



Quality Child Care Checklist

Use the following checklist to keep track of the answers you receive during your search for quality programs. You may need to make additional notes as you ask questions.

The checklist is broken down into several categories covering a wide range of topics, from general program information to the needs of your child.

First, complete the *Program Information Chart* below for each program you visit. Then, use the checklist as you visit each program. Next to each question on the checklist are three numbered check boxes:

The numbers match the program numbers in the Program Information Chart below.

As you ask questions about each program, check the appropriate numbered box when the answer is "Yes." Leave the box unchecked if the answer is "No."

When you have visited all the programs you want to see, compare the answers and determine which program is best for you and your child.

Program Information Chart	
Program: <input type="checkbox"/> 1	
Contact:	Phone:
Hours:	
Fees:	Star Rating:
Referral #1	Phone:
Referral #2	Phone:
Program: <input type="checkbox"/> 2	
Contact:	Phone:
Hours:	
Fees:	Star Rating:
Referral #1	Phone:
Referral #2	Phone:
Program: <input type="checkbox"/> 3	
Contact:	Phone:
Hours:	
Fees:	Star Rating:
Referral #1	Phone:
Referral #2	Phone:

Quality Child Care Checklist

Setting

Do children have a place to store personal belongings?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Are toys on low shelves within reach of infants, toddlers and preschoolers?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Are the furnishings the right size for the ages of the children in care?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Is the children's work displayed at their eye level?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Are there science or sensory activities that encourage the children to experiment and observe?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Does indoor and outdoor equipment (such as low slides, push/pull toys and low climbing equipment) promote physical activity?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Is there sufficient floor space in infant classrooms for cribs, and for infants to crawl and engage in nurturing activities?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Are learning centers and planned activities available outside?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Are there activity areas that allow for different types of play (such as a housekeeping area, cozy book corner, art area, blocks, etc.)?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Is the program accessible to and does it meet the needs of children with disabilities?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3

Programming

Are learning goals set for each child?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Is there a curriculum that is followed?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Are infant activities (such as play, meals or napping) individualized?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Is a daily record kept on feeding, naps and diaper changes?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Is the children's work creative and individualized as opposed to looking the same?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Is there a variety of clean, developmentally-appropriate materials and equipment for the children, both indoors and outdoors?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Are there strollers or buggies to make outdoor visits easier?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Is there a variety of toys?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Are duplicates of toys available?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Is there a record, CD or tape player?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3

Quality Child Care Checklist



Health & Safety

Are nutritious snacks and meals planned and served? Is there a menu posted for parents?	1	2	3
Does the program encourage vigorous play and plan physical activities that help children maintain healthy weight?	1	2	3
Are foods, bottles and medicines labeled with child's name and date and stored safely and appropriately?	1	2	3
Is there a staff member trained in first aid/CPR at the facility at all times? Is there a first aid kit?	1	2	3
Do staff follow health precautions such as using gloves and washing their hands and children's hands frequently?	1	2	3
Are the toys cleaned daily or as needed?	1	2	3
Can the diaper-changing surface be easily cleaned?	1	2	3
Are there clean and easily accessible bathrooms?	1	2	3
Is the outdoor play area fenced?	1	2	3
Are the children able to move between indoor and outdoor play areas safely and without difficulty?	1	2	3
Are the program's indoor and outdoor areas safe, free from hazards, and large enough for easy movement?	1	2	3
Are there separate outdoor areas for infants that include a variety of safe equipment?	1	2	3
Are safety gates used properly?	1	2	3
Are electrical plugs and radiators covered or protected?	1	2	3
Are there smoke and carbon monoxide detectors?	1	2	3
Are fire drills conducted on a monthly basis?	1	2	3



The Children

Are the children allowed to select learning/play activities and toys by themselves?	1	2	3
Can the children choose not to participate in the activities?	1	2	3
Do the children have the opportunity to develop self-help skills as they grow, such as zipping, buttoning and tying shoes?	1	2	3
Are the children encouraged to solve problems constructively?	1	2	3
Do the children appear actively involved and interested?	1	2	3

Quality Child Care Checklist

Staff

Does a staff member greet children warmly when they arrive?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Do staff seem to like and relate well to the children, to families and to each other?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Do staff use a warm and pleasant tone of voice with the children?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Do staff welcome questions and share information with families?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Do staff discipline the children in a caring, consistent and calm manner?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Do staff encourage the children to talk to teachers and one another?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Do staff respond to children's individual needs and do they provide one-on-one attention?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Do staff encourage self-help and independence?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Are staff actively involved with the children (i.e. on the floor with the infants)?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Are staff members required to have special training in early education and child development?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Is there an in-service training program and/or other opportunities for continuous staff training?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Does your child's prospective teacher/provider have a degree from a college or university?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Have the majority of staff members worked at the program for more than two years?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Has your child's prospective teacher/provider been there for more than two years?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Is the staff diverse?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Do staff accept and respect cultural differences?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3

Activities

Are the planned activities appropriate for the ages and developmental stages of the children?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Are activities planned that help children express ideas and learn about the real world?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Do books, materials and artwork reflect cultural diversity?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Are daily activity plans posted and followed?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Does the program support early literacy by integrating appropriate activities into children's play?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Do activity plans provide for active <i>and</i> quiet play?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Does the activity plan include an opportunity for music, fingerplays, books, art activities and outside play?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Is there an opportunity for large group, small group and individual activities?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Do activities encourage children to solve problems and think creatively?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Are children talked to, read to, and sung to by adults?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Do activities give children opportunities to learn new physical skills?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Are children taken outdoors daily, if weather permits?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Does the program schedule field trips and have written procedures?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3

Quality Child Care Checklist



Program Policies

Does the program have a written statement that describes its philosophy, and are you comfortable with it?	1	2	3
Does the program have a parent handbook with policies on discipline, illness, medicine and accidents?	1	2	3
Does the program keep records on children and their development?	1	2	3
Does the child/staff ratio meet state standards?	1	2	3
Is the group size small enough so that children do not seem overwhelmed?	1	2	3
Is there a safe sleep policy?	1	2	3
Are there staff benefits (i.e. sick leave)?	1	2	3
Is there a plan for substitutes when staff are sick or on vacation?	1	2	3
Does the program have a policy on toilet learning?	1	2	3
Does the program have a plan for when a child is bitten?	1	2	3
Does the program have policies/procedures in case of accidents, injuries or emergencies?	1	2	3
Does the program have a plan and resources for children with special needs?	1	2	3
Are children's families allowed to visit at any time? Is there an "open door" policy?	1	2	3
Are family members actively involved in the program (i.e. as members of an "advisory committee" or through teacher conferences)?	1	2	3
Does the program offer children's accident insurance?	1	2	3