



*"a catalyst for strong families  
and powerful communities  
where children matter most."*

Dear Potential Provider:

Thank you for your interest in becoming a family child care professional. We are excited to have you join Illinois Action for Children in its efforts to help working families with their childcare needs.

There are two ways in which you can operate a legal child care home, as a licensed childcare provider or as a license-exempt child care provider.

To become a licensed childcare provider, you must first contact the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). This is the licensing agency for Illinois. Once all licensing requirements are met, a family child care home is licensed for three years. A family child care home can be licensed for up to twelve children (this includes any of his/her own children under the age of twelve in the home). Please contact **DCFS** directly at **(312) 328-2464** if you would like more information on specific licensing requirements.

A license-exempt family childcare provider is someone caring for up to three children in their home or a home provider caring for children of only one family. This number includes any children living in the provider's household who are under the age of twelve years.

Illinois Action for Children champions quality child care/early education for all families in Cook County and the State of Illinois. We offer technical assistance and capacity building support to child care providers, helping them to expand their skills and create safe, developmentally appropriate environments. Illinois Action for Children and its network of Community Partners collaborate in order to offer training, resources, and professional development opportunities to the early education and child care communities. This network will undoubtedly be an invaluable resource for you in your child care business. Illinois Action for Children can assist in connecting to the community partners as well as training opportunities that may be required for licensing.

We are looking forward to supporting you as you strive to offer childcare to working families in your community. If you have any questions after reviewing this packet, please call Jean Ferguson at 773-564-8731.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Monique Draper". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Monique" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Draper".

Monique Draper  
Director, Provider Programs

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

4753 N Broadway  
Suite 1200  
Chicago, IL 60640  
312-823-1100 *tel*  
773-561-2256 *fax*  
(administrative offices)

1340 S Damen Ave  
3rd Fl  
Chicago, IL 60608  
312-823-1100 *tel*  
312-823-1200 *fax*

8741 S Greenwood Ave  
3rd Fl  
Chicago, IL 60619  
312-823-1100 *tel*  
312-823-1200 *fax*

17926 South Halsted St  
Suite 2 West  
Homewood, IL 60430  
312-823-1100 *tel*  
312-823-1200 *fax*

## RESOURCES

### Licensing

State Licensing Standards may be obtained by contacting:

Illinois Department of Children and Family Services  
1911 S. Indiana Ave., 9th Floor  
Chicago, IL 60616  
(312) 328-2464

Providers applying for a DCFS Child Care License for the first time must have a High School Diploma or an equivalency certificate. In addition, new applicants must complete 15 hours of pre-service training as outlined by DCFS. For detailed information, please call the DCFS Division of Licensing or visit <http://www.illinois.gov/DCFS/aboutus/notices/Pages/default.aspx> and click on the Rules link to locate the standards for Day Care Homes, Part 406.

**Illinois Action for Children's Resource & Referral** provides a variety of services to providers in Cook County.

- Illinois Action for Children maintains a database listing the child care providers in Cook County.
- Child Care referrals are offered to parents who are looking for child care in Cook County.

**Community Partners** – Four organizations throughout Cook County have formed partnerships with Illinois Action for Children to assist providers. The Community Partner you can work with is based on your zip code. Please refer to the enclosed list to determine which Community Partner serves your area. The Community Partners can give you more information about workshops, trainings and conferences. In addition, the Community Partners can offer you technical assistance as you start up your program.

**INCCRRA** – The Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (INCCRRA) is a statewide organization which – in partnership with its 16 local Child Care Resources and Referral (CCR&R) agencies – is a recognized leader, catalyst and resource for making high quality, affordable early care and education and school-age care options available for children and families in Illinois. To contact INCCRRA, please call (800) 649-1884 or visit their website: [www.inccrra.org](http://www.inccrra.org).

INCCRRA manages the **Gateways to Opportunity** programs. Gateways to Opportunity is a statewide professional development support system designed to provide guidance, encouragement, and recognition to individuals and programs serving children, youth, and families. Resources and services provided by Gateways to Opportunity include Credentials, Professional Development Advisors, Great START, Gateways to Opportunity Registry, the Illinois Trainers Network, and Gateways to Opportunity Scholarship Program. For additional information regarding these programs, please call (866) 697-8278 or visit the website: [www.ilgateways.com](http://www.ilgateways.com).

