

ASAP

ACCESSING SUPPORT FOR ALL PARENTS



**EXPLORING
YOUR
CHILD CARE
CHOICES**



ChildCareAware[®]
America's most trusted child care resource.

ACCESSING SUPPORT FOR ALL PARENTS

ASAP

Child Care Aware is a program of the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. NACCRRA and Child Care Aware would like to acknowledge Cathy Myers, of the Family and Home Network, for her generous contribution to the development of this guide.

Design by: Kim Leaird, Leaird Designs

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For more child care information:
1-800-424-2246
tty: 1-866-278-9428
www.ChildCareAware.org

ACCESSING SUPPORT FOR ALL PARENTS

INTRODUCTION

The decision to stay at home or return to work is not easy.

Child Care Aware's *Accessing Support for All Parents (ASAP)* project will help families look at the many factors involved in their child care options.



The *ASAP Decision-Making Tool* will allow families to:

- consider important areas of their lives that will be affected by child care decisions;
- examine their feelings about their child care options; and
- seek the most appropriate resources and support for those choices.

Some questions you may be thinking of as you begin this process are:

- Will I continue my full-time employment? If I do, who

will care for my child? If I don't, what do I need to know about being a stay-at-home parent?

- What does my child need?
- What can my family afford? What other factors should I consider?
- Where do I find more information?
- What do other parents do?
- How may my personal relationships be affected by this choice?
- What child care is available in my area?

If you have questions like these, the ASAP project may be of assistance to you.

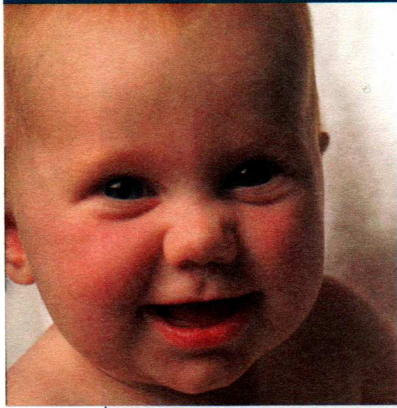


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THINGS TO CONSIDER

...ABOUT CHILD CARE



The Decision-Making Tool "Consideration" section offers you the chance to review important topics when looking at your child care options. They are:

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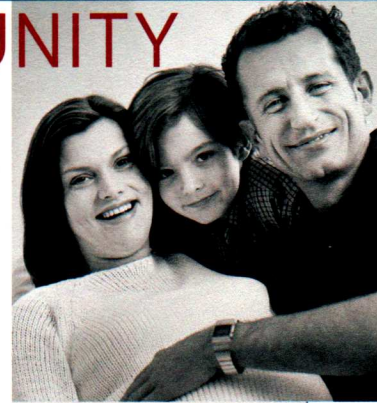
1. Support: Family, Friends, Community, Government
2. Your Child's Needs
3. Relationships
4. Finances
5. Work Assessment

Each family has unique qualities. There are many quality child care choices that work for children and parents. Although most of the following examples are explained in terms of two-parent families, single parents may use the same strategies by teaming up with extended family members, friends, or other single parents to share caregiving/income-earning responsibilities. Here are some strategies families use:

- **One parent at home — one parent leaves the paid workforce to care for the child(ren) while the other parent has a job with pay.** In a single parent family, the parent may get help by using federal, state, or local assistance programs.
- **Full time child care —** A single parent works full-time or both parents work full-time during regular daytime hours. With this option the family uses full-time quality child care.
- **Tag-team parenting —** Two parents working full-time can provide most or even all of the care for their child themselves, by working different hours.

- **Part-time employment —** Parents remain employed, but both cut back to part-time hours. If possible, each parent works 2/3 time and shares the child care responsibility or uses part-time quality child care.
- **Full-time employment plus —** One parent is working full-time, the other earns income part-time (through part-time work with regular hours or a home-based business).
- **Single parent network —** In a single parent family, two or more families, with alternating work schedules, could develop a child care co-op where they agree to care for each other's children. This may help all families financially.
- **Family help —** Single (and two) parent families are also able to use relative care. Family members take on a caregiving role while parent returns to work.

...FAMILY, FRIENDS, COMMUNITY



A strong network will support you and your child and help provide emotional and practical assistance. Some parents are fortunate to have extended family members who are supportive and live close by. Others may make new friends and strengthen connections in their community.

It may take time and effort to create a child care network, so be persistent! Parent education groups and parent-child focused activities are good places to meet new friends with children. Remember that people of all ages and all stages of life can be part of your community.

