

## **A Checklist For Parents**

This checklist is designed to help you decide what things about a day care arrangement are most important to you and your family. It can also help you make sure your child's arrangement offers the things you believe are important.

Print the list off and then read it through and circle those items you want the facility to provide. Then, when you talk to a possible care giver or visit a home or center, decide whether the arrangement offers those things. Just check "yes" or "no". Use the checked-off list to help you make a decision.

Remember, this checklist tries to be as complete as possible. Not everything will apply to your family's situation. Look at the headlines in the lefthand column to see what you can skip.

For All Children		
Does the Care Giver.....	Yes	No
Appear to be warm and friendly?		
Seem calm and gentle?		
Seem to have a sense of humor?		
Seem to be someone with whom you can develop a relaxed sharing relationship?		
Seem to be someone your child will enjoy being with?		
Seem to feel good about herself and her job?		
Have child-rearing attitudes and methods that are similar to your own?		
Treat each child as a special person?		
Understand what children can and want to do at different stages of growth?		
Have the right materials and equipment on hand to help them learn and grow mentally and physically?		
Patiently help children solve their problems?		
Provide activities that encourage children to think things through?		
Encourage good health habits, such as washing hands after toiletry and before eating?		
Talk to the children and encourage them to express themselves through words and language?		
Encourage children to express themselves in creative ways?		
Have art and music supplies suited to the ages of all children in care?		
Seem to have enough time to look after all the children in her care?		
Help your child to know, accept, and feel good about him- or herself?		
Help your child become independent in ways you approve?		
Help your child learn to get along with and to respect other people, no matter what their backgrounds are?		
Provide a routine and rules the children can understand and follow?		
Accept and respect your family's cultural values?		
Take time to discuss your child with you regularly?		
Have previous experience or training in working with children?		

If You Have An Infant or Toddler (Birth to Age 3)		
Does the Care Giver.....	Yes	No
Seem to enjoy cuddling your baby?		
Care for your baby's physical needs such as feeding and diapering?		
Spend time holding, playing with, talking to your baby?		
Provide stimulation by pointing out things to look at, touch, and listen to?		
Cooperate with your efforts to toilet train your toddler?		
"Child-proof" the setting so your toddler can crawl or walk safely and freely?		
Realize that toddlers want to do things themselves and help your child learn to feed and dress, go to the bathroom, and pick up his or her own toys?		
Help your child learn the language by talking with him or her, naming things, reading aloud, describing what she is doing, and responding to your child's words?		

If Your Child Is A Preschooler (Aged 3 to 5 or 6)		
Does the Care Giver.....	Yes	No
Plan many different activities for your child?		
Join in activities herself?		
Set consistent limits which help your child gradually learn to make his or her own choices?		
Recognize the value of play and encourage your child to be creative and use his or her imagination?		
Help your child feel good about him- or herself by being attentive, patient, positive, warm, and accepting?		
Allow your child to do things for him- or herself because she understands children can learn from their mistakes?		
Help your child increase his or her vocabulary by talking with him or her, reading aloud, and answering questions?		

If Your Child Is School-Age (Aged 6 to 14)		
Does the Care Giver.....	Yes	No
Give your child supervision and security, but also understand his or her growing need for independence?		
Set responsible and consistent limits?		
At the same time, allow your child to make choices and gradually take responsibility?		
Understand the conflict and confusion that growing children sometimes feel?		
Help your child follow through on projects, help with homework, and suggest interesting things to do?		
Listen to your child's problems and experiences?		
Respect your child when he or she expresses new ideas, values, or opinions?		
Cooperate with you to set clear limits and expectations about behavior?		
Understand the conflicts and confusion older school-age children feel about sex, identity, and pressure to conform?		

<b>Are There Opportunities For All Children</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
To play quietly and actively, indoors and out?		
To play alone at times with friends at other times?		
To follow a schedule that meets young children's need for routine but that is flexible enough to meet the needs of each child?		
To use materials and equipment that help children learn new physical skills and to control and exercise their muscles?		
To learn to get along, to share, and to respect themselves and others?		
To learn about their own and others' cultures through art, music, books, songs, games, and other activities?		
To watch special programs on television that have been approved by you?		
<b>Are There Opportunities If You Have An Infant Or Toddler (Birth to 3)</b>		
To crawl and explore safely?		
To play with objects and toys that help infants to develop their senses of touch, sight, and hearing (For example, mobiles, mirrors, cradle gyms, crib toys, rattles, things to squeeze and roll, pots and pans, nesting cups, different sized boxes)?		
To take part in a variety of activities that are suited to toddlers' short attention spans (For example, puzzles, cars, books, outdoor play equipment for active play; modeling clay, clocks, boxes, containers, for creative play)?		
<b>Are There Opportunities If Your Child Is A Preschooler (Aged 3 to 5/6)</b>		
To play with many different toys and equipment that enable preschoolers to use their imaginations (For example, books, musical instruments, costumes)?		
To choose his or her own activities, for at least part of the day?		
<b>And If Your Child Is School-Age (Aged 6 to 14)</b>		
To practice skills (For example, sports, musical instruments, drama activities, craft projects)?		
To be with friends after school?		
To do homework?		
To use a variety of materials and equipment, including art materials, table games, sports equipment, books, films, and records?		
To use community facilities such as a baseball field, a swimming pool, a recreation center?		

Does the Facility Have....	Yes	No
An up-to-date license, if one is required? Ask, if license is not posted.		
A clean comfortable look?		
Enough space indoors and out so all the children can move freely and safely?		
Enough caregivers to give attention to all of the children in care?		
Enough furniture, play things, and other equipment for all the children in care?		
Equipment that is safe and in good repair?		
Equipment and materials that are suitable for the ages of the children in care?		
Enough room and cots or cribs so the children can take naps?		
Enough clean bathrooms for all the children in care?		
Safety caps on electrical outlets?		
A safe place to store medicines, household cleansers, poisons, matches, sharp instruments, and other dangerous items?		
An alternate exit in case of fire?		
A safety plan to follow in emergencies?		
An outdoor play area that is safe, fenced, and free of litter?		
Enough heat, light, and ventilation?		
Nutritious meals and snacks made with the kinds of food you want your child to eat?		
A separate place to care for sick children where they can be watched?		
A first aid kit?		
Fire extinguishers?		
Smoke detectors?		
Covered radiators and protected heaters?		
Strong screens or bars on windows above the first floor?		

<b>Does the Facility Have....</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>If You Have An Infant Or Toddler (Birth to Age 3)</b>		
Gates at tops and bottoms of stairs?		
A potty chair or special toilet seat in the bathroom?		
A clean and safe place to change diapers?		
Cribs with firm mattresses covered in heavy plastic?		
Separate crib sheets for each baby in care?		
<b>If Your Child Is A Preschooler (Aged 3 to 5 or 6)</b>		
A step stool in the bathroom so your preschooler can reach the sink and toilet?		
<b>If Your Child Is School-Age (Aged 6 to 14)</b>		
A quiet place to do homework?		
Places to store personal belongings?		