

# Referring Worcester Families to Child Care Programs



Families Who Receive DTA Benefits	Low Income Working Families with toddlers up to 2.9 years old & school age children up to 12 years old	Childcare For Teen Parents	Preschool Child Care (ages 2.9 and up)	Private Pay
<p><b>First:</b> Ask your DTA worker for a <b>Child Care referral to take to Child Care Resources</b> at least a week before start of work / job training.</p> <p><b>Then:</b> Make appointment at <b>Child Care Resources: 90 Madison Street, Worcester, MA 01608</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visit and/or phone <b>Child Care Resources</b> to get on income eligible waiting lists: 90 Madison Street, Worcester, MA 01608 / 508-798-8112</li> </ul> <p>Vouchers provided for children ages infant to age 12 (Call to check on income eligibility requirements)</p> <p><i><u>Start this process as early as possible!!! As soon as you know your baby's due date, if possible.</u></i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visit and/or phone <b>Child Care Resources</b> to get on income eligible waiting lists: 90 Madison Street, Worcester, MA 01608 / 508-798-8112</li> </ul> <p><u>And</u></p> <p><b>Apply for DTA Benefits!! :</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DTA Office at 9 Walnut St., Worcester. / (508)767-3100</li> <li>For families with children (under the age of 19) or pregnant women</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact <b>Worcester Head Start, 770 Main Street</b>, a free pre-school program for 3-5 year-old children from low-income families (see eligibility below)</li> <li><b>Worcester Public Schools Preschool Program:</b> Apply at the James L. Garvey Parent Information Center, 768 Main Street, Worcester, MA 01610, telephone 508-799-3194. For Worcester residents/ children 4 years of age by December 31<sup>st</sup>. <i>Selection is done through a lottery system. You should apply before the announced lottery</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visit/contact <b>Child Care Connection</b> for information on private pay providers: 100 Grove Street, Suite 102 Worcester/ 508-757-3880</li> <li><b>Get listing of in-home licensed family child care providers in your neighborhood</b> (Through Child Care Connection or <a href="http://www.eec.state.ma.us/fe">www.eec.state.ma.us/fe</a>). These providers sometimes offer flexible schedules</li> </ul>

		at or below 125% of the federal poverty level. The asset limit = \$2500	<i>date.</i>	
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**Important! Bring all documentation to your appointment at Child Care Resources or your voucher will not be issued!!!**

**Call Child Care Resources before you go to find out what to bring: 508-798-8112**

## **General Information & Referral**

### **Child Care Resources**

90 Madison Street, Worcester, MA 01608.

Before you go, make an appointment with a counselor by calling 508-798-8112 or 800-952-9183.

Provides referrals to licensed day care providers for parents enrolled in Department of Transitional Assistance. Also assists families who do not receive DTA benefits but need help paying for child care services. These families can apply to be on waiting list to receive child care financial assistance. Maintains statewide waiting list.

### **Child Care Connection**

A program of Family Services of Central MA

100 Grove Street, Suite 102

Worcester, MA 01605

508-757-3880

Provides child care resource and referral services for parents on selecting child care programs including family child care, day care centers, school age programs, nursery schools, summer camps and in-home care. Also provides information and referral to day care for special needs children

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### **Tips For Parents:**

<b>Eligible for Subsidized Slots (Low income or receiving DTA benefits)</b>	<b>Private Pay</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Apply at Child Care Resources to get on statewide waiting list. CCR alone has ability to update info in the statewide system.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Get on waiting list early (there is one statewide waiting list) at Child Care Resources. CCR alone has ability to update info in the statewide system.</li></ul> <p>Get on waiting list as soon as you know your baby's due date – no matter how long the list is!!</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Even if you or your childcare provider goes on vacation – many childcare providers will still require payment.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• For listing of local private providers visit <a href="http://www.eec.state.ma.us">www.eec.state.ma.us</a> -Then sort by zip code—to narrow down list, call or visit Child Care Connections. These may have more flexibility of fees &amp; hours of operation.</li></ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DTA clients can apply for travel time to allow additional time to drop children off at childcare if they are working or are in job training – depends on circumstances. Ask Child Care Resources worker.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Even if you or your childcare provider goes on vacation – many childcare providers will still require payment.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Watch out for Renewal letter from Child Care Resources</u> that will be sent out 6 months after family is placed on waiting list for slot. Family must contact CCR within ten days of the letter to inform them that they wish to remain on the list – or they will be removed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most centers charge a parent/caregiver if he/she is late in picking up his/her child. Child Care Voucher does not cover late fees—parent is responsible for late fee.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep the DTA and/or Child Care Resources aware of any address changes!! – Contact with these agencies is mostly through the mail!!! Reply to all correspondence!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep Child Care Resources aware of any address changes!! – Contact with these agencies is mostly through the mail!!! Reply to all correspondence!</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If your voucher is due to expire, call CCR at least two weeks before. When you call, make sure you</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If your voucher is due to expire, call CCR at least two weeks before. When you call, make sure you</li> </ul>

