

## **Types of Child Care**

Choosing a child care arrangement is a very personal decision for parents. It is one of the most important decisions a parent can make since the care children receive influences their future development.

There are three basic types of child care: child care centers, child care homes, and child care in your own home. This section describes these basic types and also outlines some additional child care programs that may be available in your community: before and after school care; vacation and summer programs; sick child/back-up/emergency care; part-day preschool programs and nursery schools; programs for children with special needs; and the Head Start Program.

### **Child Care Centers**

A child care center provides care for groups of children by a staff of caregivers. The staff have some type of early childhood education training. Centers are generally licensed by the state. Centers are either privately operated for profit by a chain or individual, or operated by non-profit agencies, such as churches, public schools, government agencies, or non-profit vendors. (See the licensing section, and the directories of State and local agencies that can help you locate child care centers in your area.)

### **Child Care Homes**

A child care home provides care for a small group of children in the caregiver's home. These homes are registered or licensed in most States and normally provide more personalized attention to each child. (Willamette After School is a licensed child care home)

### **Child Care in Your Own Home**

This type of care takes place in your own home. The caregiver may be a baby-sitter, a professional "nanny" trained to care for young children, a student "au pair" who lives in your home, or another caregiver who has some experience with young children. Parents need to check references carefully. When using in-home care, you become an employer, which requires special considerations. As an employer, you are responsible for Federal Unemployment Insurance and Social Security taxes. In many States you must provide Workers' Compensation and State Unemployment Insurance.

### **Before and After School Care**

There are various options for before and after school care. Programs in your community may be operated by child care centers, recreation centers, churches, and youth organizations, such as Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), Boys Clubs of America, Girls Inc., and Camp Fire, Inc. In many communities, schools provide after school care, sometimes called "extended day care" programs or for more personalized programs a local after school enrichment home, such as, Willamette After School.

If your school does not currently provide such a program, your school's principal or Parent Teachers Association (PTA) may be aware of parents' associations that are working in your community to get such programs started or to find other affordable options for school-age care. Willamette Primary School has Willamette After School listed as a recommended provider.

### **Vacation and Summer Programs**

Vacation and summer programs are usually for school-age children, although in some areas they are also available for preschool children. These programs provide a variety of activities such as arts and crafts, swimming, drama, and organized sports. Vacation or summer programs are often operated by the local parks and recreation departments, community organizations, and child carecenters. Willamette After School offers an excellent summer program that provides children with a variety of summertime activities.