

# Running a family day care business

Becoming a Alice Springs Family Day Care Educator is a great opportunity to start your own business while receiving support and guidance from a dedicated, experienced team.

Having a realistic expectation of the work and costs involved in setting up your family day care business and understanding how the business can affect other members of your family before you make the commitment will help you to succeed.

Setting up your own business means that you need to be organised committed and professional at all times. As a small business owner, you will be responsible for every aspect of your family day care service, from managing your own income and expenses, book keeping, accounts and tax returns. Speaking with an accountant about your existing financial obligations can help you decide if family day care is the right decision for you.

## Professionalism

It's a very important to promote yourself and your business in a professional manner. This will be reflected in the way that you:

- Answer and speak on the phone
- Handle any enquiries or complaints
- Present your environment (having a high standard of cleanliness and following strict hygiene practices is essential)
- Write emails, complete documentation, present portfolios and communicate with families.

## Opening hours

Family Day Care Educators are self employed, which means that you will determine your own hours. For an effective family daycare business, we recommend operating for at least 8-10 core hours per day for a minimum of three days per week.

## Marketing

Alice Springs Family Day Care will do your Marketing. Some Educators do promote their business with a sign on their car or on their house etc. Some use Alice Springs Family Day Care uniforms, while others create their own along with t-shirts for the children in their care. You may want to develop your own logo, a brochure, flyers or other marketing material to get your name out there in the community.

There is also marketing material on the Family Day Care Australia website, this you will have access too once you are a member.

## Fees

In Family Day Care services, providers typically have the flexibility to set their own fees in collaboration with the overseeing organisation.

Fees are often determined based on several factors: , based on your qualifications, experience and the length of operation. This is reviewed (annually), helping you to set goals for your own professional development. Following regulations set by the department of Education and Trainings child care management system ensure that your rates are competitive and that family day care is accessible for working families who need to access your service.

## Confidentiality

Maintaining confidentiality is an essential part of becoming a successful Educator. confidentiality not only protects the privacy and rights of children and families but also fosters trust and a positive relationship between you as a provider and the families you serve. It is an essential part of providing a safe and secure environment for children in your care.

You must also be mindful of discussions and storage of confidential documents. You will be required to complete a confidentiality agreement that outlines these requirements.

**Training and Awareness:** you can stay informed about regulations and guidelines related to confidentiality in childcare settings. Regular training and updates on privacy laws and best practices can help you maintain confidentiality effectively.





# What is Family Day Care?

Many people prefer family day care services for the value they represent; having a dedicated Educator working with a small number of children means they can deliver a higher standard of education and care at an affordable price.

Approval for Child Care subsidy (CCS) means that families utilising Alice Springs Family Day Care can receive financial assistance to reduce the overall cost of childcare. This can make quality childcare services more accessible and affordable for a wider range of families, encouraging parents to work or study while ensuring their children receive excellent care and early childhood education .

Attending a family day care service helps children to develop a sense of belonging, and allows them to feel comfortable and confident in their environment. It also helps them to build a strong links with the community and learn about local culture

## **A fantastic opportunity**

Family Day Care provides a wonderful opportunity for parents to re-enter the workforce while also ensuring quality education and care for their own children. This arrangement offers several benefits: . You will have a maximum of seven children including your own (no more than 4 children under pre school age, and the ability to care for 3 extra school age children also including your own).

This gives you the opportunity to build strong partnerships with parents and provide an excellent, personalised service for a small group of children you know well.

you will also have the opportunity to create an engaging learning environment and change your daily routines to reflect the needs and interests for the children in your care.

Family Day Care services, like other forms of childcare, operate under government regulations and guidelines. These regulations are designed to ensure the safety, well-being, and quality of care for children.

As a Alice Springs Family Day Care Educator, you will have access to training, resources and support from our experienced staff, including 24-hour support via phone or email.

Alice Springs Family Day Care staff will support you to set up your business and provide you with ongoing professional advice, ongoing support and regular visits.

