

The facts about safety and Care.com

Recent media coverage has generated confusion about Care.com, our safety protocols and our services. We'd like to set the record straight and address some critical misconceptions from this coverage.

Misconception #1: Care.com doesn't vet individual caregivers on the Care.com Membership service and only started vetting them after recent media reports

The Truth: Since launching in 2007, Care.com has been focused on helping families find high quality in-home care solutions that best suit their needs. Contrary to recent media coverage, from Day 1 we have run various preliminary screenings on all individual caregivers on our site and, in mid-2009, we expanded those screenings to include a search of certain available electronic criminal records. We have always acknowledged that these preliminary screenings are intended to provide a baseline of safety for our online community and that additional safety steps should be taken by families before finalizing a caregiver hire. We outline a [5 Step Hiring Process](#) and make three tiers of background checks available for purchase in our [Safety Center](#).

It is also important to distinguish the vetting within the Care.com Membership service from the screening we perform on caregivers within our Care@Work Backup Care network. All backup caregivers are either employees of Care.com who have undergone employment-level background checks or are employed by our network of agency and child care center partners who have committed to in-depth background checking and vetting.

Misconception #2: All background checks are created equal and they are foolproof

The Truth: We believe the term "background check" is used liberally and is too generalized, leaving people to assume that all background checks are the same or that a background check will always capture a person's full history. We believe those assumptions are incorrect and can lead to creating a false sense of security. Our goal is to be transparent that our preliminary screening is just that, preliminary. Looking at the landscape of other online businesses and marketplaces, we see the term "background check" used to describe what we believe is very similar to the preliminary screening that Care.com performs on caregivers.

Misconception #3: The individual caregiver profiles on Care.com and the child care center directory on the site are subject to the same level of screening

The Truth: Our Care.com Membership service has two sides: 1) a marketplace where families can find profiles of individual caregivers looking for work; and 2) a directory of care businesses, such as child care centers. These are two distinctly different services and are subject to distinctly different screening protocols.

Every individual person with a caregiver profile on Care.com goes through our preliminary screening process, which includes:

- A manual review of the content submitted, looking for indicators of fraud or anything suspicious
- Checks against a database comprised of certain available electronic criminal records across multiple jurisdictions nationwide and against the National Sex Offender Public Website
- The use of a range of additional internal and third-party tools that use data science and machine learning to identify, detect and deter potential bad actors both during and after enrollment

We do not screen or verify the information provided by the businesses in our directory of child care centers and we alert the user to that on each business's listing page.

Misconception #4: Care.com removed daycare centers from its website directory because they were "unverified" and "fake"

The Truth: As part of the Care.com Membership service, we provide a free directory of child care centers for families seeking care outside of the home. These directory listings are not our primary offering to our millions of members, but they offer a typically more affordable option than in-home care.

In creating this directory as a resource to families, like many digital platforms, we aggregated information from publicly available and third-party data sources and gave the business

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operators the opportunity to claim and enhance their listings. Many did; many did not. We refer to the latter as “unclaimed.” The “unclaimed” status does NOT mean these listings were fake. It is, however, possible that some of these businesses had closed since they were originally included in the directory, but ceasing operation does not mean the listing was fake.

As for being “unverified,” we have always noted on child care center listing pages that we do not verify the information about child care centers. Also, in our [Safety Center](#) we encourage families to do their own due diligence to verify the information most important to them, such as licensing, references and the fit of the specific daycare for their child. To make this even clearer, we now more prominently note that we do not verify the information on each of the child care center listing pages.

In speaking with reporters, it became apparent to us that a directory having only claimed listings would be more up-to-date and beneficial for our users, so we decided to remove all unclaimed child care center listings, representing 45% of the total child care centers in our database. Now, only profiles provided or reviewed directly by the child care center operators are presented.

Misconception #5: The child care centers in the directory are the same as those used for Backup Care for Care@Work clients

The Truth: The child care centers in the Care@Work Backup Care network have been curated by our team and are subject to in-depth vetting by us or our network partners, including:

- Verification of state licensure
- Background checks on the staff they employ
- Checks against the National Sex Offender Public Website and the Central Abuse and Neglect Registry on the staff they employ
- Confirmation of staff eligibility to work in the U.S

Some of the centers in the Care@Work Backup Care network have also claimed their profiles in the Care.com child care directory, but they would not and could not be part of the Care@Work Backup Care network if they hadn't passed our screening protocols.