# Siting of Children's Residential Facilities

Important issues to consider before choosing the location of the facility:

SAFE ENVIRONMENT
- Are there hazards near the building or house you intend to use?  For example, dangerous traffic patterns, high crime statistics, inappropriate influences (gang activity, drug activity, a sex offender living nearby, etc. - to check the sex offender registry click on: http://sex-offender.vsp.virginia.gov/sor/index.htm)
- Does the building meet the needs of the population you want to serve? For example, will each of the residents have adequate bedroom space?  Will be there be space for confidential conversations?  Will staff be able to easily supervise the activities of the residents?  Is the floor plan easily navigated by individuals with permanent or temporary physical challenges (e.g. pregnancy, ambulatory issues, etc.)
- Is the property around the facility suitable for the program?  How close is the home to neighbors, other buildings?  What is the level of traffic around the property?

RESOURCE AVAILABILITY
- Recreation Areas
- Schools
- Medical Facilities/Offices
- Transportation
- Emergency Services
- Job Opportunities
- Libraries
- Mental Health Professionals

ADEQUATE PARKING FOR STAFF AND VISITORS

MAINTENANCE ISSUES
- Do you have the resources to keep the building furnished and in good repair?
- Can you keep the yard mowed and free of debris?
- Can you keep the driveway clear of snow and ice?

The standards require that a certificate of occupancy be attached to the initial application for licensure.  The locality where you wish to locate your facility, not the Department of Social Services, makes the decision whether or not to issue a certificate of occupancy.  Each locality has its own procedures and rules for issuing the certificates.  Research may be needed to determine what information is required in the locality where you want to locate.  The locality should be made aware that your intent is to operate a children's residential facility.

Wherever you locate your facility it is important to be a good neighbor.  The standards require providers to develop and implement written policies and procedures for promoting positive relationships with the neighbors.  All staff must be trained on good neighbor policies and community relations.

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