## **Why become a family Day Care Educator?**

- Get back into the workforce while caring for your own children.
- Offer your own children an the children enrolled at your service an enriched learning environment, and have the satisfaction of supporting each child with their learning, development, wellbeing and social interaction.
- Becoming a role model for young people and make a difference in your community.
- Make your dream of running your own business a reality
- Have the flexibility to choose your working days, hours and holidays to suit your family.
- Earn around \$1000-\$2500 per week depending on your operating hours, fees and number of children enrolled at your service



# What you can expect from Alice Springs Family Day Care

**Clear guidelines and expectations are essential in any professional setting, including Family Day Care services. These guidelines ensure consistency and quality in the care and education provided to children. Here are some typical expectations and obligations you can expect from Alice Springs Family Day Care**

**Induction Process:** 3-4 day induction process is essential for new Family Day Care providers. This period allows individuals to familiarise themselves with the policies, procedures, and expectations of the service, ensuring they start their childcare venture with a strong foundation of knowledge.

**Professional Resources and Training:** Access to resources and training sessions on various topics, including regulations, standards, child protection, risk assessment, and child development, is invaluable. Continuous education and professional development are essential for providing high-quality care that meets industry standards.

**Support with Practices and Routines:** Guidance on implementing effective practices, creating enriching experiences, and incorporating learning into everyday routines is crucial. This support encourages each child's development, focusing on both their learning and overall well-being.

**Marketing and Advertising Support:** Assistance with marketing and advertising can help providers reach potential families in the community. Effective marketing strategies can help providers establish their Family Day Care service and attract families seeking childcare.

**Referrals:** Referrals from families looking for care are valuable, as they directly connect providers with parents seeking childcare services. These referrals can help providers build their clientele and establish trust within the community.

**Regular Home Visits:** Regular home visits, both announced and unannounced, provide an opportunity for evaluators to assess the environment, ensure compliance with regulations, and offer support and feedback to providers. These visits help maintain high-quality standards of care.

**Advice on Education and Care Practices:** Keeping providers informed about current education and care practices, as well as learning frameworks, is essential. Staying updated with the latest research ensures that providers offer contemporary and effective early childhood education.

**Access to Professional Development:** Continuous learning and professional development. Providing access to such opportunities ensures Educators' ongoing growth and the quality of education they offer.

**Guidance for National Quality Standards:** Guidance, support, and feedback tailored to these standards help Educators maintain and improve their service quality, promoting positive outcomes for children.

**Support for Children with Additional Needs:** Inclusive practices are vital in early childhood education. Educators need appropriate support and resources to cater to children with additional needs, ensuring that every child receives tailored care and educational experiences.

**Recording and Monitoring Children's Development:** Guidance on effective recording methods helps Educators track each child's development accurately and design appropriate learning activities.

**Timely Processing of Attendance Records and Payments:** Ensuring timely payment is crucial for the financial stability of Educators. Efficient processing of attendance records and payments, including coordination with family and government subsidies (CCS), simplifies the administrative process for Educators.

**Centralised Payment System:** Adopting a centralised payment system streamlines the payment process for both ASFDC and Educators. You are paid weekly from ASFDC

**Resources for Compliance:** Providing necessary resources to ensure compliance including materials, guidelines, and templates necessary to meet regulatory requirements and maintain high-quality standards.

This comprehensive support system is not only beneficial for Family Day Care providers but also plays a vital role in ensuring the well-being, safety, and development of the children under their care.





# Environments

Setting up your Family Day Care environment is exciting. You will need to consider your **indoor** and **outdoor** environments, and may need to purchase additional equipment and resources. You will also need to ensure your spaces are clean, and hygienic, comfortable and safe and secure.

