

ASSESSING QUALITY

Parent Checklist

Finding quality child care starts by asking questions. Here's a list of indicators you should be aware of when searching for the right place for your child.

- ★ A close, positive relationship exists between children and their provider. A caring relationship is the foundation of good care. The adult should be consistent, kind, and patient. Look for someone who spends a lot of time talking with and listening to each child.
- ★ The early childhood professional understands child development and has been trained to care for children. When adults truly understand children – the how, when and why certain skills, behaviors, and common feelings develop – they are better prepared to meet a child's needs.
- ★ Children are cared for in small groups and receive the attention they need from adults. Studies show the quality of care improves when children are in smaller groups and get more individualized attention.
- ★ The child care space is clean and safe. Toys and equipment must be in good condition, safe, and sanitary. Inspect the eating, diapering/bathroom, sleeping, and indoor/outdoor play spaces. Well-thought out plans for supervision and emergencies should be in place.
- ★ A variety of activities are planned throughout the day that are interesting and involve each child. Children need a variety of activities such as story time, singing, games, dress-up play, building toys, and outdoor time. A daily routine is also important for creating a stable and secure environment.
- ★ Children are regularly observed and their learning and development is tracked. This information informs how activities and interactions are tailored for your child and is shared with you.
- ★ The early childhood professional is respectful of each child's unique background and encourages children to celebrate their individuality. Activities that teach about similarities and differences in realistic, positive ways help children learn to value and respect themselves and others.
- ★ Parents and providers communicate daily about the children's well-being. You and your provider will be partners, both invested in your child's development. Children are constantly growing and changing so information sharing is essential. Bulletin boards, notes, or a daily conversation at the end of the day are all ways a program can keep you updated.

Parent Aware Ratings make it easy to identify and be assured of quality. To search and learn more visit www.parentawareratings.org or call 1-888-291-9811 for a complete, free child care search consultation.