

Choices for Children



Child Development Incorporated

Choosing Your Child Care Checklist

Telephone Interview

Tell the person answering the phone your name and the age of the child needing care. Ask if he or she has time to answer a few questions. If not, ask when it would be a good time to call back.

1. Do you have any openings? If not, do you anticipate any openings in the near future?
2. Is the center licensed? By whom?
3. What is the cost per week? What does this include (e.g., snacks, meals, diapers)?
4. Is transportation available? To and from what locations?
5. What days and hours is care available?
6. Does the center close for vacations, holidays, staff training, or other reasons?
7. Is sick care available? What are the policies regarding sick children?
8. How many children in each group?
9. What is the total number of caregivers in the center?
10. How many caregivers have left the center during the past year?
11. What are the education and training requirements for the caregivers?
12. What meals are served?
13. Is there a safe outside play area?
14. What are some sample activities that my child would be involved in?
15. How does the center communicate the curriculum to the parents?
16. Is there a weekly and/or daily written plan available for parents?
17. Does the center provide written policies?
18. Are parents permitted to visit their children unannounced at any time during the day?

If the basic information sounds like it will meet your needs ask when you can visit. Be sure to make your appointment for a time the children will be present. Are the sounds in the background O.K, i.e., are many children crying in the background?

On-Site Checklist

1. Is it clean, colorful, and in good repair?
2. Is it "child proof"?
3. Are you satisfied with the amount of space for activities?
4. Are the meals nutritious?
5. Do the children's voices sound happy and are they at a reasonable noise level?
6. Are the caregiver's voices calm and caring?
7. Are the caregiver's actively involved with the children?
8. Is there a schedule of activities posted?
9. Are the children supervised at all times?
10. Do the children seem to be comfortable, happy, and enjoying themselves?
11. Do you feel your child will be well cared for?
12. Do you feel your child can learn here?

If after the visit, you are considering sending your child to this center or home, ask for several references, preferably parents of children already attending.