## Here are some things you will need to consider:

- What entrance and exit will your families use?
- Where will your families sign in area be? There are a few documents that you will need to display in this area, so you will need some wall space and a surface.
- Will you use a separate room for sleep and rest?
- Will you have a play room? Will you use all of your home, or will you keep some rooms off limits?
- Which toilet will you use? Does it have hand washing facilities?
- Do you have laundry facilities?
- Which areas will you choose to set up your outdoor environments?
- Is your outdoor area fenced appropriately? Does it have a lockable gate?
- Do you have safety glass or glass that is made safe in your home?
- Equipment and resources
- An equipment and toy list is available as a guide,
- You will need to purchase child sized tables, chairs, shelving, age appropriate toys and learning materials, bedding, car restraints, and even office equipment. A tablet or laptop is essential for families to sign in and out of your service each day (this is tax deductible)

## Child Safety

You are responsible for the safety of the children in your care. It is your legal and ethical obligation to ensure that children are supervised at all times, and do not have access to hazardous materials. Consider the following when deciding to

Assessing your home using this guide is a good place to start. Ongoing safety audits, risk assessments, daily checklists of your indoor and outdoor environment, upgrading equipment and toys, and reminding family members to remove potential hazards must become standard practice.

You are deciding to operate a family day care business. Recommendations are common sense, and if you have young children at home you may already have addressed many of these.

You will be required to participate and complete ongoing safety audits, risk assessments, daily checklists of your indoor and outdoor environment, upgrading equipment and toys.

## Children have the right to a safe care environment that is:

- Clean and hygienic
- Has adequate safe space for indoor and outdoor play
- Comfortable with adequate light and ventilation
- Safe and secure with barriers to reduce access to roads, bodies of water and at times, pets

## Indoor environments

- All equipment must meet Australian standards. In addition, children must not have access to:
  - Hazardous materials
  - Any glass indoors or outdoors under one meter in height that isn't safety or filmed safety glass
  - Hot water
  - Electrical appliances or equipment, including power points, dangling cords, hairdryers and kettles
  - Heaters with exposed elements, open fire places, slow combustion stoves
  - Pedestal fans
  - Alcohol, matches, lighters, cigarettes, ashtrays, vapes
  - Poisonous indoor plants
  - Stairs
  - Firearms, weapons or ammunition
  - Pets, their food, and water bowls and bedding
  - Any equipment that doesn't meet Australian Standards
- Outdoor environments
- Your outdoor area must meet the Australian playground standards. Additionally, your outdoor area must have
  - Appropriate fencing
  - A separate area for pets
  - Locks on garages, sheds and gates leading to the road
  - Tools, garden equipment and chemicals
  - Trailers and caravans
  - Poisonous plants are removed or inaccessible

# Your Family

Your family is about to go on an exciting new adventure with you, and will all need to play a role in welcoming other children and families into their home. It is important to maintain good communication with your family, making time to discuss and reflect on any issues, concerns or ideas that arise.

Making your family a part of your business and encouraging all members of your family to have positive interactions with the children and families who are coming into your home helps them to feel welcome. The way that your family interacts with your clients can have an impact on attracting and retaining business.

During the registration process, there will be an opportunity for a family interview with Alice Springs Family Day Care Service Manager where everyone can ask questions and discuss issues, concerns and ideas.

If you have your own children who will be in your care during your hours of operation, they will be included in your ratio (see below). Discussing family day care with your family before you start running your business from home is important.

Following is a list to discuss and plan with your family to help everyone to participate in setting boundaries and expectations.

