



Suggested Items for Opening a Licensed Family Child Care

(For a list of required items, see the Department of Children and Families [Required Items for Family Child Care Centers](#))

- **Questions to consider when making a purchase:**
 1. Is the material or equipment sturdy & well-made so it will last a long time?
 2. Does the material or equipment have different uses?
 3. Can it be used by children of varying ages or do you have materials and equipment for all ages?
 4. Do your materials reflect diversity?
 5. Do your materials support children in many types of play, like outdoor play, active indoor play, dramatic play and quiet play?

- **Operational Items:**
 - Inquiry packet
 - Medical log book (a bound and stitched notebook such as a Mead Composition Book)
 - Health exam and TB test for provider (cost varies depending upon insurance coverage of provider – sometimes county health departments offer low cost TB tests)
 - File folders/file cabinet or box and copies (keep child/provider records and receipts)

- **Home & Safety Items:**
 - Safety latches, outlet covers, and locks
 - Smoke detectors; one for each level of the center and for sleeping areas
 - Carbon monoxide detectors; one for each level of the building except the attic and garage
 - 2A-10BC (or larger) fire extinguisher
 - Sleeping bags or mats—you can always have the parents supply these for their children
 - Cribs or play pens
 - Outdoor fence (provide a minimum of 600 square feet of space)
 - Paper towels, soap, toilet paper, tissues, etc.
 - Vehicle safety inspection – this is free for child care providers at some Farm & Fleet stores
 - Vaccinations for any dogs or cats in the home
 - Water test for private wells
 - Step stool

- **Infant & Toddler Items:**
 - Safety gates
 - Highchairs
 - Sippy cups, child-friendly utensils, dishes, etc.
 - Plastic-lined covered container for diapers
 - Vinyl changing mat
 - Bleach

- **Age Appropriate Indoor & Outdoor Play Equipment:**
 - Preschool Toys: assorted blocks, props for block play such as people or vehicles, dolls, magnets, playdough, glue, scissors, watercolor and tempera paints, paper, books, puzzles, unit and Lego blocks, musical instruments, dress-up clothes and other housekeeping items, etc.—be creative!
 - Infant/Toddler Toys: rattles, teething rings, soft toys and dolls, cloth and hard board books, foam blocks, large trucks, push/pull toys, large crayons, paint brushes, markers, paper, etc.
 - School-Age Toys: board games, dominoes, cards, calculators, woodworking tools, books, camera, scales, fabric, clay, tape measures, maps, etc.
 - Outdoor Toys: sandbox and sand, sand toys, hula hoops, riding toys, large balls, sports balls, jump ropes, etc.
 - Storage crates/cubbies for children’s belongings
 - Toy and materials shelving
 - Child-sized table and chairs

- **No-Cost or Low-Cost Additional Suggested Items:**
 - Public Library books, cassette tapes, books on tape, videos, toys, etc.
 - Recyclable products for art projects (ex. Milk jugs, egg cartons, scrap paper)
 - Homemade playdough
 - Dress-Up clothing: Look for old hats, scarves, dresses, shoes, costume jewelry, etc.
 - Musical instruments: Use kitchen utensils, pots/pans, or recycled plastic containers with lids filled with dried beans or rice.
 - Dish tubs and household items –sieves, funnels, measuring spoons, etc.—for water or other sensory materials.
 - Large cardboard boxes for pretend play.
 - Homemade puppets: Make out of paper bags, socks, or fabric.
 - Bubbles: Just dish soap and water!
 - Flashlights, measuring tapes and rulers for pretend play
 - Homemade puzzles: Cover a picture with clear Contact paper, glue onto cardboard, and cut into pieces.
 - Homemade books: Cover photographs or magazine pictures with clear Contact paper, glue onto cardboard or tagboard, paper punch holes, and tie with yarn.
 - Collage materials for art, (Styrofoam peanuts, feathers, wrapping paper scraps, etc.)
 - Homemade felt board: Cover a piece of plywood with felt and cut-out animals, objects, etc.
 - Poker chips/cards

These are just a few ideas—there are a lot more out there. Be creative! Consider purchasing some of these items second-hand from garage sales or consignment shops if you can find them in usable, safe condition. Happy hunting!

(**CAUTION:** To find out about safety recalls on any of the materials you might use, visit the [United States Consumer Product Safety Commission website](https://www.cpsc.gov/), or call them at 1-301-504-7923).