**Catalogs** – Early childhood catalogs for ordering materials and equipment.

Beyond Play  
(877) 428-1244  
[www.beyondplay.com](http://www.beyondplay.com)

Constructive Playthings  
(800) 448-1412  
[www.constructiveplaythings.com](http://www.constructiveplaythings.com)

Community Playthings  
(800) 777-4244  
[www.communityplaythings.com](http://www.communityplaythings.com)

Discount School Supply  
(800) 627-2829  
[www.discountchoolsupply.com](http://www.discountchoolsupply.com)

Discovery Toys  
(800) 341-8697  
[www.discoverytoys.com](http://www.discoverytoys.com)

Environments, Inc.  
(800) 342-4453  
[www.environments.com](http://www.environments.com)

Harrison and Company  
(888) 345-4005  
[www.harrisonandcompany.com](http://www.harrisonandcompany.com)

Hatch  
(800) 624-7968  
[www.hatchearlychildhood.com](http://www.hatchearlychildhood.com)

Kaplan  
(800) 334-2014  
[www.kaplanco.com](http://www.kaplanco.com)

Kidstuff Play Systems  
(800) 255-0153  
[www.kidstuffplaysystems.com](http://www.kidstuffplaysystems.com)

Lakeshore Learning Materials  
(800) 428-4414  
[www.lakeshorelearning.com](http://www.lakeshorelearning.com)

Me & Mi Publishing  
(888) 251-1444  
[www.memima.com](http://www.memima.com)

NASCO  
(800) 558-9595  
[www.enasco.com](http://www.enasco.com)

Play With A Purpose  
(888) 330-1826  
<http://pwap.gophersport.com>

Pro-Ed, Inc.  
(800) 897-3202  
[www.proedinc.com](http://www.proedinc.com)

Redleaf Press  
(800) 423-8309  
[www.redleafpress.org](http://www.redleafpress.org)

S&S Worldwide  
(800) 288-9941  
[www.ssw.com](http://www.ssw.com)

School Specialty  
(888) 388-3224  
[www.schoolspecialty.com](http://www.schoolspecialty.com)

## FUNDING SOURCES

The federal government produces a publication titled *Federal Register*, which lists all Federal Register announcements related to education, such as funding, and grant opportunities. This publication can be located at most public libraries or write to the following address for subscription information:

**Federal Register Digest Service**

P.O.Box 23326

Washington, DC 20026

[www.federalregisterdigest.com](http://www.federalregisterdigest.com)

**U.S Small Business Association**

Small Business Administration – Illinois District Office

500 W. Madison St., Suite 1150

Chicago, IL 60601

(312) 886-5688

[www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov)

**Foundation Center** – <http://www.fdncenter.org>

**Grantsmanship Center** – <http://www.tgci.com>

**Council on Foundations** – <http://www.cof.org>

## INSURANCE COMPANIES

Joseph M. Wiedemann and Sons Inc.  
505 E. Golf Rd.  
Arlington Heights, IL 60005  
(847) 228-8400  
[www.jmwsons.com](http://www.jmwsons.com)

Markel Specialty Insurance  
4600 Cox Rd.  
Glen Allen, VA 23060  
(800) 416-4364  
[www.markelinsurance.com](http://www.markelinsurance.com)

Morgan Insurance  
5705 95<sup>th</sup> Place SW  
Mukilteo, WA 98275  
(877) 799-8980  
(425) 348-6557  
[www.morganinsurance.com](http://www.morganinsurance.com)

Illinois Department of Insurance  
320 W. Washington, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Springfield, IL 62767  
(217) 782-4515  
[www.insurance.illinois.gov](http://www.insurance.illinois.gov)

New England Insurance Services, Inc.  
P.O. Box 63  
Weatogue, CT 06089-0063  
(860) 844-8288  
[www.neisinc.com](http://www.neisinc.com)