



EMBOLDEN
PRIVATE DAYHOME
COMMUNITY

NAVIGATING PRIVATE CHILDCARE

A PARENT GUIDE FOR
SECURING QUALITY
PRIVATE CHILDCARE IN
ALBERTA



NAVIGATING PRIVATE CHILDCARE



Hello there!

And welcome! I'm so glad you've stumbled upon my little corner of the web!

emboldenpdc.com is a labor of love that I have created to support both parents and providers in Alberta.

If you're in the market for childcare, but are feeling a bit overwhelmed with the process, this guide is for you!

As you may have already learned, only 1/3 families have access to registered childcare in Alberta. This means that 2/3 families rely on the private dayhome industry to meet their childcare needs.

In this guide we will go over all of the qualities that make up a reputable private dayhome, and how you can protect yourself and your children while navigating the private childcare world.

There are many private dayhomes in Alberta that go above and beyond the minimum standards for our province and we're going to help you learn how to find them!

Let's get started!

XOXO

Danielle Bourdin
Embolden Private Dayhome Community



WHAT IS THE
DIFFERENCE BETWEEN
AN APPROVED
DAYHOME AND A
PRIVATE DAYHOME?





NAVIGATING PRIVATE CHILDCARE

UNDERSTANDING THE 2 TYPES OF DAYHOMES IN ALBERTA

APPROVED DAYHOMES VS PRIVATE DAYHOMES

The government of Alberta is currently unable to regulate the private childcare industry.

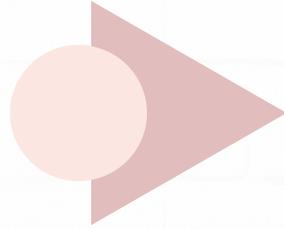
For this reason, private dayhomes operating within Alberta are not held to the same standards of care as their regulated counterparts.

This means that private dayhomes are not required to follow the Alberta Dayhome Standards and they are not checked in on by agency consultants or licensing officers like registered dayhomes are.

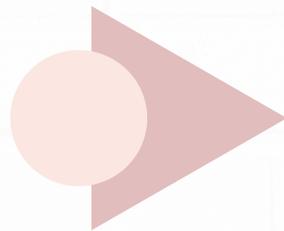
However, with 2 in 3 Alberta families being unable to access regulated childcare, you may find yourself needing childcare from within the private sector.

As a parent looking to the private sector for their childcare needs, it's important to understand where the governments oversight ends and where a parents responsibility begins.

Scroll on to learn more about the minimum standards for private childcare in Alberta and how you can take some additional steps to protect you and your family when choosing childcare from the private sector.

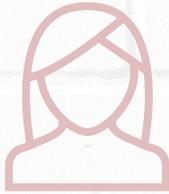


WHAT ARE THE MINIMUM STANDARDS?





NAVIGATING PRIVATE CHILDCARE



1 Provider



6 Non-Biological Children

THE GOLDEN RULE

As a private babysitter in Alberta, private dayhomes have only one regulation imposed on them.

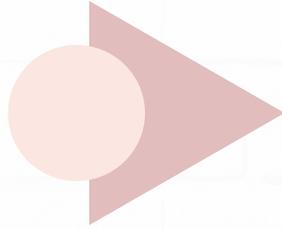
Private dayhomes are permitted to care for a maximum of 6 children not including their own.

That's it. 6.

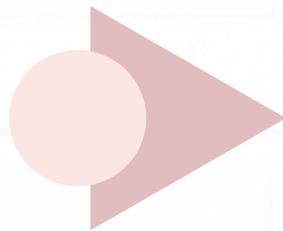
This means that dayhome providers who are caring for more than 6 non-biological children at any one time are operating illegally, and should be reported to your local Childcare Licensing Authority.

But just because the Alberta government has only one regulation for private dayhomes does not mean that you can't hold your care provider to a higher standard.

