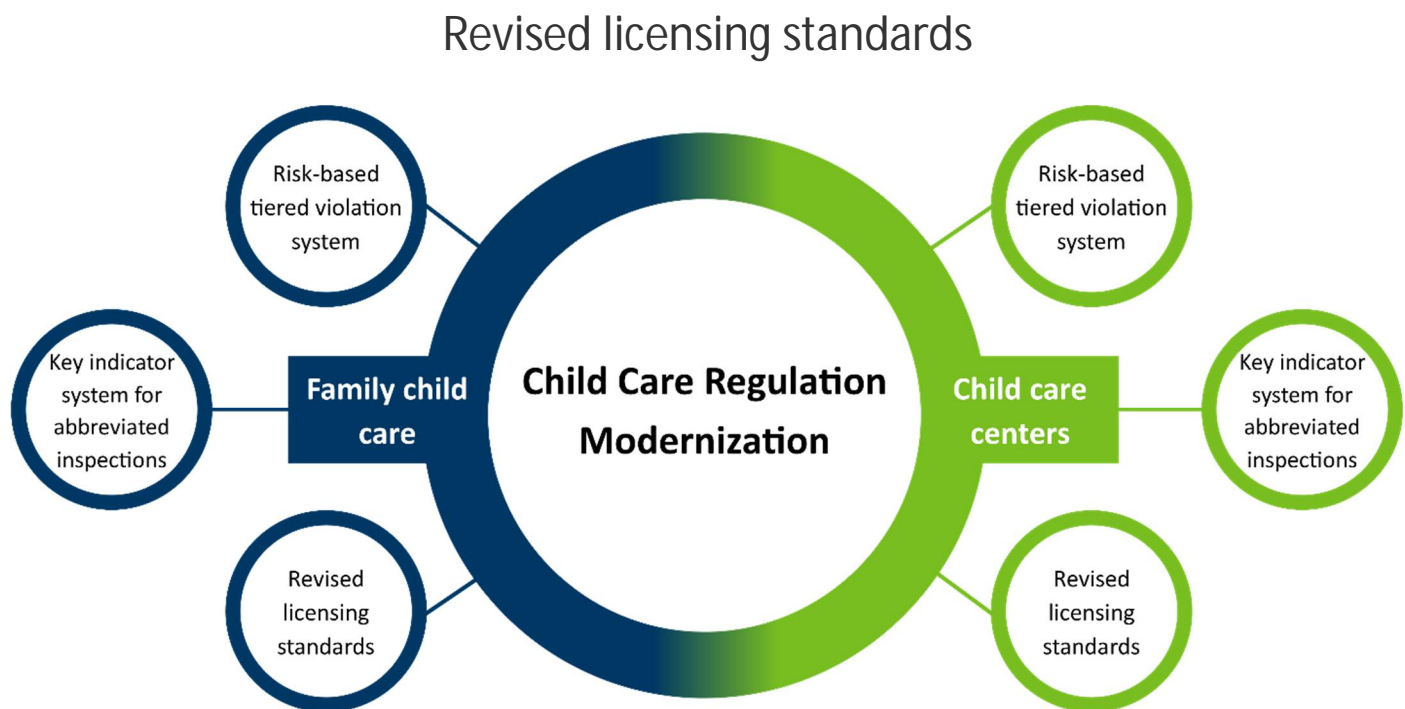
It is nice to have a year without many legislative changes! Below please find the Implementation Plan for 2022. As a license holder it is your responsibility to be aware of changes that affect you or your license. Please review the plan and reach out with any questions.

[Family Child Care Implementation Plan for 2022 Legislative Changes](#)

# Family Child Care Regulation Modernization Project

In 2021, the Minnesota legislature passed legislation and allocated federal funding to support regulation modernization projects for both licensed family child care and child care centers ([MN Laws 2021, First Special Session, Chapter 7, Article 2, sections 75 and 81](#)). The regulation modernization projects support the development of three components:

- Key indicator systems for abbreviated inspections
- Risk-based tiered violation systems



Over the summer stakeholder engagement opportunities were held for both licensors and providers as part of this process. If you were unable to participate but would like to know what was discussed, you can read through the [participation slides](#). More information can also be found on the [DHS licensing page](#).



# CENTER FOR INCLUSIVE CHILD CARE

## Tip Sheets

### Meeting the Needs of Multiple Ages in Family Child Care



Children may experience the benefits of an early childhood program setting with a group of children of various ages—including

infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school-age children. This is most common in family child care, but may also occur in classrooms with a smaller age range, such as three- to five-year-olds, grouped together. In a mixed-age setting, children can form meaningful relationships that build a community among children, caregivers, and parents.

#### Benefits of Mixed-Age Grouping

##### Family-Style Environment

Many children are raised in a family with older and/or younger siblings. Having this familiar family-style experience of multiple ages in the care setting helps enhance a child's sense of trust and comfort. Mixed-age grouping also benefits children and families because children from a single family can remain together in the care setting over time.

##### Opportunities for Cross-Age Learning

Mixed-age grouping exposes younger children to the knowledge and abilities of the older children in the program. Children can observe, emulate, and learn from the activities and behavior of older children, which is typically beyond that which peers could provide. Older children learn by teaching and gain a sense of responsibility for other people.

*Caregivers do not need to force children to play together, but can simply provide the opportunity to interact with older or younger children.*

##### A Positive Social Environment

In a mixed-age group, younger children are more likely to participate in more advanced activities than they would if they were by themselves.

