

Is Your Child Safe?

Questions to Ask Your Daycare Provider

STAFF/TRAINING

1) What ages does the daycare center care for?

2) Does your caregiver seem to always have an excuse as to why things aren't running as they should. Are they defensive or show signs of a temper?

3) Is your caregiver attentive to the children when you visit? Or are they always on a computer or smartphone?

4) How many caregivers does the center have?

5) How do they screen staff, and what training is required of them?

6) Do all staff members have emergency training (including infant & child CPR certification and first aid)?

7) Ask the center director how it screens prospective day care providers. Are background checks done on each member of the center's staff (including cleaning crews or anyone present while children are on site)?

8) Does the center meet the National Association for the Education of Young Children standards of ONE caregiver PER 3-4 babies, 4 children age 2, 6 children age 3, 8 children age 4, or 10 children age 5?

9) What are the center's policies if your child is injured?

10) Does the caregiver have a bad attitude, is short-tempered, or appears generally unhappy while at work?

11) Do the children receive the individual attention, warmth and understanding that you would like for your child?

12) Are the children encouraged to make friends with other children?

13) Are the children happy as they play and talk to one another and the caregivers?

14) Do caregivers recognize when a child is sad, upset or excited?

15) Is an effort made to listen to and answer children's questions in ways they understand?

16) Is discipline handled in a positive manner?

17) Do caregivers supervise the children at all times including during naptime?

18) If the child does not fall asleep during naptime is the child engaged in a quiet activity?

19) Do you sense that the caregiver feels good about being with children, and has a sense of humor and enthusiasm?

20) Does the caregiver have professional training in child care development?

PARENT/GUARDIAN VISITS/COMMUNICATION

1) Are visits from parents/guardians encouraged?

2) What does the center expect of you when it comes to your child's care?

3) How are communications handled with parents/guardians?

4) Is there a notice board or newsletter that is sent out to parents/guardians?

5) Is there a number you can call for immediate questions or concerns?

6) Does the center give daily or weekly reports to account for the time your child spends at the facility?

7) Does the facility or home have an open-door policy for parents? You should not have to call first, and no areas that children have access to should be off limits to you.

PICK UP/DROP OFFS

1) What are the pick-up and drop-off procedures?
Is there a sign-in and sign-out sheet?

2) What happens if you want to drop off your child early or are late for pick-up?

3) How does the center verify that children only go home with pre-approved adults?

4) Are all doors secured during the hours children are present at the facility to prevent strangers from entering?

HYGIENE/HEALTH/SAFETY

1) Are children required to be immunized before attending this daycare?

2) What are the center's policies for sick children?

3) What are the center's policies on giving children over-the-counter medicine such as Tylenol or Advil?

4) How are medications administered? Are staff able to administer prescriptions as needed?

5) Are children taught/required to wash their hands after using the restroom?

6) Has the facility been child-proofed and escape-proofed? What standards were used and how often are these measures inspected?

7) How often are the facilities cleaned?

8) Notice whether the play equipment is well maintained and is appropriate for the age groups using it.

9) How often are toys and shared items cleaned? What type of products are used?

10) Does the facility have a fire extinguisher, first-aid kits, and a secured perimeter?

11) Does your child frequently come home with soiled clothes?

SUPPLIES/EATING/NAPS

1) What are the center's policies on children with allergies?

2) Does the center have a refrigerator to store breast milk or formula, and bottle warmers for the bottles?

3) How often are the children fed?

4) Are babies fed on demand or on a schedule?

5) Does the center allow mothers to come during their lunch hour to breast-feed?

6) Is the bathroom a pleasant setting that encourages children to use it?

7) What is the nap schedule?
Does the center allow children to sleep when tired?

8) Where do the children sleep?

9) How often are bedding and shared items washed?

10) Have cribs been inspected for safety?

11) Are babies placed on their backs to sleep? Does the center follow other safety practices to reduce the risk of SIDS (such as removing blankets, pillows, and toys from the cribs)?

DAILY ROUTINE/ACTIVITIES

1) Does the daycare center offer a variety of structured, age-appropriate daily activities for the children? If so, what sort of activities are offered (examples: music, art, building blocks, toys, and reading materials)? Can you view a sample schedule?

2) Does the center have a dedicated, comfortable, and child-proofed play area where children can safely explore and develop skills?

3) Does the center have an outdoor area where children can play, climb, run, and use wheeled toys with staff supervision?

4) Are children ever taken from the facility for activities? If so, does the center notify the parent/guardian to get permission first?

5) What methods are used when a child needs to be disciplined?

6) How are staff trained to comfort children when they need it?

7) How does the center handle child-based conflict such as bullying or inappropriate behavior?

PARENT/GUARDIAN TIPS

- Be sure to get as many references as you can for the facility and staff.
- Look for a daycare center with smaller groups of children and plenty of staff.
- Ask as many questions as you can possibly think of. Don't be shy; they will be caring for your child, and your child's safety is of the utmost importance.
- Pay close attention to what you observe while touring the facility, as this is the environment that your child will be living in daily.

• Are the following items posted inside a Licensed Center's entrance area?

- Current License Name of Director Name of Director's designee Fee schedule and refund policy Menu
 Notice of any communicable disease or infestation Notice of availability and location of facility inspection report

FINAL QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

1) Do the children seem happy and cared for? How is your child around the daycare worker? Are they scared, withdrawn, or abnormally quiet around them?

2) Are crying children attended to immediately?

3) Are the staff engaged with the children?

4) Are babies held and soothed; children spoken to in a friendly and patient tone?

5) Are caregivers enthusiastic and friendly?

6) Are they caring for the children the way you would care for your child?

7) Does the facility share the same beliefs and ideals as you?

8) Is the daycare center a clean and pleasant environment?

9) What type of insurance does the daycare carry in case of an injury to a child?

10) What type of license does the daycare center carry?

11) Will you feel at ease knowing your child is in this setting while you aren't there?

- YES NO

