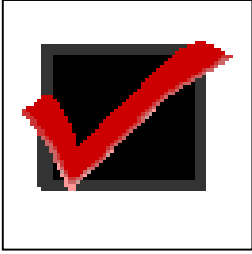


4 Steps to Choosing Quality Child Care

A Parents Check list



- Interview
- Check References
- Make a decision
- Stay Involved

If you need child care, you want the very best setting for your child.

When choosing child care, you should visit more than one program.

The following list will give you some hints to help you make a good choice.

1. Interview caregivers

Call First and ask...

- What hours and days are you open?
- Where are you located?
- Is there an opening for my child?
- How much do you charge? When is payment due?
- Do you charge for holidays, absences due to vacations or illness, or late pickups?
- How many children do you care for?
- How much child care experience and education do you have?
- How many adults care for the children?
- How many ages do you serve?
- Must a child be toilet trained?

in a home setting...

- Are there others living in the home? Who and what ages are they?
- Who, besides the provider, may be caring for my child?
- Will my child be taken out of the home while in your care?
- Are there pets or smoking in the home?

Visit and look for ...

- Positive reactions between caregivers and children.
- Children getting lots of attention.
- Clean, safe, and healthy indoor and outdoor spaces.
- Safety features such as gates on stairs, caps on electrical outlets, and a locked cabinet for medicine, poisons and cleaning products.
- A variety of toys and learning materials, such as books, puzzles, blocks, and climbing equipment, that your child will find interesting.

Ask the provider...

- Can I visit at any time?
- How do you handle discipline?
- What do you do if my child is sick?
- How do you handle an emergency?
- Do you have a back-up caregiver?
- Where do children take naps?
- Do caregivers have up-to-date CPR and First Aid training?
- Do caregivers have training in childcare?
- May I see a copy of your license?
- May I have a list of parents (current and former) who have used your care?

2. Check References

Ask other parents...

- Was the caregiver reliable?
- How did the caregiver discipline your child?
- Did your child enjoy child care?
- Was the caregiver respectful of your values and cultures?
- Would you recommend the caregiver?
- If your child is no longer with the caregiver, why did you leave?

3. Make the decision for Quality

Ask yourself, from what you have learned....

- Is there a balance of free play and routines?
- Can the caregiver meet the special needs of my child?
- Which caregiver should I choose so that my child will be happy and grow?
- Is the child care affordable?
- Do I feel good about my decision?

4. Stay Involved

Ask yourself.....

- How can I work my schedule so that I can
 - Talk to my caregiver?
 - Talk to my child about how the day went?
 - Visit my child in care?
 - Work with my caregiver to discuss problems that arise?
 - Help my child grow?
 - Meet with other parents

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Checklist developed jointly by the Michigan 4C Association and the State Family of Michigan Independence Agency