

Dear Parent,

Thank you for contacting Colorado Shines Child Care Referral at Mile High United Way, a partner of The Office of Early Childhood, for your child care referral. We hope that you find the referral process helpful, informative and most importantly, we hope that you will find a child care center or family child care home that meets your family's needs.

Please take a few minutes to fill out the attached Intake Form, save it and send it back. We will conduct a search for providers in your area that may meet your needs. You will have a referral list as soon as possible but within one business day of returning the Intake Form.

Children's early years are very important. That is why parents must demand the best care for them. Choosing child care for your young child should be a positive experience for your family. Attached, please find the document, "Working Your Way Through The Child Care Maze."

This workbook will provide you with questions to ask and information about Identifying characteristics of quality child care programs.

You've determined your needs and contacted your local Child Care Resource and Referral Agency (MHUW Child Care Options) to obtain a list of child care providers that may meet your specifications.

**Ask Questions.** Once you have a list of child care providers prepare questions and begin the phone interview process. Our referral specialists can provide examples of questions to ask.

**Visit.** Narrow your list to a handful providers. Visit each facility or home. Meet with the providers or center directors, and tour the facilities.

**Investigate and Enroll.** Before making your final decision, review the providers' licensing history by calling the Colorado Division of Child Care at: **1.800.799.5876** or via web by following the instructions below.

Visit <https://gateway.cdhs.state.co.us/cccls/PublicFileReview.aspx>.

1. When prompted, select "parent" and type in your zip code.
2. Select the "License Number" tab from the second row of tabs.
3. Enter the provider's license number (our resource and referrals specialists can provide you with this information).
4. Select "View" from the right hand side of the next page to see the providers licensing file.

Please be advised that violations and complaints are rated on a scale of zero to five. A rating of zero indicates the most severe violation and a rating of five indicates a minor violation. If you would like more information contact the Colorado Office of Early Childhood, Division of Early Care and Learning at 303.866.6029 or [cdhs\\_oec\\_pbfr@state.co.us](mailto:cdhs_oec_pbfr@state.co.us) to request files of the licensed facility you are considering. Files will be ready in approximately 72 hours.

**Stay Involved.** Be part of your children's learning experience. Speak with your children and their teachers often about how they are doing at home and school. At home, read to your children and help them explore the world around.



# HELPFUL INFORMATION

**To apply for benefits, such as CCCAP, in your county:**

[www.colorado.gov/PEAK](http://www.colorado.gov/PEAK)

**Information about Dependent Care – Flexible Spending Accounts:**

<http://www.asiflex.com/>

**Child Tax Credit:**

<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/tax/income-tax-credits>

**Early Development Guidelines**

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

**Child Care search and Quality Child Care Information:**

[www.coloradoshines.com](http://www.coloradoshines.com)

[Colorado Shines at Mile High United Way](#)



*Bright by Text is a free tips-by-text program for Colorado parents and caregivers of children aged 0-3. Bright by Text messages include learning games, health, safety and development tips, and information about language learning and positive discipline. Learn more*

**To contact Colorado Shines Child Care Referral at Mile High United Way:**

[childcarereferrals@unitedwaydenver.org](mailto:childcarereferrals@unitedwaydenver.org)

Dial 1.877.338.2273 or 303.561.2244

To view PDF files, please download Adobe Reader at: <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>

## CHILD CARE REFERRAL PROGRAM DISCLAIMER

All of the referred providers are licensed by the Colorado Office of Early Childhood, Division of Early Care and Learning. Beyond verifying licenses, our office does not endorse or recommend any providers, nor do we monitor quality or screen provider files. Only parents can determine whether particular child care arrangements are appropriate for their children. It is up to the parents to monitor any child care setting that they choose for their children. Locating the best possible care for your child can take time. "Steps to Finding Quality Care in Your Community" can be used as a guide when interviewing and visiting providers. **We highly encourage parents to ask for and to check references. Never leave children in any center or home if you are told that parents are not welcome to drop in at any time, unannounced. Never leave your child anywhere without having spent some time with the prospective child care provider.** The Colorado Office of Early Childhood, Division of Early Care and Learning keeps a file including licensing records and information about complaints and violations for each licensed home and center. These files are open to the public, and we encourage you to take the time to request a Summary Report and the most recent Report of Inspection on the providers you are considering prior to making a decision about your child's care. The Summary Report will list complaints and/or negative licensing actions that a provider has had. A more detailed report can also be requested specific to a given complaint number. To request these licensing reports, call 1.800.799.5876 or visit [www.colorado.gov/childcaresearch](http://www.colorado.gov/childcaresearch)