

(a) (1) The General Assembly finds that:

[(1)] (I) A child is not capable of self-protection; and

[(2)] (II) If care of a child is given over to another, mental and physical risks arise that need to be offset by reasonable protective measures.

(2) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ALSO FINDS THAT:

(I) THERE IS A SHORTAGE OF DAY CARE PLACEMENTS FOR CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 2 YEARS; AND

(II) THE RULES AND REGULATIONS ADOPTED UNDER THIS SUBTITLE SHOULD PROVIDE FOR SMALL DAY CARE CENTERS THAT PROVIDE CARE IN A HOMELIKE ENVIRONMENT.

(b) The purpose of this subtitle is not to limit a parent in getting the help of responsible relatives or friends in giving day care for a child, but is to aid each parent and protect each child from the risk present if:

(1) The child is cared for by an individual other than a relative or friend; and

(2) Children of more than one family are cared for together or, on different days, use the same facilities.

[(c) The General Assembly further finds that there is a shortage of day care placements for children under the age of 2 years. To alleviate this shortage, the Department is instructed to adapt its regulations to provide regulations for small day care centers which care for infants and other children in a homelike environment.]

14-104.

(a) The Secretary shall adopt rules and regulations for licensing and operating group day care centers.

(b) These rules and regulations shall:

(1) Ensure safe and sanitary conditions in group day care centers;

(2) Ensure proper care, protection, and supervision of children in group day care centers;

(3) Promote the sound growth and development of children in group day care centers;

(4) [Be adapted] ENCOURAGE THE CARE OF CHILDREN IN A HOMELIKE ENVIRONMENT BY REFLECTING THE IMPRACTICABILITY OF CONFORMING A RESIDENCE TO STANDARDS THAT ARE APPROPRIATE FOR