



Professional childcare



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Day-care, playgroup or crèche:

Professional childcare has a positive effect on the child's development and helps parents reconcile work and family life. Professional childcare does not replace the family; rather, it broadens the family network.

Children need other children for a healthy development. Several studies have shown that professional childcare is helpful. The children grow up to become confident and independent.

Professional childcare helps especially young families maintain financial independence. Even if one parent works only part-time, their income contributes significantly to the family's financial security.

There are several forms of professional childcare to choose from. You have to find



the model that suits you best, depending on the age of the children and the amount of professional childcare you need. But remember that your situation will change over time: the children grow older and become more independent, and you may change jobs.

Reconciling work and family life

Reconciling work and family life is always a challenge. Finding the best solution takes time and patience. It is not only about what is fair, but also about appreciating each partner's contribution to the family.

«UND Office» has been publishing pioneering work on the subject for more than 20 years. They coach parents who are looking for a creative solution. Sign up online for an initial consultation.

Please also read the chapter on „family and work“ for more information.

Is professional childcare good or bad for children?

Most children are used to spending time away from home with professional carers. It will not alienate them from their parents. In fact, there are no significant differences between children who were raised at home and children who stayed in a crèche. Some studies, however, claim that professional childcare positively influences the children's cognitive development. They learn to assert themselves within their peer group and grow up to be confident and independent.

A study on the performance of migrant children at school («Schulerfolg von Migrationskindern» by Andrea Lanfranchi (2002/2009)) shows that children from migrant families who spent time in professional childcare do better in primary school, speak better German and find friends more easily than those who were raised at home. Seen in this light, professional childcare improves opportunities for migrant children. However, whether the children continue to do well throughout their school years depends largely on the family's support.

Day-care centres

Day-care centres and crèches need a license from the relevant authority. Children spend their time in a cosy and comfortable «home away from home» together with qualified day-care workers and pedagogues. They play with other children of different ages, spend lots of time running around outside and eat their meals together. Most crèches take in babies from the age of three months. School children come to the crèche after school, have lunch, do their homework and play with the other children. Day-care centres are generally open five days a week. Usually, children must spend at least one day per week in a crèche.

Professional childcare is not free of charge, though some municipalities subsidize crèches. The rates depend on the parents' income and on the number of siblings staying at the crèche. It must be noted, however, that only half the crèches in Baselland are subsidized. The system of calculation for rates varies from town to town.



Day-care families

Day-care families are a flexible and very personal form of professional childcare.

So called «Tagesmütter» (day-care mothers) are qualified childminders who care for children of all ages in their own homes. It is a very flexible form of childcare, as there are no fixed opening hours, and everything can be arranged directly between the childminder and the parents. Day-care families are a wonderful experience for children, almost like a second family.

Day-care families offer:

- Fixed hours of childcare (hours, half days, or whole days)
- Childcare seven days a week
- Lunches

Parents get to choose their day-care family and have the opportunity to enter into a very personal relationship with their childminder. The hours are flexible, so parents get good value for their money. If you can't find a registered day-care family in your town, don't hesitate to ask your neighbour or a friend from the playground.

The federation of «Tagesfamilienvereine Nordwestschweiz VTN» acts as an umbrella organisation for all day-care families. The federation offers training courses for new day-care parents. You can find all the important addresses online:

Verband Tagesfamilienvereine
Nordwestschweiz VTN, Farnsbürgerstr. 8,
4132 Muttenz, Tel. 061 463 18 00
www.vtn.ch

Nannies

A nanny is an in-house childminder, who may or may not live with the family. The state does not subsidise private nannies, but some employers will contribute to the cost of a nanny. If you are looking for a nanny, contact one of the professional agencies. Be prepared to pay a commission fee of about a nanny's monthly salary. If you employ a nanny, you are responsible for her contract, insurance and social security. It is important that your nanny be employed with a regular contract.

Make sure your nanny is qualified, ideally as a «Fachfrau Betreuung», or licensed day-care worker.

Au-Pair

Young women or men from abroad come to live in a family for a year, working as a childminder and learning the local language. Au-pairs are considerably cheaper than a nanny. But you must be aware that they are not qualified and very young, so that you will almost be like a surrogate family for them.

Grandparents

Grandparents are indispensable as childminders, especially in Switzerland, where there is a lack of professional childcare. They are very flexible, reliable and available in emergencies. Even if they don't spend time with their grandchildren regularly, they are a great support for the whole family.



