



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Home Away from Home:
Finding High-Quality Child Care in FIVE Simple Steps**

When your child is away from home, you need to know he or she is in a safe, loving, nurturing and stimulating environment. Studies show high-quality child care supports a young child's learning and helps him or her develop socially, emotionally, and physically. But how do you know if your child is receiving the right care?

Leaving a child under the care of someone else can be a struggle, except when you are confident you have a high-quality child care provider. That's why the First 5 Butte County Children & Families Commission recommends parents **Find, Investigate, Visit and Evaluate (FIVE)** when choosing a child care provider:

Find high-quality care that is best for your child based on your family's specific needs. There are many different types of care to consider, including:

- Family Child Care Homes — This type of care takes place in the childcare provider's home.
- Child Care Centers — Most of the time, child care centers are bigger than family child care homes and can be run by an individual, business, school, church or public agency.
- In-Home Care — In-home care is when someone comes to your home to care for your child. It can be a friend, relative, nanny or baby-sitter.
- Licensed Exempt Providers — Licensed exempt providers care for the children of one family, in addition to their own family, without being licensed through Community Care Licensing. Children go to the provider's home for care.

Investigate potential providers. Once you decide on the type of child care and are ready to choose a provider, be sure to ask them plenty of questions about their qualifications and style of care, including:

- What's their previous experience in childcare?
- Is the center/home licensed?

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- What types of activities are scheduled?
- What is the provider's approach to discipline?
- Will the provider care for your child if they are ill?
- Has the provider been through the Trustline process (if they are not licensed)?

Asking these questions and more will give you an idea whether a provider is the right fit for you.

Visit the center or home when children are there. Make sure to:

- Watch how the staff interacts with the children
- Observe the surroundings and make sure the area is clean, safe, and filled with appropriate equipment and toys
- Talk to parents of children who go there about their experiences with the provider

Evaluate and interact often with your provider. Once you have found a quality provider:

- Develop a partnership with the provider regarding your child's development
- Have regular meetings to hear updates on your child's activities and progress
- Share stories about your child

After you **Find, Investigate, Visit and Evaluate**, you can rest easy knowing your children are in a place where they are able to grow up safe, healthy and ready to enter school learning.

First 5 Butte County encourages parents to use resources available to them. For background checks and other child care information, call Trustline at [\(800\) 822-8490](tel:8008228490). To locate a local resource and referral agency in your area, call the California Child Resource and Referral Network at [\(800\) 543-7793](tel:8005437793). In Butte County, contact Valley Oak Children's Services at [\(530\) 895-3572](tel:5308953572). For more information about First 5 Butte County programs and services, call [\(530\) 538-7964](tel:5305387964) or visit www.buttecounty.net/bccfc.

About Butte County Children and Families Commission

Research shows that a child's brain develops most dramatically in the first five years and what parents and caregivers do during these years to support their child's growth will have a meaningful impact throughout life. Based on this research, California voters passed Proposition 10 in 1998, adding a 50 cents-per-pack tax on cigarettes to support programs for expectant parents and children ages 0 to 5. Butte County Children and Families Commission distributes approximately \$2 million a year in Prop. 10 revenues to programs and services that meet local needs.