

## Talking Points around School-Age Care

- **Working families need safe child care options during the school day for their children to participate in remote learning while they must be at work**
  - About 64 public school districts (representing about 987,000 students) started the school year fully remote in Plan C – some children may need care 5 days a week.
  - About 51 school districts started the school year in Plan B (hybrid) – some children will need care on days they are not attending in-person instruction.
- **There is licensed child care available across the state**
  - We've made it easy. The child care hotline was set up to connect families to available licensed child care program. 1-888-600-1685. (Flyers available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#))
  - Licensed child care programs are required to meet robust health and safety standards that protect children's well-being, such as [criminal background checks for child care staff](#), [ongoing health and safety training for staff](#), [sanitation](#), [building](#), and [fire inspections](#); and staff to child ratios to ensure appropriate supervision.
  - To be open, licensed child care programs must meet [additional requirements to help prevent COVID-19 spread and are held accountable with required reporting](#).
  - Licensed child care has kept our economy going and is ready to step in again and expand their programs to serve an additional school-age children.
- **Public schools and community-based organization partners are best positioned to meet any gaps in child care for working families**
  - In communities where there is not enough licensed child care to meet the need for school-age care, public schools are helping to fill the gap.
  - To address the unique needs for care during this pandemic, [emergency rules](#) adopted by the NC Child Care Commission allow public schools to contract with community-based organizations (such as YMCAAs, Parks and Recreation, Boys and Girls Clubs, non-profits) to serve as Remote Learning Facilities (at least 20 districts are in process of contracting).
  - Public schools can choose to offer care on-site at the public school.
  - Public schools and CBOs providing care are required to meet health and safety requirements in the [StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit \(K-12\)](#) guidance.
- **To help public schools and CBOs with contracting, NCDHHS has provided resources**
  - [Sample contracts](#) are available to serve as examples for entities pursuing contracting.
  - [Operational FAQs](#) provide answers to questions from public school leaders, CBOs, child care providers, and local health departments.
  - [Guidance](#) on recommended sanitation standards to ensure CBO sites are safe for kids
  - DHHS is also available to assist CBOs with the process of obtaining a license to provide school-age care if they wish to do so.
- **We have paths forward to support families needing school-age care without needing to deregulate the child care industry and pose long-term damage**
  - Child care programs remained open since the beginning of the pandemic, serving children of essential workers during stay-at-home order.
  - Many stayed open even though they faced new expenses to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and reduced revenues due to high levels of unfilled classrooms.
  - Now more than ever, in the middle of a public health pandemic, we must maintain rigorous health and safety requirements and licensing and oversight standards to ensure the health and well-being of children including:
    - Criminal background checks
    - Proper cleaning and disinfection practices and supplies, buildings have adequate ventilation and other safety requirements
    - Buildings are in good condition to mitigate risk of fire that could result in injury or death of children in care
    - Training in Preventing/controlling infectious disease, administering medication, and Recognizing and responding to child abuse and neglect, responding to allergic reactions, and CPR and First Aid.