



child  
development  
centers  
a fun place to learn and grow

# Easter Seals Inclusive Child Care

Easter Seals has its roots in serving children since 1919. Our association with children, and reputation for quality and innovation lead to the creation of Easter Seals Child Development Centers Network. The Network launched in September 1999 with a commitment to serving children of all abilities.

All Easter Seals Child Development Centers strive to meet or exceed the accreditation guidelines set by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Each facility offers ongoing training for caregivers; low adult to child ratios; developmentally appropriate learning activities; and top-quality facilities that meet or exceed industry standards. As a non-profit organization, Easter Seals provides its high-quality services at costs that are affordable to families in need.

### *The Compelling Need*

How parents and service providers define “child care” varies according to individual family need. But one thing is clear: the need for affordable, quality child care is large. According to the Children’s Defense Fund:

- More than 19 million children under the age of 6 years are in some form of child care
- More than 65 percent of mothers with children in this age range are in the US labor force
- More than 78 percent of mothers with children between the ages of 6-13 are in the US labor force
- More than 55 percent of all US mothers bring home half or more of their household income

With 83 child care sites in 27 states, Easter Seals is the only national organization with a child care network focused exclusively on inclusion.



### *Understanding “Inclusive” Care*

The practice of inclusive child care — placing children of all physical, emotional and academic abilities in the same learning environment — is gaining support. Both caregivers and parents are learning that inclusive settings benefit all children, regardless of their ability.

Easter Seals' experience shows that children with disabilities significantly benefit from receiving appropriate care along side their non-disabled peers. Child care experts observe that when children are young enough, it is difficult to distinguish between a “typically developing” child and one with either a learning or physical disability. Preschool age children of all abilities enjoy the same activities and relate to one another in a similar fashion.

**Special Needs and Disabilities Served**

