



# IS THIS THE RIGHT PRESCHOOL FOR OUR FAMILY?

## A Quick Preschool Check List To Help Make An Informed Decision

### ENVIRONMENT, MATERIALS & PROGRAMMING

YES NO N/A

Parents are regularly provided with information about the daily schedule & programming, as well as about their child's day & activities.			
There are activities, equipment and materials suited to children of different developmental levels.			
Children have access to a variety of kinds of age-appropriate equipment and materials.			
Activities emphasize play and exploration through group and individual activities.			
Children have considerable opportunity for active play, much of it outdoors.			
The child care environment is set up in a safe, accessible and interesting way. (For example: children can use materials freely.)			
Children are not overly controlled or programmed; at the same time, they are not wandering around aimlessly.			
Children are engaged with the materials and environment, they look busy, content, and relaxed.			
There are displays of children's work and documentation of activities.			
The space is organized to make transitions (from indoors to outdoors, or from active play to lunchtime) smooth.			
There is a welcoming, warm atmosphere for parents.			
There is little to no use of TV or other passive technology.			
Does the center encourage use of the outside area for learning activities as well as free play?			
Are furnishings in the classroom child sized?			

### HEALTH AND SAFETY

YES NO N/A

Are the State/Business License and current Health Report posted in a visible place?			
The center is clean and in good repair.			
Doors to outside are secure.			
Staff/caregivers and children wash their hands before meals and after toileting or diapering.			
Toys are disinfected on a regular basis (daily for infants and toddlers).			
There are clear routines posted in each classroom in case of an emergency such as fire, evacuation, or accident.			
Procedures about children's allergies (such as food) are clearly stated and observed.			
There are clear routines for giving children medications while at the center.			
Cleaning products, medications, or equipment are stored safely.			
If meals are provided, menus are posted, and the food is nutritious and appealing.			
Outdoor play is offered a minimum of twice a day.			
Outdoor space is clean, well-maintained and available with plenty of shade.			
Cribs/playpens and other equipment meet current safety standards.			
Each child has his/her own crib (infants), cot and/or bedding/pillow/blanket for sleeping.			
Sheets and bedding are laundered daily (infant room).			
Is staff trained or certified in CPR and first aid.			

**HEALTH AND SAFETY (CONTINUED)****YES NO N/A**

Policies are in place for all adults entering the child care premises.

The number of children in each classroom adheres to state ratios.

What is the centers sick child policy?

**STAFF & TEACHERS****YES NO N/A**

Staff/caregivers have education or training related to working with young children.

Children are being supervised by the staff/caregiver.

Staff/caregivers exceed the number of training hours required by the State.

Staff/caregivers treat children with respect, listen to them and respond to them sensitively.

Staff/caregivers encourage co-operation, problem-solving and independence in the children.

Staff/caregiver welcomes parents into the child care environment at any time; there is an "open door" policy.

Staff communicate with each other in a positive and respectful manner (the program seems to have a good working environment).

**OVERALL PROGRAM****YES NO N/A**

A Parent Handbook is given to all parents upon enrollment.

Goals and objectives for children and parents are articulated.

Is there a daily method of communication between the staff/caregiver and parent?

What discipline methods are used?

Is the quantity of toys and materials sufficient for the number of children in the classroom?

How long has the director been at this center?

If you were a child, would you want to spend your day at this center?

**GOOD TO KNOW...****YES NO N/A**

Is the center a Corporate owned company, a franchise, non profit, or privately owned?

Does the center use the terms preschool or child care instead of "daycare"? (This usually indicates the level of professionalism of the center.)

What is the average staff/caregivers longevity?

Are the hours of operation posted ?

What are the tuition/material/registration fees?  
When are they due? Are they refundable?

Is there an extra charge for bringing a child early or arriving later than usual to pick up the child?

Does the center participate in the subsidized child care program?

Do you pay even if your child does not attend care for a day?

Is there a deposit (to be on the waiting list?) If so, is it refundable?

What is the current state star rating for the center? (Rating is out of 3 stars.)

Can I call and check on my child during the day? Can I drop in anytime during the day?

What is the overall feeling you get when you are in the center?  
Does it feel warm and inviting? Are the staff friendly and genuine? Are they helpful?