In an effort to keep you informed of the latest regulations impacting family child care providers, the Office for Children recently has mailed several communications to permitted family child care providers. These mailers contained updates on important changes to the permit requirements and new legislative changes that will affect family child care providers in Virginia. Here is a summary of these new regulations:

- Effective immediately, a Central Registry Search will be conducted every three years for all residents 14 years and older in a permitted family child care home.

- On July 28, 2015, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors passed an amendment to Chapter 30 of the Code of the County of Fairfax which requires more frequent renewals of criminal history background checks.

- Effective immediately, criminal history background checks will be conducted every three years for all residents 18 years or older in the permitted family child care home.

- New Virginia state legislation recently passed changing the requirement for licensure of family child care providers. Starting July 1, 2016, a state license will be required for family home child care providers who care for five or more children, not including the provider’s own children and any other children who reside in the home. Therefore, beginning July 1, 2016, the Fairfax County home child care permit will also change to allow providers to care for up to four children in their homes.

There will be other changes in the next few years that will affect regulated family child care providers across the country. Information on additional pending changes is available on the Office for Children website at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc posted under the Child Care Professionals section. OFC will continue to share more information with providers as it becomes available. If you have any questions, please call our office at 703-324-8100 and ask to speak with a child care specialist.

You Are a Mandated Reporter

As a family child care provider, you play a critical role in ensuring the safety of young children. According to Virginia law any person providing full or part-time care for pay is considered a mandated reporter of suspected child abuse or neglect. If you observe or a child tells you about abuse, that is enough to require a report. Look for the “As a Family Child Care Provider, You Are a Mandated Reporter of Child Abuse and Neglect” handout in Spanish and English available at all Family Child Care Business workshops. The resource can help you learn more about your reporting responsibilities as well as other learning resources. You can also find this handout posted under the Child Care Professionals section on the website, www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc.
Did you know that to administer medication to children in your care, you are required to take an eight-hour course and pass a certification every three years? To be consistent with the Virginia state standards for licensed family child care providers, the Office for Children now allows you to apply these eight hours toward the 16 training hours needed for your family child care permit renewal. A list of instructors offering this certification is available on the county’s website at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc.

New Partnership with the Health Department

The Fairfax County Health Department is offering a new class for family child care providers called Keeping Children Healthy. In sessions earlier this year, providers enjoyed learning the importance of daily health assessment, immunization, hand washing and ways to prevent the spread of illness. This training will be offered for Hindi and Urdu speakers in November and for Spanish speakers in December. Look for this class to be repeated in 2016!

Training Credit Needed for Renewal

At renewal time, all permitted providers will need documentation of successful completion of 16 hours of professional development. You can receive those hours by attending a class in person, by completing online training, or by participating in a webinar. You can find a list of organizations or businesses that offer a variety of learning experiences titled, “Professional Development Resources for Early Childhood Professionals” in the business section of your Introduction to Family Child Care notebook.

Register for Training Every Two Months

Starting with November and December 2015, the Institute for Early Learning will combine two months of professional development and training classes in each course flyer. The flyers will be mailed six times a year, every two months, and registration will now take place every two months. Registration for the two-month time period will begin at 7:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of the following months: December, February, April, June, August and October. For example, registration will take place on December 9, 2015, for training classes scheduled in January and February 2016. To view the class flyers online or to register for classes, visit the website at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc.

Helpful Training Reminders

As an adult learner, remember to help ensure professional development events run smoothly:

- Arrive on time to be able to participate.
- Select different trainings and topics from previous years.
- Plan and register early.
- Cancel if you are not able to attend.

Professional Development News

Institute for Early Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Registration Date</th>
<th>For Class Months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December 9, 2015</td>
<td>January and February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 10, 2016</td>
<td>March and April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 6, 2016</td>
<td>May and June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 8, 2016</td>
<td>July and August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 10, 2016</td>
<td>September and October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 12, 2016</td>
<td>November and December</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Six Marketing Tips for Child Care Providers

While there are many different methods for marketing your child care business, the following six tips set the stage for building a successful marketing strategy.

1. **First Impressions Are Lasting Impressions**
   First impressions should be consistently positive throughout every aspect of your business operation and marketing activities.

2. **Build Win-Win Business Relationships**
   Strive to build situations and relationships in which all parties — customers, employees, and business alliances — stand to win.

3. **Develop Your Unique Selling Proposition**
   Develop an answer to this vital question: “Why will people choose to do business with your child care program instead of going elsewhere?”

4. **Know Your Customer**
   Customers change, their needs change, and the marketplace and competition constantly change. Knowing your customer is an on-going, ever-evolving process to keep ahead of your competition and remain profitable.

5. **Make Customer Service a Top Priority**
   - Analyze everything that you are doing now and what can be improved. Be prepared to go the extra mile to earn a customer’s loyalty – for life.

6. **Don’t Stop Investing In Yourself**
   Invest in making yourself a better business person and marketer through reading marketing books and publications, attending training workshops, and using technology that increases efficiency.

Tips provided by The Women’s Business Center (WBC) of Northern Virginia, a program of Community Business Partnership. WBC offers free business counseling, training in marketing, as well as a host of classes designed to assist small business owners succeed. For more information, contact nicole@cbponline.org or tina@cbponline.org. Visit www.cbponline.org for class registration.

Join the Child and Adult Care Food Program

The main goal of the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program is to ensure that children participating in family child care homes receive healthy meals and snacks that contribute to their wellness, healthy growth, and development, while establishing healthy food habits that will last a lifetime.

There are many benefits to family child care providers participating in the program, such as:

- Partial reimbursement for the cost of providing healthy meals and snacks.

- Help in communicating with parents about food-related issues.

- Assistance in planning well-balanced meals and snacks.

- A Food Record Calendar to use for the monthly health and activities.

- The opportunity to participate in the EAT and RUN workshop and receive the “EAT and RUN” book to use in your child care program.

Nutrition is an important part of good child care and a healthy lifestyle. All children need well-planned meals and snacks that provide a variety of foods and the nutrients necessary for good health and energy.
Are you interested in improving the quality of your child care? Come to an information session at 7:30 p.m. on Nov. 23 at the Pennino Building or on Dec. 1 at South County Center. Learn more about OFC’s Supporting Quality in Family Child Care Homes program. Participation in this program will benefit children in your care and their families, enhance your overall program quality, as well as support your professional development. If you need more information, your child care specialist will be happy to discuss.

Read what two of our successful Supporting Quality providers have to say about the program!

Ivonne Juarez commented that, “I experienced a big change by knowing about the options and opportunities to grow as a professional and as a person.” The children have benefitted because, “I am reinforcing their knowledge and they are more equipped to be successful in school.”

Whitney Wyatt discovered that, “The changes in the environment have made it easier to supervise the children, while decreasing behavioral problems.” She reports that the many improvements to the activities and environment have resulted in greater engagement from the children and increased enrollment in her program.