"Children need opportunities not only to observe and imitate a wide range of competencies, but also to find companions among their peers who match, complement, or supplement their interests in different ways."

Providers can help create a positive social environment as older children interact with younger ones. Young children who are nurtured by older children are more likely to emulate these actions when they eventually become the older children.

##### Continuity of Care from Infancy to School Age

Familiarity with a caregiver helps children of all ages develop confidence and trust. Mixed age settings allow children to stay with one provider over an extended period of time. This is especially important for infants and toddlers.

#### Challenges of Mixed Age Groupings

Caring for multiple ages can present challenges for providers. Providers must:

- Understand/promote expectations across the developmental spectrum for a range of ages.
- Address children's individual needs and differences, no matter the setting in which they are working with mixed-age groups.
- Pay close attention to the strengths and challenges of each child and relate those to the appropriate indicators.

- Remember that child development varies greatly across the early years, and children will not develop skills/capabilities simultaneously.

#### Using ECIPs in Mixed-Age Groupings

Using Early Childhood Indicators of Progress (ECIPs) to observe, document, and plan curriculum for each child will help obtain the benefits of mixed-ages while overcoming the challenges.

ECIPs are listed across domains and age groups so providers can identify where a child is presently performing and what's next in their development. Observation, documentation, and planning related to ECIPs is essential. Mixed-age caregivers should:

- Observe children as they care for them.
- Record observations as necessary as a point of referral when relating it back to ECIPs.
- Use this documentation to assist with planning education experiences for the children.
- Utilize the different domains as a guide to plan activities that build skills for every child regardless of age and skill level.

Single-age groups can create pressure for children to reach certain milestones. The above steps will help providers recognize and care for each child as an individual with unique capabilities while unifying indicators across ages of the children in their care.

#### Planning Appropriate Curriculum

Providers must plan and implement developmentally appropriate curriculum based on each individual child as well as the program's curriculum goals. This includes:

- Developmentally appropriate methods such as play, small group projects, and cooperative learning to help children develop curiosity, solve problems, and make decisions.

- Creating and implementing meaningful integrated learning experiences using children's ideas, needs, interests, and culture.

#### Multi-Age Environments

To create a learning environment that meets needs across the age ranges consider:

- Safety for all ages served.
- Play and quiet spaces that provide options for a variety of developmental skills and needs.
- Space for infant and toddler motor exploration.
- Open-ended materials/learning experiences.

#### Open-Ended Experiences

Open-ended experiences offer many materials, play, and learning opportunities that address varying goals. This strategy helps with curriculum planning for mixed-age groups because multiple children with a range of skills can be successful in individual ways. On the contrary, when experiences address only one specific goal, children may succeed or fail, leading to more frustration.

#### Additional Resources

How to Care for Infants and Toddlers in Groups  
<https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/77-how-to-care-for-infants-and-toddlers-in-groups>

Early Childhood Indicators of Progress (ECIPs)  
<https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/early>

For more information, visit [www.inclusivechildcare.org](http://www.inclusivechildcare.org).

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[www.inclusivechildcare.org](http://www.inclusivechildcare.org)

## Directive for Alternate Infant Sleep Position

One of the changes for 2022 allowed for more professionals to be able to sign off on the Directive for Alternate Infant Sleep Position. The form has been updated to reflect that it now can be completed by a physician, APRN or PA. The form has been updated on the DHS website and the Wright County website. Please begin using the new form if you have a need.

[DHS-7216-ENG \(Directive for the Alternative Infant Sleep Position\) \(state.mn.us\)](https://state.mn.us/dhs/7216-ENG)



### Health and Safety I and II



This is your last reminder to complete Health and Safety I and II if you have not done so in the last 5 years. These trainings are required every 5 years for license holders. The 6-hour Supervising for Safety training also meets this requirement. Below are some upcoming training options:

- Health and Safety I—Monday, Oct 10<sup>th</sup> in Big Lake—Event ID: 386320
- Health and Safety I—Thursday, Oct 13<sup>th</sup> in Litchfield—Event ID: 387222
- Health and Safety II—Monday, Oct 17<sup>th</sup> in Big Lake—Event ID: 386328
- Health and Safety II—Thursday, Oct 20<sup>th</sup> in Litchfield—Event ID: 387223
- Health and Safety I—Monday, November 7<sup>th</sup> on-line—Event ID: 388990 or 381891
- Health and Safety II—Wednesday, November 9<sup>th</sup> on-line—Event ID: 381900 or 388993
- Health and Safety I—Monday, November 21<sup>st</sup> on-line—Event ID: 382775
- Health and Safety II—Monday, November 28<sup>th</sup> on-line—Event ID: 382777
- Health and Safety I—Monday, December 5<sup>th</sup> on-line—Event ID: 381894
- Health and Safety I—Tuesday, December 6<sup>th</sup> in Elk River—Event ID: 387266
- Health and Safety II—Tuesday, December 6<sup>th</sup> on-line—Event ID: 381901
- Health and Safety II—Thursday, December 8<sup>th</sup> in Elk River—Event ID: 387267
- Health and Safety I—Monday, December 12<sup>th</sup> on-line—Event ID: 382829
- Health and Safety II—Tuesday, December 13<sup>th</sup> on-line—Event ID: 382872
- Health and Safety I—Monday, December 19<sup>th</sup> on-line—Event ID: 388995
- Health and Safety II—Wednesday, December 21<sup>st</sup> on-line—Event ID: 389000