

10 Factors to Consider When Choosing a Childcare Center



1. Safety & Security

Knowing the childcare center's safety and security policy will help you rest assured that your little ones are in a safe environment. The last thing you want to be worrying about during a workday is your children's safety.



What to Ask and/or Look For:

1. Does the center have secure doors, strong safety gates, and a plan in case of disasters?
 2. Inquire about how medicines, cleaning supplies, and other poisonous materials are stored.
 3. Ask each childcare center to explain who has access to the facility.
 4. How can visitors leave and enter the building?
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2. Communication

Open communication can help improve your child's overall experience.



What to Ask and/or Look For:

1. How does the staff communicate with parents about what is going on?
2. How will they report to you about any problems they are having?
3. Do they encourage feedback from parents?
4. How would they like to receive feedback?

3. Daily Schedule

Getting an idea of the daily schedule will help you determine whether your child will enjoy his or her day.



What to Ask and/or Look For:

1. What does a typical day look like?
2. What types of activities will your child participate in?
3. Is a daily schedule available for parents?
4. Do you really know what your child will be doing at the childcare center?

4. Age Divisions

Age separation allows your children to socialize with children who have similar interests.



What to Ask and/or Look For:

1. How are students grouped together?
2. Are they kept within the same age range?
3. How big are the groups?

5. Training, Licensing, Credentials, and Accreditation

A well-educated and experienced staff will provide high-quality interactions and activities for your child.



What to Ask and/or Look For:

1. Does the director have experience caring for children?
2. Who is on staff? Is there a place to view staff biographies?
3. How is the staff screened?
4. Does each staff member have the right credentials and experience?
5. Does someone have current CPR and first aid training?
6. How and when does the childcare center conduct its own training on an ongoing basis?
7. Does the staff continue to receive training about the changes in childcare industry?
8. What type of accreditation have they received?

6. Location

The last thing you want to do is go out of your way to drop your child off at childcare. With that said, you need to make sure you are willing to take small detours to get your child into a better childcare center. Settling for a childcare closest to your home or work may not be the best choice.



What to Ask and/or Look For

1. Is the location convenient for you?
 2. Is there plenty of parking?
 3. Is the location in a safe area?
 4. Is it well lit at night?
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7. Discipline Philosophy

It is important to know how the staff will handle misbehavior.



What to Ask and/or Look For:

1. What system is in place to discipline children, and teach them right from wrong?
2. Does the staff avoid yelling, spanking, or other negative punishments?
3. What positive reinforcement tools does the center use?

8. Equipment, Toys, and Learning Tools

Children need variety to help them learn faster. They also need age-appropriate equipment, toys, learning tools, and instruments. All of these items help children to learn and grow.



What to Ask and/or Look For:

1. Make sure to ask about any sports or playground equipment.
 2. Look at the condition of the equipment to make sure it is safe.
 3. Are there a variety of toys and learning tools for the age groups?
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9. Nap Time

Depending on the age of the children, you need to know how often your child will take naps during the day. Since each child is a little different, napping schedules for each will most likely vary.



What to Ask and/or Look For:

1. Ask how long is it.
2. How flexible is the napping schedule?
3. Are there disruptions?

10. Cost

Last, but not least, you need to know what the cost of the childcare center's service is. Although it may be the right center for your family, the price has to be right too.



What to Ask and/or Look For:

1. What is the cost structure of the childcare center? (weekly, monthly)
2. Does the center have a sliding scale that bases fees by income?
3. Are there any discounts for enrolling more than one child?
4. Are there discounts for enrolling your child for a certain amount of time?

Best

Childcare Websites



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Where Children Learn By Being Children