It just means that as a parent you have a bigger role in ensuring you've done your due diligence when selecting a provider to care for your child.



GOING BEYOND THE MINIMUM STANDARDS





NAVIGATING PRIVATE CHILDCARE

YOUR ROLE IN FINDING SUITABLE PRIVATE CHILDCARE FOR YOUR CHILDREN

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Before we get started on some suggested minimum standards it is important to understand that private dayhomes in Alberta are not required to follow any suggested requirements beyond the magical number of 6 kids plus their own.

Instead, the onus is really on parents to ensure that they are selecting a childcare provider that is competent, professional, and ultimately - **safe**.

And this might leave you feeling a little overwhelmed and hesitant with this whole process.

As a parent - I completely understand the hesitancy.

As a provider - I know that you will have no problem finding reputable care.

As the founder of Alberta's first private dayhome support network I have the pleasure of working with some of the best private dayhomes in Alberta and I have no doubt that you will find a wonderful provider to care for your children.

So what do you need to do?



NAVIGATING PRIVATE CHILDCARE

DETERMINING YOUR MINIMUM STANDARDS

WHAT IS IMPORTANT

At Embolder PDC we believe in going beyond the minimum standards for private childcare in Alberta and we are passionate about connecting providers with the resources and support they need in order to do so.

To advertise within our childcare directory dayhomes must meet a minimum set of requirements. These are things that we think should be the absolute bottom line when it comes to private childcare and we think they should be your minimum standards, too.

OUR STANDARDS

INSURANCE

Arguably one of the most important requirements - adequate dayhome insurance will help to protect you in the event that your child is injured while at dayhome. While extremely rare, accidents do happen and having access to all of the financial resources you may need to care for your injured child is something you should never compromise on. Ask to see your dayhome providers insurance policy and make sure the coverage provided is something you feel comfortable with.



NAVIGATING PRIVATE CHILDCARE

DETERMINING YOUR MINIMUM STANDARDS

BUSINESS LICENSE

While a business license won't really impact you as a parent (aside from ensuring that your dayhome won't be shut down by your municipality for operating without one), it does show that your provider is willing to do what it takes to run a reputable business. Some municipalities require dayhome providers to obtain a business license and some don't. We plan to have a list of municipalities and their business license requirements within the parent portal on the Embolder PDC Directory - so keep an eye out for that. It is important to note here that a business license is not equivalent to a childcare license. Remember: private dayhomes can not obtain a childcare license from the province of Alberta.

FIRST AID

This is probably the most common requirement for parents seeking childcare and understandably so. If an emergency were to arise you will want your provider to have proper first aid training. It would be a hard pass for me if a provider did not have a current first aid certificate from a reputable trainer. Red Cross and St John's Ambulance are 2 of the most common training affiliations in Alberta. Be sure to ask to see a hard copy of the first aid certificate, too.



NAVIGATING PRIVATE CHILDCARE

DETERMINING YOUR MINIMUM STANDARDS

DOCUMENTATION & SAFETY

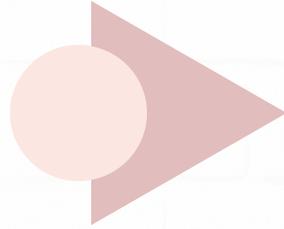
This standard is a bit harder to measure, but important nonetheless. Things to consider in terms of documentation and safety would be to ask if the provider has policies and procedures in place. What happens if your child is injured? What happens when they get sick? What happens if there is a fire? Do they have a contract? Do they have a handbook? Do they have an emergency evacuation plan? Do they do fire drills? Do they have adequate safety equipment like smoke alarms and fire extinguishers? Asking these questions will help you to determine the lengths of planning and preparation your childcare provider has gone through to start their business. A provider who puts a priority on safety and documentation is a good one in my books!

