

2013 State of Child Care Centers in Montana

Total Score: 86/150	Total Percentage: 57%	Overall Rank: 38
Oversight Score: 30/40	Oversight Percentage: 75%	Oversight Rank: 13
Program Standards Score: 56/110	Standards Percentage: 51%	Program Standards Rank: 44



2011 Annual Child Care Center Costs	
For an Infant:	\$8,307
For a 4-Year-Old:	\$7,285

Program Standards	Meets
1. A comprehensive background check is required, including using fingerprints to check state and FBI records, checking the child abuse registry and checking the sex offender registry.	
2. Child care center directors are required to have a bachelor's degree or higher in early childhood education or a related field.	
3. Lead teachers are required to have a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, college courses in early childhood education or an associate degree in early childhood education or a related field.	
4. Child care center providers are required to have an orientation and initial training in specific topics.	
5. Child care center providers are required to have 24 hours or more of annual training in specific topics.	
6. Child care centers are required to plan learning activities that address specific developmental domains.	

Program Standards	Meets
7. Child care centers are required to follow recommended health practices in 10 specific areas.	
8. Child care centers are required to follow recommended safety practices in 10 specific areas. Corporal punishment is prohibited.	
9. Child care centers are required to encourage parent involvement, communicate regularly with parents, allow parents access to the center and give written policies to parents.	
10. Staff:child ratio requirements comply with NAEYC accreditation standards for seven age groups.	
11. Group size requirements comply with NAEYC accreditation standards in seven age groups.	

Oversight Standards	Meets
1. Child care centers are inspected at least four times per year, including visits by licensing, health and fire personnel.	
2. Programs to licensing staff ratio does not exceed 50:1.	
3. Licensing staff have a bachelor's degree in early childhood education or a related field.	
4. Online inspection and complaint reports are available to parents on the Internet.	

Key Fully Meets Substantially Meets Partially Meets Marginally Meets Does not meet

2013 State of Child Care Centers in Montana

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Health standards address nine of 10 basic standards; programs are not required to address universal health precautions. ■ Safety standards address 10 of 10 basic standards. ■ Centers are required to encourage parent involvement, communicate regularly with parents, allow parents access and give written policies to parents. ■ Child care licensing staff are required to have at least a bachelor's degree in early childhood education or related field. ■ Inspection and complaint reports are available online. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Providers are required to undergo background checks, but these checks are completed without using fingerprints. ■ Background checks do not require a check of the sex offender registry. ■ Directors are required to have less than a CDA credential. ■ Providers are not required to have a high school diploma or GED. ■ Providers are only required to have initial training on three of the specific topics. ■ Providers are required to complete only eight hours of annual training. ■ Group size requirements do not meet NAEYC accreditation standards for any of the seven age groups. ■ Licensing inspections of child care centers are conducted once every three years.

Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Require the use of state and federal fingerprints for checking individuals' criminal history. ■ Background checks should include a check of the sex offender registry. ■ Require the director to have a bachelor's degree in early childhood education or a related field. ■ Require lead teachers to have a minimum of a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or a degree in early childhood education or related field. ■ Require providers to have comprehensive initial training. ■ Require providers to complete 24 hours or more of annual training. ■ Require centers to comply with NAEYC accreditation standards for group size in all seven age groups. ■ Increase licensing inspections of child care centers to at least once a year.

State Note: In Montana, a FBI check and a fingerprint check of state criminal records is required for candidates who have lived in Montana for less than five years.

In Montana, the number of inspections depends on the licensing type. Montana offers 1, 2, and 3 year licenses depending on whether the facility meets the criteria for that licensing type. Programs with no violations have extended registration up to three years. Programs with violations receive a regular one year license. During the period of October 1, 2011-September 30, 2012, 69 percent of centers received a monitoring visit.

Notes:

1. The total maximum points a state could receive is 150. Ranks out of 52, including 50 states, the District of Columbia and the Department of Defense (DoD).
2. In addition to orientation, topics of initial training are child development, child guidance, child abuse prevention, emergency preparation, licensing regulations, learning activities, health and safety, safe sleep, shaken baby prevention, CPR and first aid.
3. Topics of annual training are child development, child guidance, child abuse prevention, emergency preparation, licensing regulations, learning activities, health and safety, safe sleep, shaken baby prevention, CPR and first aid.
4. Planning learning activities includes language/literacy, dramatic play, active play, cognitive/math, self-help skills, creative activities, limit screen time, social development, emotional development and culturally sensitive activities.
5. Ten health areas are hand washing/diapering/toileting, nutritious meals and snacks, immunizations, exclusion of ill children, universal health precautions, administration of medications, toxic/hazardous substances, sanitation, weekend/evening care and incident reporting.
6. Ten safety areas are SIDS prevention, discipline/guidance, fire drills, outdoor playground surfaces, emergency plans, electrical hazards, water hazards, supervision, transportation (with head count), firearms (prohibited or access controlled). Prohibiting corporal punishment is scored separately. States that permit parents to authorize the use of corporal punishment receive a zero for the safety benchmark.
7. Source for regulatory information: State regulations reviewed by staff at Child Care Aware® of America and by state licensing staff and are current as of February 1, 2013.

Source for cost of care information is 2011-2013 data from Child Care Aware® of America. (2012). *Parents and the High cost of Child Care: 2012 Update* <http://www.naccrra.org/about-child-care/cost-of-child-care>.