All-day schools

In Switzerland, all-day schools are a matter of choice for parents. The public schools usually close for lunch, so most all-day schools in Switzerland are private.

All-day schools offer professional childcare over lunch and outside the lessons.

Childcare is voluntary, flexible and can be booked as needed. All-day schools are closed during the holidays.

Qualified childminders or teachers share a healthy lunch with the children in a comfortable and friendly atmosphere.

They organise games and outings, and help the children with their homework.

There is a close cooperation with parents and teachers.

School lunches at primary school

Primary school kids have lunch at school, together with other children and under the care of qualified childminders. After lunch, the kids can relax, play or run around outside. Parents' rates depend on their income. School lunches are usually prepared by private organisations such as youth centres or churches.

School lunches at secondary school

Secondary schools only organise school lunches if requested by the parents. If you want to start a school lunch at a secondary school, contact Esther Kilchmann at the «Fachstelle für Sonderschulung, Jugend- und Behindertenhilfe» (Office of Special Education, Adolescents and Children with Disabilities).

The Federal Social Insurance Office sponsors private initiatives for school

lunches (based on the law on state financial assistance for supplementary childcare).

Healthy meals away from home

School lunches must be healthy and balanced. Many children and adolescents are overweight because they eat too much junk food and don't get enough exercise.

In the Canton of Baselland for example, the «Gesundheitsförderung Baselland» (office for the promotion of public health) and the Domestic Science College Ebenrain started «schnitz und drunder», a training programme for cooks in crèches and school kitchens. These institutions act as role models for families and prepare healthy and balanced meals with vegetables in season. The experts of the Domestic Science College Ebenrain provide support in planning and improving meal plans without extra costs. There is also a useful printed guide.

Playgroups

Playing is indispensable to a child's development. Playgroups for children from the age of three provide a familiar and protected space where they can play together, sing, craft, draw or listen to stories. The children are free to play whatever they wish, and whatever suits their needs. Playgroups are not preschools.

Playgroups consist of about six to ten children in the care of a qualified childminder. Opening hours are always the same, once or twice a week for two to three hours, usually in the morning.



The «IG Spielgruppen Schweiz» organises training courses for childminders. You can find the relevant information on their website.

Helpful neighbours

There is always the possibility to get help from friends and neighbours – and help them in return. Friendly neighbours make life a lot easier for the whole family.

Finding professional childcare online

The office for children and families (Fachstelle Kinder & Familien) has launched an internet-platform for parents and childcare providers in Northwestern Switzerland and the cantons of Bern and Obwalden:

<http://www.kinderbetreuung-schweiz.ch/de-ch>

The website provides an extensive overview of all childcare offers such as day-care, playgroups and school lunches. The information is constantly updated, to make sure that it is always accurate. Furthermore you can find explanations about the different forms of childcare, which might make it easier for you to choose what kind of childcare could suit your family.

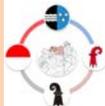
Information on foster families can be found in the chapter on „family diversity“.



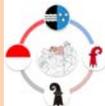
Professional Childcare: addresses and links

Please note: Most of the described services and links are in German. If a service is explicitly offered in English this is marked by a *

Schweiz	Aargau	Basel-Landschaft	Basel-Stadt	Solothurn
Reconciling work and family life				
Parent coaching by the Fachstelle UND: www.und-online.ch Privatpersonen Elterncoaching				
Is professional childcare good or bad for children?				
Day-care centres				
You can find information about childcare providers in all four cantons of northwestern Switzerland on the website below: www.kinderbetreuung-schweiz.ch	Search engine for childcare in the Canton of Aargau: http://www.kinderbetreuung-aargau.ch/index.html Fachstelle Kinder und Familien offers advice on childcare : http://www.kinderundfamilien.ch/	Licensed day-cares in Baselland: https://www.baselland.ch/fileadmin/baselland/files/docs/ekd/kj_b/kind_jugend/kita_bl.pdf	The „Vermittlungsstelle Tagesheime“ has to be contacted in order to get a place in one of the subsidized day-cares: http://www.baslerfamilien.info/index.php/institutionen/vermittlungsstelle-tagesheime	Please consult the website below to find out about childcare providers in Solothurn: http://www.kinderbetreuung-schweiz.ch/de-ch



