1. **What is the Bureau of Child Care Licensing?**
The Bureau of Child Care Licensing (BCCL) monitors the health, safety and well-being of children in child care centers and child care group homes by regulating, establishing and enforcing appropriate rules. BCCL provides consumer education and technical assistance and training to child care staff. BCCL also ensures compliance with regulatory requirements by investigating unlicensed facilities and taking enforcement actions that are necessary to ensure compliance with the standards that are set forth by the State of Arizona.

2. **What types of licensed child care are available?**
The types of child care available are child care group homes and child care centers. A child care group home must be in the licensee's own home and care is provided for no more than 10 infants through school-age children for compensation. A child care center is usually located in a commercial building and care is provided for infants through school-age children.

3. **How can I find a licensed child care facility for my child?**
All licensed child care facilities are listed on the BCCL's web page. Refer to additional resources, Child Care Resource and Referral and The Department of Economic Security (DES).

4. **Why should I choose a licensed child care center or certified child care group home for my child?**
The child care licensed or certified providers are required to be fingerprinted. An extensive background check is done at that time. In addition to the licensing inspections done by the BCCL, centers are required to have liability insurance and fire, sanitation and safety inspections. Child care group homes are required to have liability insurance and meet local zoning requirements.

5. **Do all child care group homes have to be certified by the State of Arizona?**
No, a person may care for four or fewer children for compensation without being a certified child care group home. A person caring for five or more children for compensation must be certified by BCCL in order to operate legally.

6. **How many children may a center care for at one time?**
The square footage for the indoor activity areas and the age of children being cared for in each room are ways that determine the number of children who may be cared for in a child care center. The maximum number of children that the center may care for will be printed on the license and each licensed room will have a maximum capacity posted.
7. **What happens to my child if my group home provider becomes ill or has an accident during the day?**
   Regulations require each provider to have a person who is qualified and is familiar with the regulations and policies of the home to be present when the provider is not home.

8. **How will I learn about the facility’s rules and policies?**
   The center is required to provide parents with a written Statement of Services (Parent Handbook).

9. **Can the staff at the facility give medication to my child?**
   The staff at the center or home may or may not administer medication depending on their policy. If they choose to administer medication, there are strict guidelines in the rules that must be followed.

10. **What happens when a center or home fails to meet some of the regulations?**
    When the Department determines that the facility is not in compliance, the BCCL will cite the facility and offer technical assistance to help them return to compliance. An acceptable Written Documentation of Corrections is required. If there is a consistent pattern of non-compliance or areas which endanger the health and safety of children, legal action may be taken against the facility. Legal actions may include reduction of services, fines, suspension or revocation of the license. Refer to the BCCL's web page "Enforcement Action Search" section.

11. **How do I know if staff at a center or home are meeting regulations?**
    The staff at a center or home are required to make inspection reports available to parents. These reports are also available on BCCL's web page in the “AZCareCheck” link. The Child Care Rules and Statutes may be found in the “Rules/Regulations” section of the web page.

12. **What will happen when there is an emergency and I cannot be reached?**
    Parents are required to provide at least two emergency contact persons on the "Emergency, Information and Immunization Record" card, in addition to providing their own contact information. The staff at the center or home will try to contact the parent first and if the parent cannot be reached, the persons listed as the emergency contacts will be called. In the event that parents and the persons listed as the emergency contacts cannot be reached, 911 or the Arizona Department of Child Safety will be called.

13. **What are the staff-to-child ratios for child care centers and child care group homes?**
    The ratios for centers are:
    - Infants - 1:5 or 2:11
    - One year old children - 1:6 or 2:13
    - Two year old children - 1:8
    - Three year old children - 1:13
    - Four year old children - 1:15
    - Five year old children - 1:20
    - School-age children - 1:20

    The required staff-to-child ratio for a mixed age group of children is based on the age of the youngest child in the group.

    The ratios for homes, regardless of age, are: 1:5
14. What do I look for when visiting a center or home?
There is a "Parent's Child Care Checklist" available on the BCCL's web page that can be printed and taken to the center or home when visiting. A "Notification of Parents' Rights" is also available in the "Parent Information" section.

15. Can the BCCL recommend centers or homes to parents?
The BCCL does not rate a facility. The BCCL maintains a Public File for three years on each facility. These files are available for the public to review. Each file has inspection reports, complaint information, deficiencies and documentation of corrections as well as the full licensing history and applicant information. The BCCL web page has a list of each facility by city and zip code. Refer to the "Provider and Facility Databases" section. Inspection reports for each facility are also available for review. Refer to the "AZCareCheck" section.

16. Can infants be mixed with older children?
Infants may be mixed with children up to 5 years of age if there are less than 6 children present in the center. Infants may not be mixed with school-age children. When there are 6 or more children present at the center, infants may not be mixed with any other age group. In a home, all ages, including infants, may be mixed.

17. How do I find out about complaints or any enforcement actions against a facility?
All complaint investigation reports are available on the facility’s statement of deficiencies report for parents to review at the center or home. The BCCL keeps a record of all complaints and they may be reviewed at the BCCL office. Also, refer to the "Enforcement/Complaints" section on the BCCL's web page.

18. How do I file a complaint? Who do I call if the BCCL cannot take my complaint?
Any individual or agency who suspects that a regulation is being violated may file a complaint using the Online Complaint Form, mailing a letter to the Bureau or calling the local Bureau office. Complaints are prioritized based on the severity and risk to children and are investigated in a timely manner. The BCCL investigates all complaints that are based on rule or statute violations within their jurisdiction. To file a complaint, call the BCCL between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday-Friday and speak to the Surveyor on Duty who is available to answer questions and take complaints. If the complaint is not within BCCL jurisdiction, the Surveyor can refer you to the appropriate agency. Complaint forms are available on the BCCL’s home page.

19. How often are facilities inspected?
Centers are inspected annually. Homes are inspected twice annually. All annual and mid-year inspections and complaint investigations are unannounced. For more information about the Survey process refer to "Child Care Facilities Survey Process - How the State Surveys Child Care Centers and Child Care Group Homes" available in the "Parent Information" section on the BCCL's web page.

20. Can a facility disenroll my child for any reason?
Yes, a facility can disenroll a child based on their policies and procedures listed in their "Statement of Services" (Parent Handbook).
21. Why don't some facilities have to be licensed?
If parents remain at the facility (on premises) while the child is in care, those facilities are exempt.

Local Child Care Licensing Offices:

Phoenix:  
150 North 18th Ave.  
Suite 400  
Phoenix 85007  
(602) 364-2539

Tucson:  
400 West Congress  
Suite 100  
Tucson 85701  
(520) 628-6541