



## Child Care in Virginia

- ✗ Fingerprint background checks expire in 2020.
- ✗ Virginia could be subject to a \$5 million penalty, which means a federal funding cut for child care.
- ✗ No laws require home-based child care providers to keep guns locked and out of the reach of children during child care program operating hours.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends the “Back to Sleep” campaign:

- Always place infants on their backs to sleep
- Place infants on a firm mattress with a fitted sheet
- Actively observe sleeping infants

Child Care Aware® of Virginia  
<http://va.childcareaware.org/>



## Promoting Cami’s Law & Child Care Safety



Elly Lafkin and her husband, Cameron, decided to put their infant daughter, Camden, in a family child care home after a referral from two friends who had both been using her child care services for over a year. The Lafkins ran a VA court run, public knowledge background check, and nothing suspicious was found (since alias names are not required to be listed). Without the knowledge of unlisted alias names, they trusted the court system and felt confident with the safety of their choice. After only 4 weeks, they received the call no parent wants to hear. Their daughter was found unresponsive while in the provider’s care and following CPR efforts, was pronounced dead. When the police investigated and conducted a fingerprint-based background check, the Lafkins learned that the provider had 5 alias names and a criminal history including drug offenses. At the time of Camden’s death, the provider was on felony probation. The police found methamphetamine and marijuana in the home, as well as 6 children (which exceeded the state limit for operation without a license).

Elly and Cameron were unable to find out about the provider’s criminal past because the name check they conducted did not identify the provider’s alias names. Elly and Cameron are now strong advocates for child care safety, including support for fingerprint checks against state and federal records to ensure that no family has to suffer the tragedy that happened to them. Fingerprint checks are the only effective means to stop those who wish to use an alias from circumventing a screening.

### Child Care Aware® of Virginia’s Policy Recommendations:

- Require all child care providers paid to care for 3 or more unrelated children on a regular basis (as a business) to have a license.
- Make sure that the comprehensive background checks on child care providers – a fingerprint check against state and federal criminal records, a check of the sex offender registry, and a check of the child abuse registry DO NOT expire in 2020.
- Require home-based child care providers who own guns to keep them locked and out of the reach of children in their care.

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