Explore other sources of support through services offered by government agencies at the local, state and national levels. Seek information from a variety of sources — try the library, human services offices, your local Child Care Resource and Referral agency, school systems, physicians, and community publications for families. Religious communities are also a good source of support for families.

As you think about the support and connections you already have and how to strengthen that network, here are some questions to consider:

Family:

Who else in my family is involved in this child care decision? Is there anyone else I/we might want to include? How might family members help?

What can other family members do to support my/our child care decision?

Do I feel comfortable discussing this with family members? If not, do I know why?

Friends:

How can I turn to my friends who don't have children for support?

How do I turn to my friends who are parents for support?

Community:

What support opportunities are available to families in my area?

Are there parent education resources in my area?

(If you belong to a religious community): What is available through my place of worship?

Government:

Are there any government programs that can support my choice?

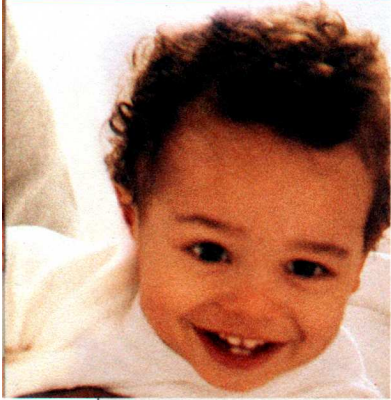
Remember that people of all ages and all stages of life can be part of your community.

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YOUR CHILD'S NEEDS

...HEALTHY GROWTH



Learning about what children need for healthy growth is an essential part of making a decision about your child's care.

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Children are born needing basic care (food and warmth). They also need the kind of nurturing and attention that is not easy to measure or describe. Doctors and researchers have been working hard to understand and explain children's needs. Learning about what children need for healthy growth is an essential part of making a decision about your child's care.

Several years ago, at a White House conference on young children's brain development, this question was asked:

What types of early experiences are vital for intellectual and emotional growth — and how much of each is necessary?

In response, two of our nation's leading doctors, pediatrician T. Berry Brazelton, M.D., and child psychiatrist Stanley I. Greenspan, M.D., co-authored a book.* Based on their many years of research, clinical practice and teaching, they explain the things infants and toddlers need in order to "grow, learn and flourish" — calling these things the "irreducible needs." They are:

- 1) Ongoing Nurturing Relationships
- 2) Physical Protection, Safety and Regulation
- 3) Experiences Tailored to Individual Differences

- 4) Developmentally Appropriate Experiences
- 5) Limit Setting, Structure and Expectations
- 6) Stable, Supportive Communities and Cultural Continuity

While *all* the "needs" are important, the first — the need for ongoing nurturing relationships — is the basis of emotional growth. As the doctors explain, emotional growth comes first and is critical for intellectual and moral growth. In other words, if children feel loved and have a good foundation with a primary caregiver, they are better able to learn and care about themselves and others as they grow older.

Although these suggestions were aimed at the specific needs of infants and toddlers, it is important to remember that all children continue to grow and develop through supportive or nurturing relationships. Quality child care programs and those in which parents and providers work together will allow for the ongoing development of these nurturing relationships.

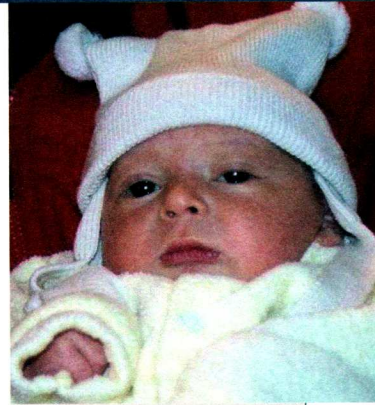
You will find resources at the end of this pamphlet on the development of children from birth to school age. Not only will this developmental information help you understand and nurture your child, it will be helpful to you as you look at the quality of child care settings you may consider.

*The book referenced above is: *The Irreducible Needs of Children: What Every Child Must Have to Grow, Learn and Flourish* by T. Berry Brazelton, M.D. and Stanley I. Greenspan, M.D. (Perseus Books, October 2000).

FOR ALL PARENTS

RELATIONSHIPS

...FINDING A BALANCE



Becoming a parent brings big changes to people's lives. If you're wondering how your decisions about caring for your child might affect your marriage/partnership, you're not alone. This decision will also change other significant relationships in your life — with friends, extended family, co-workers. Other parents can tell you about their personal experiences — you can read books and/or ask parents in your community. Hearing others' stories might help you be prepared for some new feelings, as well as other issues you might face.

