

Quality Child Care

Check List

Choosing who cares for your child is one of the most important decisions you'll make. This check list can help you look for quality when choosing child care.

Why QUALITY MATTERS

Children in high quality early learning programs:

- ▶ Are better prepared for kindergarten,
- ▶ Get better grades in reading and in math,
- ▶ Are more likely to graduate from high school,
- ▶ Get higher paying jobs.

High Quality Programs Offer:

- ▶ Small group size (no more than 3 infants, 4 toddlers or 8 preschoolers per adult)
- ▶ Fun learning activities and lessons
- ▶ Ongoing training for their teachers
- ▶ Clean and friendly childcare spaces
- ▶ Meaningful interactions between staff and children
- ▶ Supportive, inclusive programs that help a diverse group of families thrive.

If possible, visit several providers, including centers and home-based programs to spend time watching what happens in the program and to ask lots of questions. Use this checklist to help find a high-quality program that will meet the needs of your family and child.



Questions to Ask

- Is the program licensed by the state?
- Does the program participate in QUALITY MATTERS...a STRONG START for kids?
- What is your ratio of teachers to children and your maximum group size?
- How are activities and lessons planned?
- How long have the teachers been working here? How long have they worked with children? Do they do training like college coursework or workshops?
- How do you measure children's development?
- How do you keep families informed about your program and their children's progress? How can parents be involved?
- How does the program support children with challenging behaviors?
- How do you support children with disabilities?
- Do you ever take children on outings?
- Is the daily routine shared with children through pictures and songs?
- How does the program celebrate different cultures?

Things to Ask For

- A parent handbook
- The enrollment agreement
- Fees, days and hours of operation, menus, health and discipline policies, daily schedule, and disaster plan
- References from other parents

(continued on reverse)