- What changes will you and your family need to make for you to run a family day care business? Will you need to change some of your commitments? appointments? When will you do your grocery shopping? How will you include time for yourself?
- If you will be doing school pickups and drop-offs, can you walk there? Do you need a larger vehicle?
- How will your home work as a family day care business? Do you have a place for children to sleep and rest? Will you have one toilet/bathroom for your family and one for the children, or will this be shared?
- Will your own children's bedrooms or resources be used by your family day care business? Will they be off limits? How will you explain resources and equipment to your children?
- Would you consider offering weekend care or extended care
- How will you ensure that your family's privacy is respected?
- How will you maintain a good work/life balance while working from home?
- What are the risks in your home? You'll need to ensure your environment is free from hazards to keep the children safe.
- Ask your family how they feel about you running your own business from home. Talk about what roles they can play and how they can make other children and families feel welcome.
- Make sure they understand that, even though you will be working from home, you will have opening and closing times and will be working during that time. As long as you have children present and in your care, you will be working and are responsible for these children. There may be some things that you do for your family that will now need to be done before or after your work hours.
- Help your family understand and respect your role as an educator. Explain the policies and procedures you must follow and the responsibilities involved with their role. Running a family day care business is a hands-on job and involves working long hours so it's important that you get their full support. Understanding the importance of leaving you with parents in case they need to discuss sensitive or confidential information when they arrive in the morning or leave at the end of the day is also important.
- Ask for your family's help to keep you home environment free from hazards. It is important that your family members and visitors are aware of the policies and procedures that must be followed; for example, that dangerous equipment is stored away in a lockable shed or cupboard, and that dangerous substances are locked away at all times.
- Every child in your care must be treated with respect and equality by all members of your family. We encourage all members of your household to interact positively with the children, but make sure that they understand that it is your responsibility to care for the children (for example, nappy changes, feeding, delivering activities and supervising).

# Practical Information

Before deciding to offer day care for children in your home, you should ask yourself a number of questions which will help you determine if family day care is really for you. **Ask yourself the following:**

- Am I passionate and committed about quality care and education for children
- Am I 21 years or older and able to commit for at least 12 months?
- Am I fit and healthy and free from any medical condition or dependency on medication or substance that could affect my ability to care for children?
- Do I have a minimum of Certificate III in children's service or willing to study whilst working to achieve this?
- Can I offer a nurturing, family-focused environment at home?
- Do I have the relevant experience of caring for children?
- Am I professional in my approach ?
- Can I offer flexibility for the children and families in my care?
- Are my communication skills good, and do I foster relationships?
- Am I happy to develop and educate children in a learning environment?
- Will my own children and family benefit from offering Family Day Care services?
- Am I proficient in using the Internet, computer, smartphone/Tablet devices and do I have a reliable multi-functional media Centre: printer, scanner, computer and mobile.

**Maintaining Quality Care:** Family Day Care Educators are required to provide and maintain a quality childcare service in a safe, healthy, nurturing, friendly home environment. This includes adhering to:

- Current National Regulations
- Occupational Health and Safety Legislation
- Scheme policies and procedures
- Participating in National Quality Framework requirements
- Participating in ongoing professional development often outside the hours of their service Operation (the hours an Educator chooses to work)
- Providing parent with ongoing information about their child's daily activities.

Educators must fulfil all the administrative and business requirements of a self-employed person, and ensure that records are retained in accordance with the timeframes and requirements set out in the Children's Services Regulations. Educators are also required to maintain a safe workplace at all times. The support and assistance of the Educators family members in meeting these requirements and providing a professional service is also required. Having other people's children in your home also means

**Having other people's children in your home also means:**

- Providing an environment that recognises and operates in a safe and respectful manner
- Considering the needs of your family and the families and children in care.
- Maintaining confidentiality
- Recognising that it is more than 'just babysitting'.

Educators need to plan for the individual child's needs and interests. The Educator is solely responsible for the children at all time, and cannot delegate this responsibility to any other household member

# Legal, Insurance, payments, ongoing costs

## Legal and business matters:

While family day care is not as complex as running a large business, you should be considering some legal matters carefully. These involve insurance, taxes, budgeting and being registered with ASFDC. All, when taken care of properly, is for your direct benefit, and serve to protect you from unnecessary expense and liability.

**Insurance:** One of the first things you may have to think about is public liability insurance. Children are subject to a wide range of injuries, it may serve to protect you and the children. Family Day Care Australia has a comprehensive insurance plan designed specifically for the unique needs of Family Day Care. Useful information can be found at the following link:  
[www.familydaycareaustralia.com.au](http://www.familydaycareaustralia.com.au)

**What is your ongoing cost?** The office charges an administration fee which is a tax deduction, the fee covers:

- Administration and support provided to you by the coordination Unit.
- Regular visits from Coordination Unit staff who will assist you with all aspects of care and education of young children.
- Events, play and gym sessions, health and wellbeing support Educator meetings, some training costs
- Promotion of the service
- Providing the service of recommending children for care with an Educator
- Relief care for children in your care in instances of taking leave
- Processing timesheets and weekly payment of full fees
- Providing Child Development support to Educators.
- Providing office support including processes, policies, forms etc to Educators.
- Providing training including initial set up and ongoing training to Educator
- Monitoring Educators and ensuring Quality Assurance requirements are met. -24 hr On Call service for problems or issues that arise out of office hours.

