



# Early Learning Programs in Santa Clara County

**90% of a child's brain develops by age 5.** Regularly attending early learning programs prepares children to be fully ready for kindergarten. The **Santa Clara County Office of Education** has resources to help families and caregivers find programs that meet their needs.

Programs	California State Preschool Program (CSPP)	Head Start	Private Centers and Homes*	Transitional Kindergarten
<b>Ages</b>	3 and 4 year olds	3 and 4 year olds	Birth to 12	4 year olds
<b>Schedule</b>	Full-day options available	Full-day options available	Full-day options available	Full-day options available
<b>Cost</b>	Free or low-cost, based on family income and other factors	Free, based on family income	Varies by provider, subsidized vouchers may be available	Free to all
<b>Eligibility</b>	Must meet eligibility criteria	Must meet eligibility criteria	N/A	Open to all. Part of public school system

\*Centers and family homes can be licensed or license-exempt

(Adapted from CDE UPK Materials)

California State Preschool, Head Start, and Transitional Kindergarten are required to include an educational component that is developmentally appropriate and follows research-based standards/foundations. Private providers may use various educational practices. Some private providers use the same educational practices that are used by state-funded programs.

The **Quality Care Checklist** provides a list of questions that families can ask as they search for programs. Use the QR code to download the checklist.



## Find a program

The **Santa Clara County Childcare Resource & Referral (R&R) Program** provides free information to families about all program options below. The R&R does not administer programs.

<b>California State Preschool</b>	<b>Contact the Santa Clara County R&amp;R Program for locations and contact information</b> Phone: 669-212-5437    Email: <a href="mailto:childcarescc@sccoe.org">childcarescc@sccoe.org</a> Web: <a href="http://www.childcarescc.org">www.childcarescc.org</a>
<b>Head Start</b>	<b>Contact the Santa Clara County Office of Education, Early Learning Services Department</b> Phone: 408-453-6900    Email: <a href="mailto:HSReceptionist@sccoe.org">HSReceptionist@sccoe.org</a> Web: <a href="https://sccoe.to/ELS">https://sccoe.to/ELS</a>
<b>Private Centers and Homes</b>	<b>Contact the Santa Clara County R&amp;R Program for locations and contact information</b> Phone: 669-212-5437    Email: <a href="mailto:childcarescc@sccoe.org">childcarescc@sccoe.org</a> Web: <a href="http://www.childcarescc.org">www.childcarescc.org</a>
<b>Transitional Kindergarten</b>	<b>Visit your school district's enrollment webpage:</b> <a href="https://sccoe.to/MySchoolDistrict">https://sccoe.to/MySchoolDistrict</a>

## Santa Clara County Childcare Portal

The Santa Clara County Childcare Portal is an online search tool that allows families to immediately find licensed childcare and Pre-K programs throughout Santa Clara County. The website is managed by the **Santa Clara County Office of Education's Childcare Resource & Referral Program**.

- Access contact information for nearly 2,000 providers
- Search by program characteristics
- Learn about getting help with paying for care
- Free accounts for families who want to save their search results



### Early Learning Videos

Visit the Santa Clara County Office of Education's early learning YouTube playlist to find answers to frequently asked questions about early learning programs.



### Programs & Supports for Children with Disabilities

The **Inclusion Collaborative** offers free supports, resources, and referrals for both educators and families who serve children with disabilities and other needs.

**Contact Us:**

408-453-6651

[inclusionwarmline@sccoe.org](mailto:inclusionwarmline@sccoe.org)

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



# Quality Child Care

## Check List

Choosing who cares for your child is one of the most important decisions you'll make. This check list can help you look for quality when choosing child care.

### Why QUALITY MATTERS

Children in high quality early learning programs:

- ▶ Are better prepared for kindergarten,
- ▶ Get better grades in reading and in math,
- ▶ Are more likely to graduate from high school,
- ▶ Get higher paying jobs.

### High Quality Programs Offer:

- ▶ Small group size (no more than 3 infants, 4 toddlers or 8 preschoolers per adult)
- ▶ Fun learning activities and lessons
- ▶ Ongoing training for their teachers
- ▶ Clean and friendly childcare spaces
- ▶ Meaningful interactions between staff and children
- ▶ Supportive, inclusive programs that help a diverse group of families thrive.

If possible, visit several providers, including centers and home-based programs to spend time watching what happens in the program and to ask lots of questions. Use this checklist to help find a high-quality program that will meet the needs of your family and child.



### Questions to Ask

- Is the program licensed by the state?
- Does the program participate in QUALITY MATTERS...a STRONG START for kids?
- What is your ratio of teachers to children and your maximum group size?
- How are activities and lessons planned?
- How long have the teachers been working here? How long have they worked with children? Do they do training like college coursework or workshops?
- How do you measure children's development?
- How do you keep families informed about your program and their children's progress? How can parents be involved?
- How does the program support children with challenging behaviors?
- How do you support children with disabilities?
- Do you ever take children on outings?
- Is the daily routine shared with children through pictures and songs?
- How does the program celebrate different cultures?

### Things to Ask For

- A parent handbook
- The enrollment agreement
- Fees, days and hours of operation, menus, health and discipline policies, daily schedule, and disaster plan
- References from other parents

(continued on reverse)