As you think about your relationships, here are some questions to consider:

- *What were our roles before our child was born?*
- *What will have to change now that we are parents?*
- *How will these roles change if one of us stays home or cuts back on paid work to care for our child(ren)?*
- *How will these roles change if each of us keeps the same paid employment we had before our child was born?*
- *How will my relationships with my spouse/children/family/friends be impacted based on our child care decision?*
- *What if I choose to stay home and I am jealous of my spouse? What if my spouse is jealous of the time I spend with our child?*
- *What if our family/friends/peers do not agree with our decision?*
- *What if I am jealous of my friends/peers who are working/have chosen to stay home with their children?*

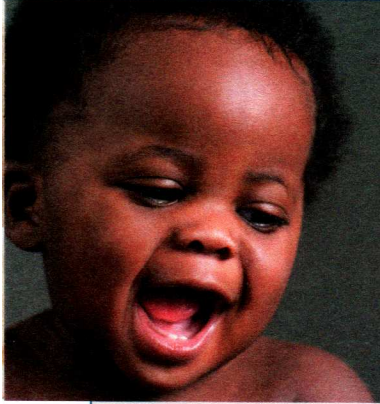
Becoming a parent brings big changes to people's lives.

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FINANCES

...A REALISTIC LOOK



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Planning, living on a budget, and hard work all play a big part in a family's child care decision.

People vary greatly in how they handle the financial aspects of their lives.

Whatever your income, a realistic look at your family's finances will help you understand the role money plays in your decisions about child care.

Families with various incomes make child care choices in different ways. No matter what a family's child care choice, they have developed strategies that are best suited to their individual situation. Planning, living on a budget, and hard work all play a big part in a family's child care decision.

The following financial worksheet can help review your family's expenses and determine how various caregiving/income-earning arrangements will affect your finances. Remember to think about future costs of cutting back on income (for instance, less income may mean having less retirement savings, loss of disability insurance coverage and employer-provided life insurance for the parent not employed full-time).

Here are some questions to consider:

- *What are our family expenses/monthly budget?*
- *Can we reduce or get rid of certain expenses?*
- *How much income do we need to meet our budget?*
- *What does child care cost in my area?*
- *How will having a child change our taxes?*
- *Might we be eligible for an Earned Income Tax Credit?*
- *Is our family eligible for any assistance with child care expenses?*
- *If one parent stays home, will he/she be able to earn part-time income?*
- *Other than earning income, what are some other ways an at-home parent can contribute to a family's financial well-being?*

It may be helpful to complete the following budgeting tool twice — once for all adults working and once for one adult staying home to care for your child(ren).

BUDGETING OUR CHILD CARE OPTIONS

INCOME:

	INCOME 1 (Base)	INCOME 2 (Additional)
TOTAL MONTHLY INCOME:		

MONTHLY EXPENSES:

HOUSING

Rent/Mortgage	
Insurance	

UTILITIES

Phone	
TV	
Electricity	
Gas	
Water	
Garbage	

GROCERIES

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ENTERTAINMENT

Cell Phone		
Internet		
Movie/Video Rental		
Dining Out		
Newspaper/Magazine Subscriptions		

AUTOMOBILE

Notes/Loans		
Gas		
Insurance		
Maintenance		

CHILD CARE

Cost of Care		
Supplies		
Allowances		

WORK RELATED COSTS

Lunch		
Coffee		
Office Parties		
Public Transportation		
Parking		

SCHOOL (school-aged children, if applicable)

Supplies		
Lunches		
Field Trips		

CREDIT CARDS

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PERSONAL (include all family members)

Clothing		
Hair		
Makeup		
Cleaning		
Fitness		

HEALTH CARE

Medical		
Dentist		
Insurance		
Other		

INVESTMENTS

401(k)/Retirement Fund		
Savings		

NEW BABY EXPENSES

Diapers		
Formula		
Wipes		
Extras (Toys/Furniture/etc.)		

OTHER EXPENSES

--	--	--

TOTAL EXPENSES:

--	--	--

**INCOME 1 -
TOTAL EXPENSES =**

--	--	--

**INCOME 1 +
INCOME 2 -
TOTAL EXPENSES =**

--	--	--

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WORK ASSESSMENT

...A REALISTIC LOOK



Whether parents make the decision to stay home to care for their child or return to work, they find themselves thinking about the many changes that are taking place in their lives.