leave the date that your voucher will expire.	leave the date that your voucher will expire.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be on time for appointments. Child Care Resources runs on a tight schedule and may have to reschedule your appointment otherwise.</li> </ul>	

## **How to Choose a Childcare Provider:**

**Family Child Care offers care in the provider's home. You should be sure that the home is licensed and inspected on a regular basis.**

- When visiting the home look at the environment.
- Is it childproof?
- Are outlets covered?
- Are cleaning products and electrical cords out of reach?
- Are the toys and materials age appropriate?
- Is the television on? (If the TV is always on, the children may not be getting enough stimulation.) Ask about the daily schedule. Children thrive on routine. There should be a regular schedule for naptime, snack and meal time, story time etc.
- Ask about who else will be in contact with your child. Will the caregiver's husband be home? What about a teenage child and his or her friends?
- Be sure to look at the outside play equipment as well. Make sure it is in good condition.

**When touring a childcare center, the same rules apply.**

- The center should have a current license from the Mass. Dept. of Early Education and Care. National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation is a good measure of childcare quality.
- The center should be clean and free from safety hazards.
- You will want to know that you can "drop-in" at any time.

- Ask about staff turnover. Consistency in caregivers helps children to develop a sense of security. Adjusting to new caregivers is difficult for young children.
- Ask about the educational background of staff. Have they completed courses in Early Childhood Education? When you visit, are the children engaged in activities?
- Is the staff taking care of crying or upset children in a sensitive and nurturing manner? Is conflict between children handled in a positive manner?

**The most important question you can ask yourself is, "Am I comfortable leaving my child here?" If you have a bad feeling about the caregiver or the center, listen to your instincts.**

## **Head Start**

### **Worcester Child Development Head Start Program - Worcester Public Schools**

*A federally funded pre-school program. Services include: Education, Social Service, Health, Nutrition/Dental, Special Needs Services, and Family Involvement support.*

- Acceptance is based on Federal Income Guidelines.
- Children with special needs are given special consideration.
- For children ages 3 and 4 year.
- Must be a resident of Worcester. (Documentation required, such as a utility bill)
- Must provide up to date immunization record and physical exam & Birth Certificate
- Offer both Half Day and Full Day Programs.
- Half-day programs operate 5 days per week from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
- Full day programs operate 5 days per week from 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. for parents who work at least 20 hours a week, who are going to school, or are in job training programs. Documentation is required.
- Limited transportation may be available.

Size of Family Unit	Income Limit
1	\$9,800
2	13,200
3	16,600
4	20,000
5	23,400
6	26,800
7	30,200
8	33,600
For each additional person add	\$3,400

*Office of Management and Budget (OMB) April 2006*

(Please note that guidelines are updated yearly)




**For more information please call the Head Start Program Office on 770 Main Street, (508) 799-3608, or (508) 799-3254 — Monday - Friday 8:30am - 4:30pm. Interpreters are available.**

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## **Worcester Public School's Preschool Programs**

- Preschool is available for children who will be 4 years old by December 31<sup>st</sup>.
- Free!!!
- A half-day classroom-based program operates Monday-Friday.
- Transportation is not available. (Some exceptions are made for children who have a disability).
- The program offers both morning and afternoon sessions.
- All children must be residents of Worcester. Proof is required.
- Follows the Worcester Public School calendar.
- Applications are available beginning in January. Lottery takes place in April, however applications are on-going throughout the school year.
- For a children with Special Needs, an appointment needs to be made to have child assessed and will be placed in program without going through lottery.

- Applications are available at the Parent Information Center. (508) 799-3194

<p>Edward Street Child Services <i>EarlyChildhood Central.org</i></p>	<p>Worcester Resources.org</p>	<p>Family Ties</p>	 	 <p>Safe Schools Healthy Students</p> <p><b>"Building Pathways to Student Success"</b></p>
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