

VACCRRRA Service Standards for Child Care Referral

1. Staffing:

A toll free referral line staffed by counselors available to the public, at a minimum, 30 hours a week. Counselors will be available by phone or in person in a location convenient to families.

All Referral Specialists will have a demonstrated knowledge of child development, child care resources, parenting, and work/family issues. Specialists must have good listening/communication skills and knowledge of social service systems in their areas.

Staff members provide face-to-face referrals and/or consumer education at locations convenient to families, including, as appropriate, but not limited to: in the CCR&R office and out-posting of staff in the community.

2. Provider data

Referral agency shall maintain information on all licensed and registered child care programs. Information collected will include: address, location, phone, ages served, licensing status, hours of operation, fees, meals, TV use, smoking, staffing, outdoor areas, any special programming provisions, philosophy, ability to serve special needs or families receiving Child Care Subsidy and openings in the program.

Referral agency shall attempt to have information about unregulated sources of child care such as summer camps; day camps, playgroups, nanny services, and other creative/alternative child care solutions.

Database Maintenance:

- (a.) The referral database shall be computerized or the R&R service shall have a clearly written plan for computerization.
- (b.) The referral database shall be maintained by trained referral specialists (paid and/or volunteer).
- (c.) Referral agency shall seek validation through the Quality Assurance Program at NACCRRRA.
- (d.) Full database is updated at least annually. Current openings will be updated at least monthly, or in accordance with specific contract provisions. Records in the database shall include the date of last update.
- (e.) Procedures shall be in place for integrating interim information changes.
- (f.) Procedures shall be in place for identifying new regulated child care providers, acquiring required information about them and including them in the database.
- (g.) Update verification procedures shall be in place to ensure accuracy. The R&R service may, for example, request a signature on the update form.

- (h.) The R&R service shall safeguard its resource database through duplication or computerized back-up. The back-up database shall be kept in a secure location where it will be protected from destruction or theft.

3. Response to calls:

Either a person or voice mail will be available during working hours, accessible either by local or 800 exchange. Weekend and evening hours available upon request or by need.

Calls will be answered within 24 hours barring unforeseen circumstances.

Staff is available to communicate with the largest and the second largest language group in the primary language of each group, with a plan in place for how to access language needs.

4. Intake Procedures:

All calls will be recorded on appropriate forms/screens.

Consumer education information is offered to families which includes, at a minimum, quality indicators brochure and/or checklist, regulation and financial assistance information.

Referral specialist will clearly convey to parents that the referrals are not recommendations.

Family choice, or at least 3 referrals are given, as appropriate.

Quality indicators are presented in a language that a family understands and at a minimum includes group size, ratio, family involvement, caregiver training and turnover, health and safety indicators.

Resource information is reviewed annually and revised as needed.

Staff respects each family's confidentiality.

Disseminates or makes available written materials to support all families in their role as parents including, at a minimum: a family newsletter, a CCR&R program brochure, and early care and education and out of school time consumer education information. Community resource information is made available to families when appropriate.

5. Follow-up:

Follow up evaluations must be received from a minimum of 20% of families within 4 to 6 weeks of their calling for child care referral. All families will be encouraged to follow up with the R&R service.

Contracted calls will be followed up as defined in specific contracts.

6. Recruitment:

7. Complaints:

All referral staff are mandated reporters. There is a clear policy to make reports to the appropriate agency, and all staff are trained on reporting and oriented to the policy.

There is a clear policy or procedure in place for how a complaint about an early care and education and out of school time provider is handled.

CCR&R Complaint Policy is sent out to all families using the services and/or posted on website.

There is a clear CCR&R Complaint Policy/Procedure in place with information on the number of complaints recorded and the outcomes of those complaints.

If a parent complains about a service covered by an employer contract the lead agency for that contract will be contacted. Each agency will have a designated staff contact person for each contract.

8. Reporting:

Reports of services will be in accordance with contractual provisions.

Any non-contract calls will be reported on following agreements with funding sources.

9. Program Evaluation:

CCR&R program uses local census and other relevant demographic data to annually assess the service delivery area of the program.

CCR&R program has outcome-based evaluation in place to monitor program effectiveness.

Internal program planning is informed on various community needs assessments that are conducted and/or utilized from other sources, such as United Ways, CAP Agencies, Head Start.

The governing board of directors or advisory committee is representative of the community and/or locally appropriate.

Evaluation process is in place that involves consumer education and referral staff.

10. Professional Development:

General training plan is written for on-going professional development of staff, including but not limited to, the following topic areas: Licensing/Regulations, Ages and Stages, Effective Listening, Cultural Competence, Community Resources, Software Training, Community Outreach, Marketing, Taking a Difficult Call.

Clear orientation process is completed for all staff.

11. Outreach:

Policies and/or procedures are in place that demonstrates CCR&R is doing outreach to under-served populations, including additional populations that are identified in NACCRRRA's definition of diversity.

The CCR&R utilizes at least 3 marketing tools to reach prospective users of the CCR&R.

The CCR&R utilizes a variety of avenues for distribution of materials to a diverse group of people including under-served populations.

Visibility, at a minimum of three community events a year, for example, fairs open houses, conference, and special events for families and employers.

The CCR&R actively seeks out opportunities for collaboration and promoting linkages with community agencies/business that have a vested interest in furthering the well being of families and children.

The program regularly informs the community, including families and providers about early care and education and out of school time issues.

The program makes general information available to the public regarding public policy issues related to early care and education and out of school time.

Supply and demand data regarding demand and quality made available to decision and opinion makers in the community at least once annually.