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Families who find themselves in the child care decision-making process also find themselves looking at many aspects of their lives, and the changes that are taking place. One of these areas is **career development**.

Before becoming a parent, a person may have certain ideas about a career path and the direction he or she would like it to take. After a child arrives, that path could take a dramatic turn, leaving a career-driven person longing to stay home to care for his or her child. On the other hand, if that career path stays its course, parents will also need to consider their options for caring for their child.

Whether parents make the decision to stay home to care for their child or return to work, they find themselves thinking some of the following:

- *What would be the ideal way for our family to care for our child(ren)?*
- *How strongly is my happiness and identity tied to my career?*

- *Can I arrange to have flexible work hours? To cut back to part-time work? How easy/difficult would it be to resume my career after a break away from it?*
- *If I choose to stay home, how will I feel about not bringing home a paycheck?*
- *Will my spouse/partner value the time I spend nurturing our child and the unpaid work I do for our family?*
- *If I don't work out of the home, am I confident that my spouse will continue to view me as an equal partner, especially with regard to financial decisions?*
- *If I stay in the workforce, how confident am I in the child care arrangements I've found for my child?*
- *How flexible is my employer? My spouse's employer? Do either (or both) of us travel on business?*

FOR ALL PARENTS

QUALITY CHILD CARE OPTIONS

...IN YOUR AREA



As part of the child care decision-making process, it will help to have a realistic idea of the type and quality of child care available to you. Whether you're looking for full-time or part-time child care, you must learn how to assess the safety and quality of any child care situation you're considering. Here are some of the questions you may have:

- *Who do I talk to about finding child care?*
- *What should I know about quality child care? What does it look like?*
- *Is one type of child care better than others?*
- *What if a family member has offered to provide care – what should I know about safety and other issues? What if I disagree with something this person does with my child?*
- *What care is available in my area?*

Child Care Aware provides information that can help answer these questions, and more. Brochures on many topics related to child care are available by mail or via the website. To request them or receive more information about your local Child Care Resource and Referral agency please call Child Care Aware at 1-800-424-2246 or visit www.ChildCareAware.org.

Child Care Aware, a program of the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, is committed to helping parents find the best information on locating quality child care and child care resources in their community. This is done by raising visibility for local Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agencies nationwide, and by connecting parents with the local agencies best equipped to serve their needs.

Local CCR&R agencies help parents take the guesswork out of choosing care — providing referrals to local child care providers, information on state licensing requirements, availability of child care subsidies, and other pertinent information. CCR&Rs provide guidance that is tailored to each individual family, by phone, in person, or on the internet.

Whether you're looking for full-time or part-time child care, you must learn how to assess the safety and quality of any child care situation you're considering.

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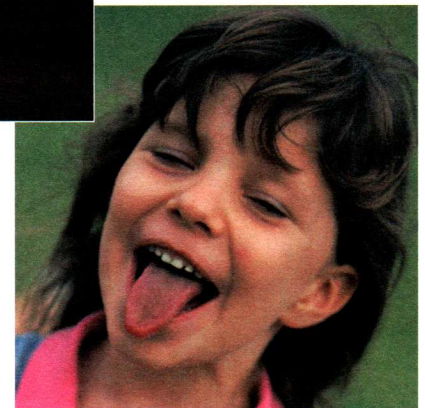
A CHILD CARE DECISION

THAT WORKS FOR *YOUR* FAMILY

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After you consider the questions and information from the “Consideration” section and whatever other questions that have occurred to you, take some time to examine your thoughts and feelings. Then make the best decision for your family at this time. As your family’s needs change, you can return to the Family Decision-Making Tool to help re-evaluate your family’s needs and options. Whatever arrangements you make for your child to have quality care, Child Care Aware’s ASAP project offers you resources and support.



FOR ALL PARENTS RESOURCES

...AND SUPPORT

Below you will find the name, website, and phone number for resources that will assist in your child care decision-making process. In addition to the following resources, don't forget to access your local library, community center, religious organization, medical professionals and Child Care Resource and Referral agency. These places may provide general information and support to you as a parent.