RECORD CHECKS

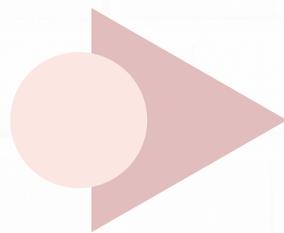
While not required by law, obtaining clean criminal record checks for all adults in the home should be a top priority for any dayhome provider. And again, be sure to ask to see a copy.

REFERENCES

And finally, there is nothing more reassuring than having others vouch for your dayhome provider. Be sure to ask if they have references available and don't be afraid to reach out to them!



GETTING STARTED ON YOUR CHILDCARE SEARCH





NAVIGATING PRIVATE CHILDCARE

WHEN IT'S TIME TO SEARCH

FINDING REPUTABLE DAYHOMES

So now that you have identified your minimum standards, it's time to start looking for the perfect private dayhome. But where do you look? There are hundreds of options available out there to help you locate private dayhomes in your area. And that alone might make you want to pull your hair out. So many choices. Some good. Some not so good. If you're looking for a better way, I have the solution for you!

EMBOLDEN PDC DIRECTORY

The Embolder PDC Directory is Alberta's first vetted childcare directory. In order to advertise within our directory providers must meet all of the minimum standards that we just discussed.

While we can't give you a 100% guarantee for any of the providers in our directory, we **can** narrow down the field so that you are viewing a directory full of providers who go above and beyond the minimum in Alberta.

Each provider profile lists their qualifications plus important details about their program, and the directory itself can be narrowed down to show only the communities you are searching in.



NAVIGATING PRIVATE CHILDCARE

WHEN YOU'VE FOUND SOME PROMISING LEADS

INTERVIEWING PRIVATE DAYHOMES

Once you've narrowed down your dayhome search to some promising options, it's time to start the interviewing process!

Most dayhomes will have a process in place for bringing on new families.

Typically the provider will ask you a series of qualifying questions to ensure that you would be a good fit and then they'll schedule an interview for you to meet them.

Some of these qualifying questions could include:

How many children do you have?

What age are your children?

What hours do you need?

Do you need transportation?

Each dayhome will have their own set of qualifiers that are dependent on their unique program and offerings.



NAVIGATING PRIVATE CHILDCARE

WHEN YOU'VE FOUND SOME PROMISING LEADS

After determining that you pass all of their qualifiers, you would move on to the next step.

Some providers will conduct a phone interview to help get to know you before moving on to the in person interview while some providers will want to meet you right away (with kids or sometimes without). The interviewing process that each provider follows is as unique as the provider themselves.

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

For the most part, an experienced dayhome provider will have a very efficient interviewing process and will likely answer any and all of the questions you may have before you even have to ask them.

But if not, don't be afraid to speak up! It's important to ensure that you know exactly what to expect from your childcare provider and asking lots of questions will help you to determine that you will be a good fit.

If you aren't sure what kind of things to ask in an interview, we've got you covered!



NAVIGATING PRIVATE CHILDCARE

WHEN YOU'VE FOUND SOME PROMISING LEADS

THOUGHT PROVOKING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Why did you start your dayhome?

This is a great question to ask. Having a dayhome provider who is passionate about their career and doesn't hesitate to answer this question is definitely a great indicator that you've found someone special.

Can I see all of the spaces? (Including nap space)

With private childcare there is nobody doing inspections or dropping in unannounced to check on your child. This means that you need to take that extra step and ensure that you have been given access to all areas that your child will occupy. While I don't think it is fair to ask to see a providers private areas (like their bedroom) I think it is absolutely reasonable to ask to see where your child will be sleeping and spending their days.

What's your experience with food prep/cooking (and also what is your approach to mealtimes? Is there a time limit? How do you serve food? How much and what types?)

This is another one of those questions that helps you to see how prepared your provider is. If the quality of food that your child eats is important to you, you will not want to skip this question.



NAVIGATING PRIVATE CHILDCARE

WHEN YOU'VE FOUND SOME PROMISING LEADS

THOUGHT PROVOKING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

What is your approach to discipline?

