

CHILD CARE Provider CHECKLIST



Program name:

Address/Phone:

Dates of visits:

1. _____

2. _____

(At least one visit should be unannounced)

Does the program meet my needs?

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| The hours are suitable. | Yes | No |
| The fees are within my budget. | Yes | No |
| The location is convenient. | Yes | No |
| The philosophy and values are what I want for my child. | Yes | No |

The caregiver:

| | | |
|--|-----|----|
| Is warm and friendly. | Yes | No |
| Listens and talks to children at child's eye level. | Yes | No |
| Enjoys children. | Yes | No |
| Is trained and experienced working with children: How long have they been working with children? How do they receive their training hours? | Yes | No |
| Is committed and happy working with children. | Yes | No |

The children are:

| | | |
|------------------------------|-----|----|
| Busy, active, and happy. | Yes | No |
| Comfortable with caregivers. | Yes | No |
| Excited about learning. | Yes | No |

The place is:

| | | |
|--|-----|----|
| Colorful and organized. | Yes | No |
| Safe, clean, orderly. | Yes | No |
| Spacious, with room for indoor and outdoor play for all ages, including infants. | Yes | No |
| Child-oriented: child-size furniture, and pictures hung at child's level. | Yes | No |

Also consider . . .

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| Other parents speak well of the program. <i>Try to get 3 references: one from a family that just started in the program, one from a family that has been there for awhile, and one from a family that has left the program.</i> | Yes | No |
| The program and the activities are appropriate for my child. | Yes | No |
| Discipline methods are appropriate and acceptable. | Yes | No |
| There are enough toys and materials to interest my child and to encourage learning. Screen time is limited. | Yes | No |
| I feel welcome and comfortable talking with the caregivers. | Yes | No |
| The daily schedule allows for quiet <i>and</i> active play, indoor <i>and</i> outdoor. | Yes | No |
| The group size is small (the smaller the group, the more one-on-one time your child will receive). | Yes | No |
| Children are treated as individuals | Yes | No |
| The center participates in the Texas Rising Star Program. | Yes | No |
| The daily schedule is interesting. | Yes | No |

And finally . . .

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| If I were a child, I would be happy here. | Yes | No |
| I think my child will be happy here. | Yes | No |
| I feel comfortable leaving my child here. | Yes | No |

Trust your instincts.



For Parents: Six Requests from Providers

As parents, you shop for child care like you would shop for a good doctor. You want service that is high quality, affordable and convenient.

But it's also important to look at child care from the provider's point of view. The attitude of the provider and parent can affect the harmony and strength of the relationship, as well as the care your children receive.

With this in mind, providers and caregivers request parents to:

1. Respect caregivers and teachers as professionals.

Most have experience and training in caring for children, and they continue their training every year. Many belong to professional education organizations and stay informed about research in early care and education. Caregivers are not babysitters.

2. Understand that child care is a business.

Many providers ask parents to sign a contract indicating agreement about hours, fees and rules. They expect parents/clients to pay fees on time and to pay extra whenever a parent is late picking up a child. Caregivers love children, but they don't work for free.

3. Leave domestic quarrels at home.

Caregivers and teachers are not referees or counselors. They don't want to be in the middle of Mom and Dad's spats. If a court order has specified custody arrangements, the caregiver needs a copy to know who may pick up the child.

4. Remember that accidents can happen.

Caregivers keep safety in mind when organizing a room, planning activities, selecting materials, and supervising children outdoors. Active children are bound to get a few scrapes and bruises, just as they would at home.

5. Abide by the rules.

Caregivers are not nurses; they don't care for sick children unless the facility offers that service. They set rules about snacks and meals out of concern for children's optimal growth and development, allergies and obesity prevention.

6. Show courtesy.

Caregivers are not maids; they don't do children's laundry. Their home or school deserves to be treated as a family's home or other property with regard to muddy shoes, trash and toys. If you need to cancel an interview with the potential caregiver, please contact them ASAP. And finally, like most people, caregivers appreciate an occasional heartfelt thank-you for they work they do.

Derived from *Texas Child Care*, a quarterly newsletter for caregivers everywhere. Visit www.childcarequarterly.com to learn more.

512.597.7191

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