## What are the income and expenses of being an Educator?

Educators are self-employed business operators. The income and the expenses incurred varies among Educators. Educators have the control over how much they earn and what overheads they incur.

**How do | get paid?** Combination of Direct payment from families and the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) Educators are paid weekly.

**Electronic Time sheets:** All Educators are to submit weekly electronic timesheets via Harmony software, these are approved and processed by the office and sent to Centrelink.

## What support does the scheme provide to Educators?

Following registration, you will receive the following Business Support:

- All relevant and necessary information to conduct your child care service, forms, checklists, policies, procedures and resource ideas to assist you in your business.
- Child Care Subsidy calculated from weekly electronic timesheets and deposited electronically into your bank account.
- support for all administrative aspects of your business.
- Referral of families to place children in your care.





# What's Next?

If you've read through this booklet and discussed family day care with your family, you're ready to take the next steps towards starting your own family day care business!

Alice Springs Family Day Care will support you throughout this journey and are available to answer questions at any time. Following is a small checklist to help organise what you may need.

## Registration and induction

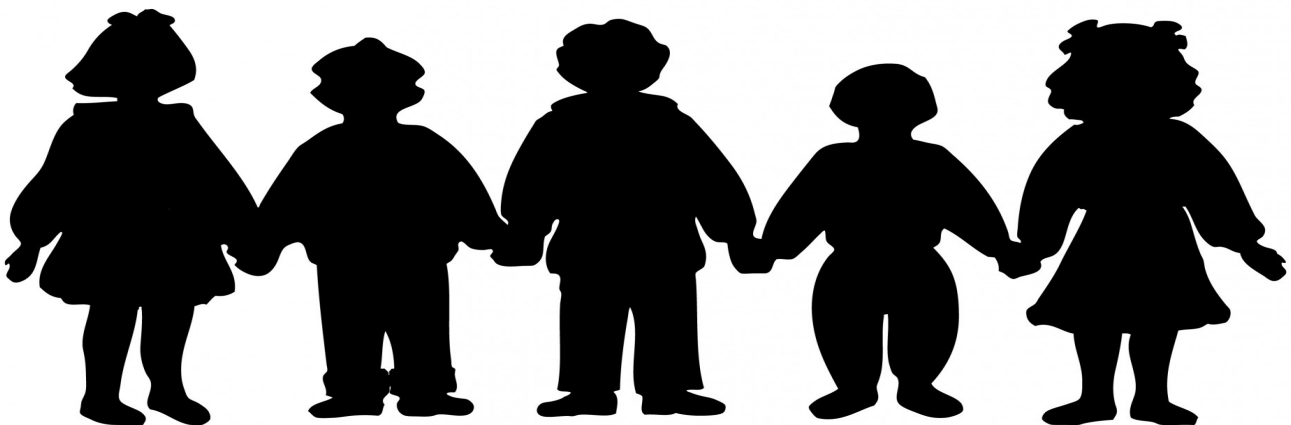
- This is a good time to ask any initial questions you may have.
- Obtain approval from your landlord (if required).
- Complete an application for membership and send in your resume (along with two references).
- You'll have an interview with one of our staff members so we can make sure that family day care is the right career path for you.
- Complete a residence assessment, completing all recommendations made by Alice Springs Family Day Care
- Organise a family interview (if needed)

## Complete your registration paperwork, including (but not limited to):

- a Working with Children Check
- first aid certificate
- medical clearance
- police clearance
- immunisation record
- membership form and landlord approval.
- If applicable, your family members will also need and police clearance.
- Complete your induction (this can take two to 4 days).