The following descriptions indicate how the resources relate to the Decision-Making Tool:

F- Finances; S-Support; R- Relationships; W - Work Assessment; C - Your Child's Needs

National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA) —

Provides resources that include: Child Care Aware, Parent Central, Americorps/Vista subsidy program, military child care assistance programs, and the Daily Parent newsletter. NACCRRA has ongoing programs that support families, child care providers, local CCR&Rs, and public policy. **(S)**

3101 Wilson Blvd. Suite 350
Arlington, VA 22201
Phone: 703-341-4100
www.naccrra.org

National Child Care Information Center —

A national clearinghouse and technical assistance center that links parents, providers, policy-makers, researchers, and the public to early care and education information. **(S)**

10530 Rosehaven St., Suite 400
Fairfax, VA 22030
Phone: (800) 616-2242
TTY: (800) 516-2242
<http://nccic.org/>

National Association for the Education of Young Children — The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is dedicated to improving the well-being of all young children, particularly from birth through age 8. **(S,C)**

1509 16th St. N.W.
Washington, DC 20036
P: (202) 232-8777
Toll Free: (800) 424-2460
<http://www.naeyc.org/>

Future of Children — An organization that seeks to promote effective policies and



Don't forget to access your local library, community centers, religious organizations, medical professionals and CCR&Rs.

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ACCESSING SUPPORT RESOURCES

...AND SUPPORT



programs for children by providing policymakers, service providers, and the media with timely, objective information based on the best available research. **(S, C)**

FOC@princeton.edu

<http://www.futureofchildren.org/>

Zero to Three — A nonprofit organization that promotes the healthy development of infants and toddlers by supporting and strengthening families, communities, and those who work on their behalf. **(C, R)**

2000 M. St. NW, Suite 200

Washington, DC 20036

P: (202) 638-1144

For Publications: 1-800-899-4301

www.zerotothree.org

National Fatherhood Initiative — A nonprofit, non-sectarian, nonpartisan organization sponsoring public awareness campaigns that promote responsible fatherhood. **(S, C, R)**

101 Lake Forest Boulevard

Suite 360

Gaithersburg, Maryland 20877

Phone: (301) 948-0599

www.fatherhood.org

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA): Food and Nutrition — Information on dietary health, food safety, child nutrition programs, food pyramid, and more. **(C)**

1400 Independence Ave.

Washington, D.C. 20250

202-720-2791

USDA HOTLINES:

Food and Nutrition Service:

Food Stamp Hotline 1-800-221-5689

Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion:

Publication Hotline 202-606-8000

Food Safety and Inspection Service:

<http://www.fsis.usda.gov>

Meat & Poultry Hotline 202-720-3333

<http://usda.gov>

Money Central — A part of msn.com that focuses on various financial issues from banking information to budgeting tips and retirement advice. **(F)**

<http://Moneycentral.msn.com>

Essortment Articles — A website that offers articles on various topics at no charge to the user. The area of Family & Parenting was used for this project. **(All subject areas)**

<http://essortment.com>

FOR ALL PARENTS

RESOURCES

...AND SUPPORT



Mommysavers — A website targeted to mothers with tips on living well for less money. Coupons, resources, low-cost activity ideas, as well as shopping and financial advice are available online. **(F, S)**

www.mommysavers.com

Babycenter — An online resource guide for families. The website offers resources, developmental guidelines, a message board for parents, articles, and advice from professionals. **(All subject areas)**

www.babycenter.com

Spencer and Waters — An online resource for parents. Areas of parenting covered include at home parenting, home-based businesses, and work and family issues. **(S)**

P: 1-800-711-3627

www.spencerandwaters.com/calculate.html

Mothers and More — A non-profit support organization for mothers. **(S)**

P.O. Box 31

Elmhurst, IL 60126

Phone: (630) 941-3553

www.mothersandmore.org

MSN Groups — Free websites that are created and managed by individuals. These groups offer support systems. For the purpose of this project, we looked at the Home & Families category. **(All subject areas)**

<http://groups.msn.com/styathomeparents/newcomersguide.msnw>

Parents Magazine **(All subject areas)**

Customer Service

P: 515-244-1832

www.parents.com

Parenting Magazine **(All subject areas)**

Customer Service

PO Box 60001

Tampa, FL 33660-0001

P: 1-800-234-0847

www.parenting.com

International MOMS Club — an

international organization designed to offer

support to stay-at-home mothers. The

organization has over 2,000 local chapters. **(S)**

1464 Madera Rd. #N 191

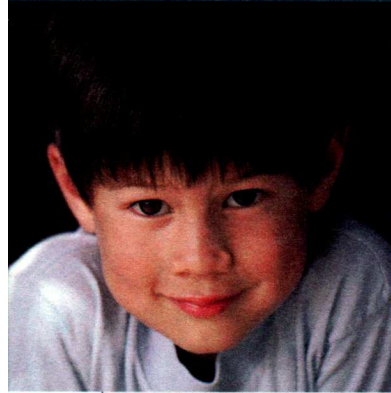
Simi Valley, CA 93065

www.momsclub.org

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ACCESSING SUPPORT RESOURCES

...AND SUPPORT



MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers) — An organization with local groups that offer support to mothers. Other resources include books, an online radio program, a monthly publication, and the MOPS to Mom Connection membership. **(S)**

