



Family Child Care Homes in Virginia

- ✗ VA does not license child care homes until 5 unrelated children are in care.
- ✗ Most child care homes with 1-4 children are not licensed, which means no background check, no minimum health & safety training, and no inspections. (Local ordinances in Arlington, Alexandria and Fairfax County license or permit small providers).
- ✗ Unlicensed care means no requirements for safe sleeping practices, fire extinguishers, working smoking detectors, evacuation plans or lists of children in care (for use by first responders).

VA Fast Facts

- 384,036 children under age 6 have working parents
- 515,000 children between age 6 & 12 have working parents

Working parents rely on child care!

<http://va.childcareaware.org/>

Briele

Briele was a happy and healthy toddler. When her parents needed child care, they did what most parents do. They asked friends and family for recommendations.

A co-worker recommended a provider who had cared for her child for 5 years. The provider seemed nice. The provider told Briele's parents that she didn't need a license because she only cared for her two children and three others. Her home was in the Landing at Langley Air Force housing complex, so they thought everything was good.

But, then a nightmare happened. Briele was 16 months old. The provider buckled her into a car seat and left her unattended in an upstairs bedroom. She then left the house with her own two children and another child for whom she was caring. An 8 year old child stayed behind, but was not upstairs.

They went to the veterinarian's office because her dog had an appointment. The police think that Briele woke up in the car seat, tried to get out, and then strangled on the straps. The autopsy lists strangulation as the cause of death. The provider was charged, convicted, is serving 15 years in prison, and is prohibited from caring for children in the future.

While it is not possible to legislate common sense, licensed care ensures that providers have training in basic safety protections for children. Parents need more choices among licensed providers in communities.



Child Care Aware of Virginia's Policy Recommendations:

- Require all child care providers paid to care for 3 or more unrelated children on a regular basis, as a business, to obtain a child care license.
- Require minimum health and safety training (including safe sleep practices) annually.
- Make sure that the fingerprint-based background checks for child care providers currently required DO NOT expire in 2020.
- Require home-based child care providers who own guns to keep them locked and out of the reach of children in their care.

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