## Setting up your family day care business

- Develop and emergency evacuation plan and site plan
- Create marketing material such as a brochure, welcome letter and Facebook page
- Set up your approved family day care areas with developmentally appropriate resources
- Complete a risk management plan for your indoor and outdoor areas
- Complete risk assessments for routine and non-routine excursions
- Compile parent orientation packs (including permission slips)
- Create your Business folder (like a resume)



# Recruitment and induction of Educators

## Step One:

Your application should indicate the reasons why you are applying as well as addressing your personal suitability for working with children.

Please note that part of your application requires you to nominate two referees (not related to you) who, preferably, can comment on your understanding of child development and your interactions with children.

These referees will be contacted by the scheme during the application process. This provides information to enable the applicant and members of the family/household to form a clear understanding of the role and responsibilities of an Educator and the requirements of becoming a workplace.

Tick of any items that you have to see what you might need next

## Step Two:

**The coordination unit will assess the applicant on the following criteria:**

- Applicants must provide a letter from a medical practitioner stating they are of good health and free from any medical condition or dependency on medication or substance that could affect their ability to care for children.
- A Suitable notice (Ochre Card) application for the applicant and any household Members over 18 years old must be completed before care can be provided.
- The applicant must have a current first aid, CPR, asthma and anaphylaxis's Certificate or enroll in and complete a course before care can be provided.
- Applicants must have a minimum of Certificate III in children's services or Diploma or be studying either of these.
- Applicants must have a criminal history check.
- If you register as an Educator from the 2nd July you will be required to provide a recent {less than 6 months old copy} of a criminal history check.)
- A PRODA number. All family day care Educators must register for a PRODA (Provider Digital Access) ID. This will strengthen the integrity of the child care system and allow relevant staff and Educators to interact with the new IT system CCS (child Care subsidy). The PRODA ID registration system is essentially a standard 100 points identity verification" process. Relevant key personnel and family day care Educators will be required to register with the PRODA system by creating an account and subsequently verifying their identity by providing relevant documents
- ABN— You are a small business therefore you will need an ABN. This can be in your name, or in your small business name, you are advised also to register for GST, Family Day Care Educators do not charge GST, but we can certainly claim it!

# Recruitment and induction of Educators

## Step Three:

The Applicant will be interviewed to ensure they are suitable to work with children. some of the critical aspects and personal qualities required are:

- Understanding of and respect for children.
- Awareness of health and safety issues
- Empathy with families using care
- Positive approach in working with families and coordination unit
- Interest in professional development and continued quality improvement
- A positive approach to behaviour guidance
- Openness to change and new ideas
- Potential to plan, implement and evaluate programs for children
- Effective communication skills, including verbal and written
- Physically and emotionally able to care for young children in a group setting.

## Step Four

The co-ordination unit will visit the applicants home to assess the premises suitability, using a safety checklist.

## Step Five

Suitable applicants will be asked to undertake on the job training and assessment to allow the coordination unit to observe their skills, knowledge and personal attributes and allows applicants to have an orientation to family day care and develop a better understanding of the job. Unsuccessful applicants will be sent a letter that they were unsuccessful and on request, additional information or feedback will be provided

## Step Six

Suitable applicants that complete registration prior to commencing the family day care service will be required to complete all home modifications and specifications outlined on the safety checklist

- complete first aid and CPR training,
- provide copies of driver's licence,
- vehicle and child restraints safety inspection,
- provided positive suitability notices (Ochre Card) for all parties involved
- ensure all business registration (local council requirements) are completed if applicable
- ensure that their insurance is current.

# Recruitment and induction of Educators

## Step Seven

Sign the family day Educator agreement and job roles and responsibilities.

Once all the above processes are completed, the Educator will be registered with Family Day Care.

A certificate of registration from the scheme is provided to the Educator.

The certificate of registration is valid for one year and Educators are required to meet the schemes requirements stated above each year to re register.