2370 South Trenton Way
Denver, CO 80231-3822
P: Toll Free: 888-910-MOPS
Local: 303-695-1930
www.mops.org

Mocha Moms — A support group for stay-at-home mothers of color. **(S)**

Membership Processing Department
P.O. Box 10207
Staten Island, NY 10301
www.mochamoms.org

Family and Home Network — A national organization that offers encouragement, information and affirmation to at-home mothers and fathers through articles from their online publication Welcome Home. In addition, other resources and sources of support, as well as public policy information are offered. **(S,R)**

P.O. Box 545
Merrifield, VA 22116
(703) 352-1072
www.familyandhome.org

SlowLane — An online network for Stay At Home Dads (SAHD) and their families. These resources include information on local support groups for dads, as well as information and support for dads at home caring for their children. **(All subject areas)**

1216 East Lee Street
Pensacola Florida, 32503
(850) 434-2626
www.slowlane.com

At Home Parent — An online resource designed by a stay-at-home mother, providing links to articles, activity ideas, and financial information. **(All subject areas)**

www.athomeparent.com

PBS: PBSkids and PBSparents —

Information, games, activities, and parenting advice offered on website for the Public Broadcasting Service. **(S,C,R)**

<http://www.pbs.org>
<http://www.pbs.org/parents/>

FOR ALL PARENTS RESOURCES

...AND SUPPORT



Dole "5 a Day" — A program encouraging children and their families to eat 5 to 9 servings of fruits and vegetables a day for good health. **(S)**

One Dole Drive
Westlake Village, CA 91362
P: (818) 879-6772
<http://www.dole5aday.com/>

Family TLC: Tools to Enhance the Parent/Child Relationship — A resource providing busy adults with resources to encourage learning and enrich relationships with their children. **(C, R)**

1-800-677-6644
<http://www.familytlc.net/>

Club Mom — ClubMom is a national organization for moms. The membership to Club Mom offers resources and support to mothers, as well as incentives for shopping at particular retailers. **(All subject areas)**

1-800-CLUBMOM (1-800-258-2666)
www.clubmom.com

Dad Stays Home — An online community with support, resources, and information for stay-at-home dads. **(All subject areas)**

www.dadstayshome.com

Mr. Momz — An online resource for stay at home fathers providing support, information, and resources. **(S, C)**

mrmomz@mrmomz.com
www.mrmomz.com

Child Magazine **(All subject areas)**

Child Editorial Department
375 Lexington Avenue, 9th floor
New York, NY 10017
515-248-7690
<http://www.child.com>

Working Mother Magazine — A publication of Working Mother Media targeted toward mothers in the workforce **(W)**

P.O. Box 5240
Harlan, IA 51593
1-800-627-0690
www.workingmother.com

The resources listed in this booklet are intended to be used for informational purposes only. We are not responsible for the content on or maintenance of these resources.

For more information or resources, contact Child Care Aware at 1-800-424-2246 or www.childcareaware.org.

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ABOUT

NACCRRRA

NACCRRRA represents a network of more than 850 child care resource and referral agencies (CCR&Rs) located in every state and most communities across the United States. CCR&R agencies help families, child care providers, and communities find, provide, and plan for affordable, quality child care.

Since 1987, NACCRRRA has been working to improve early care and education for children by:

- Providing training, resources, and best practices standards to local and state CCR&Rs that support high quality, accountable services.
- Promoting national policies and partnerships that facilitate universal access to quality child care.

NACCRRRA is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) member organization of CCR&Rs and other organizations, businesses, and individuals interested in supporting our work and in receiving NACCRRRA reports and resources.

3101 Wilson Boulevard
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Arlington, VA 22201
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www.naccrra.org

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ASAP



ChildCareAware®
America's most trusted child care resource.


naccrrra
National Association of Child Care
Resource and Referral Agencies

 **Child Care Bureau**
Child Care Aware, a non-profit program of NACCRRRA, is funded through a cooperative agreement with the Child Care Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