This question is critical in my books. It is so important that you're comfortable with the answer to this question. If you aren't, you should continue your dayhome search for someone whose beliefs and values line up closer to yours. Conflict in this area will create tension and make interactions with your dayhome provider difficult.

Do you have any back-up care for when you or your child are ill?

If you do not have access to family support or backup care this is a pretty important question to ask. If the provider does not provide backup and you will be left in a lurch because you don't have someone to call on last minute save yourselves the trouble and keep looking.

Do you charge for your vacations/illness days or are they reimbursed?

This question should be asked strictly for planning purposes only. Dayhome providers deserve to take vacation just like most people do. Whether they work that vacation pay into a higher monthly rate & reimburse you, or they require you to pay your fees even when they are closed, being understanding of your providers vacation policy will absolutely pay off in the long run.



NAVIGATING PRIVATE CHILDCARE

WHEN YOU'VE FOUND SOME PROMISING LEADS

THOUGHT PROVOKING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Is there ever anyone else in the home over 18? And if so, are they ever left alone with the kids?

This is a really important question to ask. If someone else is caring for your children you should know about it, and better yet, you should meet them first.

How often have you taken illness days in the last year or two?

This will give you a good idea of the reliability of the provider.

Have you ever had any major incident with a child in your care, and if so, how did you handle it?

Accidents happen, it's how the provider handles them that counts.

How do you manage your self care?

Guaranteed this question will catch the provider off guard! Dayhome providers are definitely not used to the parents in their care taking an invested interest in their personal health. But this is a great question to ask. Not only will you get a good idea of how the provider plans to balance the demands of the job, you will also get some really great gift ideas for showing them you appreciate their hard work in the future!

Thank you to Ellerslie Dayhome for collaborating with us on these questions.



NAVIGATING PRIVATE CHILDCARE

WHEN YOUR SEARCH IS OVER

SO YOU'VE FOUND THE ONE

Now what?

Well the hard work is done! And from here on out, it's all about putting in the effort to foster a positive relationship with your dayhome provider.

But first!

Make sure you sign a contract that lays out the expectations of your childcare agreement. If you want more information on what should be included in a contract you can find some resources within the parent portal of the Embolder PDC Directory.

And remember, don't sign a childcare agreement without fully understanding all of the policies and procedures. When in doubt - ask questions!

If you're looking for more support as you take this huge step for your family, check out your parent portal within the Embolder PDC Directory. We'll have a variety of things that might come in handy (like an interviewing checklist for keeping track of important information, advice on how to have tricky conversations with your provider, scripts for giving proper notice, and more!)



NAVIGATING PRIVATE CHILDCARE



So that's it!

I hope I have given you a pretty good idea of what you can expect on your private dayhome journey.

But before you go I would love to encourage you a little bit first.

As a private provider myself, I know that the most important aspect of running a private dayhome business is the relationships that we create.

Invest in your relationship and put in the effort to get to know your provider. Come before close, and when it's appropriate, linger a bit!

The provider parent relationship can make all the difference and will ensure that your provider has the support they need to care for your children long term.

Also, showing your provider that you appreciate them is never a bad idea. And that doesn't mean you have to spend extra money on them either. A text, an email, or even a shout out on Facebook means just as much.

Knowing that we are appreciated goes such a long way in this profession. And treating your provider like an important part of you and your child's life will make all the difference to them.

Best of Luck!

Danielle Bourdin
Embolder Private Dayhome Community

DON'T FORGET TO CHECK OUT THE EMBOLDEN PDC DIRECTORY



ALBERTA'S FIRST VERIFIED PRIVATE CHILDCARE DIRECTORY

Pre-Register Now!



Embolden

PRIVATE DAYHOME COMMUNITY

Directory

CREATE ACCOUNT

Create your **FREE** parent account to be first in line when we go live.

Go Now

directory.emboldenpdc.com