

**2-1-1 CHILD CARE
IS A PROGRAM OF:**

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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:

2-1-1 Child Care Launches Family Child Care Support Project

Rocky Hill, CT, July 31, 2007 –

A Resource for Home-Based Family Child Care Providers in Connecticut

Newly licensed family child care providers now have a free professional resource to help them successfully start or improve their child care business. The program gives providers the assistance they need, when they need it – early on and in their homes. From assistance on business issues such as creating contracts and advertising, to providing resources for communicating with families and guidance on age appropriate activities for children, this program provides a range of help. 2-1-1 Child Care is launching this free service to family child care providers across the state offering visits to their homes, phone and email consultations, information and referrals, resource materials, and follow-up if needed.

The decline in licensed family child care providers in Connecticut is creating a burden on working families across the state. Between 2000 and 2005 over 1,000 licensed family child care programs closed in Connecticut creating 6,300 fewer spaces. According to the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA) if every working parent in Connecticut with a child under age 6 needs child care, then an estimated 159,876 children would need care. With nearly 72,000 total spaces in licensed child care centers, over half of those children will receive care in a home-based setting.

“We recognize the vital role of licensed family child care providers as part of Connecticut’s early care workforce and the challenges they face. With this in mind, our goal of the project is to provide essential support and linkages to available resources to assist these providers in building and sustaining a successful child care business. Providing professional affiliations to a group that traditionally has been isolated will begin to address one area often cited as a factor in family child care provider turnover.” said Sherri Sutera, Senior Vice President of Child Care Services at the United Way of Connecticut who administers 2-1-1 Child Care.

How does this project work?

- A call to 2-1-1 will refer a licensed family child care provider to an Early Childhood Specialist in their area.
- The Early Childhood Specialist will set up a convenient visit or phone consultation to discuss the provider's areas of interest. Many providers find mornings or naptimes work best.
- Based on the areas of interest identified during the phone consultation, the Early Childhood Specialist prepares customized materials for the visit.
- After the visit, there is continued support via phone calls, email, or additional visits to their program.

What topics are covered?

- **Business Practices** such as contracts, policies, setting and collecting fees, and advertising.
- **Communicating with Families** including welcoming families into your program, discussing sensitive topics, and resolving conflicts.
- **Child growth and development** including social-emotional, physical, cognitive, and language.
- **Developmentally appropriate activities** for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school-age children.
- **Routines and scheduling** of drop-off/pick-up times, nap/rest times, meals and snacks, and diapering and toileting.
- **Effective environments** including assistance on safety, organizing toys, arranging furniture, and appropriate learning materials.

Simply dial 2-1-1 for more information on this new project or for other child care resources. To access our searchable database of providers or to access information available to child care consumers and early care professionals, go to www.211childcare.org.

About United Way of Connecticut/ 2-1-1

Did you know Connecticut 2-1-1 is one of the national models for connecting individuals to the valuable human services they need? This easy-to-use, free, and multilingual service provides anyone in Connecticut with a single access point to find child care providers, emergency shelter, substance abuse treatment, or volunteer services whether it is provided by federal, state, local governments, the private sector or nonprofit organizations.

2-1-1 is administered by the United Way of Connecticut and is a funded partnership of the Connecticut United Ways and the State of Connecticut. 2-1-1 provides toll-free information, referral, and crisis hotline support 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. In 2006 we provided service to nearly 700,000 calls and over 800,000 web visits.

About 2-1-1 Child care

Funded by the Department of Social Services, 2-1-1 Child care helps families obtain child care arrangements to best meet their needs. Child Care Referral Specialists educate parents about quality child care, provide early care professionals with technical assistance and resources, and maintains current listings of licensed and licensed-exempt care options in Connecticut. Last year 2-1-1 Child Care received almost 30,000 calls and over 130,000 web visits.

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