Schweiz	Aargau	Basel-Landschaft	Basel-Stadt	Solothurn
Day-care families				
Verband Tagesfamilien Nordwestschweiz: http://www.vtn.ch	Verband Tagesfamilien Nordwestschweiz: http://www.vtn.ch	Verband Tagesfamilien Nordwestschweiz: http://www.vtn.ch	Verband Tagesfamilien Nordwestschweiz: http://www.vtn.ch Tagesfamilien Basel-Stadt: http://www.tagesfamilien.org/	Verband Tagesfamilien Nordwestschweiz: http://www.vtn.ch Verein Tagesfamilien Solothurn: http://www.tagesfamilien-so.ch/
Nannies				
http://www.nannyvermittlung.ch				
Au-Pairs				
Pro Filia Au-Pair Vermittlung: http://www.profilia.ch				
Grandparents				
Article on swissmom.ch: www.swissmom.ch > Familie> Zusammenleben> Kinderbetreuung> Die Krippe Grosi"				



Schweiz	Aargau	Basel-Landschaft	Basel-Stadt	Solothurn
All-day schools				
„Bildung + Betreuung“- Schweizerischer Verband für schulische Tagesbetreuung: http://www.bildung-betreuung.ch/	Tagesschule Baden: http://www.schule-baden.ch/Kindergarten-Primar/Tagesschule	Tagesschule Bottmingen: http://www.bottmingen.ch/schule/tagesschule/Konzept.php	Tagesstrukturen der Volksschulen des Kantons Basel-Stadt: http://www.volksschulen.bs.ch/schulen/tagessstrukturen.html	Freiwillige Tagesschulen der Stadt Solothurn: http://www.stadtschulen-solothurn.ch/de/tagesschulen/tagesschulenmain/
School lunches at primary schools/ at secondary schools				
Finacial aid for school lunch projects*: http://www.bsv.admin.ch/praxis/kinderbetreuung/01153/index.html?lang=de	Dachverband Mittagstische Aargau: http://dtma.ch/	Mittagstische im Kanton Baselland: https://www.baselland.ch/Mittagstische.317391.0.html	Mittagstische im Kanton Basel- Stadt: http://www.volksschulen.bs.ch/schulen/tagessstrukturen/mittagstische.html	Please inform yourself at your local school or municipality to find out whether or not school lunches are offered.
Healthy lunches away from home				
Advice on healthy meals for the whole family can be found on the website of the „Gesundheitsförderung Schweiz“ http://gesundheitsfoerderung.ch/bevoelkerung/empfehlungen/ernaehrung-und-bewegung.html	Gsund und zwäg im Aargau https://www.ag.ch/de/dgs/gesundheitsfoerderung/raevention/ggesund_und_zwaeg_im_aargau.jsp	Programm Schnitz und drunder www.schnitzunddrunder.bl.ch	Aktion „Znüniibox“ (in kindergarten) Rüebli, Zimt & Co (in primary school) http://www.gesundheit.bs.ch/schulgesundheitsangebote/ernaehrung.html	Programm Znüniibox: http://www.znuniibox.ch/



Schweiz	Aargau	Basel-Landschaft	Basel-Stadt	Solothurn
Playgroups				
IG Spielgruppen Schweiz http://www.spielgruppen.ch/ Schweizerischer Spielgruppen-Leiterinnen-Verband http://www.sslv.ch/	Fach- und Kontaktstelle für Spielgruppen Basel und Region: www.fks-bsplusregion.ch	Fach- und Kontaktstelle für Spielgruppen Basel und Region: www.fks-bsplusregion.ch	Fach- und Kontaktstelle für Spielgruppen Basel und Region: www.fks-bsplusregion.ch	Fach- und Kontaktstelle für Spielgruppen Basel und Region: www.fks-bsplusregion.ch
Helpful neighbours				
http://www.nachbarnetz.ch/	http://www.benevol-aargau.ch/nachbarnetz/nachbarnetze-im-kanton/		http://www.nachbarnetbasel.ch/	
Finding professional childcare online				
http://www.kinderbetreuung-schweiz.ch/de-ch	http://www.kinderbetreuung-aargau.ch/index.html	Licensed day-care centres in Baseland: https://www.baselland.ch/fileadmin/baselland/files/docs/ekd/kj_b/kind_jugend/kita_bl.pdf	The „Vermittlungsstelle Tagesheime“ has to be contacted to get a place in a subsidized day-care centre. http://www.baslerfamilien.info/index.php/institutionen/vermittlungsstelle-tagesheime	www.kinderbetreuung-schweiz.ch