

health & safety

- Is there a posted plan for evacuation in case of emergency?
- Is there an operable phone on the premises?
- Is there an updated first aid kit containing:
 - scissors bandages
 - medicine dropper/spoon
 - sterile gauze pads and surgical tape
 - thermometer (auxiliary use only)
- Are the children's health records complete and on file?
- Are emergency phone numbers and the parents' emergency numbers posted by the phone?
- Are fire drills practiced and a list kept with dates and times?
- Does the family child care provider have a back up plan for substitute care in case of illness or injury?
- Are ill children isolated, supervised, and parents called immediately?

policies

What are the program's policies?

- How are children enrolled?
- Is there a credit for vacations?
- Is there a refund for sick days?
- Are you comfortable with the discipline policy?
- Are there parent meetings, newsletters, parent nights?
- Are parents welcome at all times?
- May the child visit the classroom before enrolling?
- What is the policy on transportation of children?

references

Ask for the references from each potential provider. Call these references yourself. Be sure they seem satisfied with the provider. Listen to the tone of voice as well as the answer to your questions. Ask the reference:

- Is this program reliable and responsible?
- What did you like the most/least about the program?
- Would you choose this program again?
- Did your child like this provider?

licensing

The state of Ohio licenses early childhood programs and certain types of family child care home providers. The state sets minimum standards for health and safety, staff qualifications, program requirements, and nutritious meals. The child care licensing law limits the number of infants that may be cared for by one staff person.

One person may care for

Age of Child	No. of children
6 weeks - 11 months	5
12- months - 17 months	6

A **Family Child Care Provider** may care for no more than six children at any one time. No more than three may be under the age of two. These totals must include the provider's own children who are under age six.

licensed/ certified/listed

- Is the program licensed by the State of Ohio or approved by the State of Ohio Department of Education?
- Is the license/certification posted for your review?
- Is the home provider certified through the County Department of Job and Family Services or participating in the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program?
- If the home provider cares for more than six children, is it licensed by the Ohio Dept. of Job and Family Services.
- Is the home provider listed with Child Care Connection (call 330-376-7706 or 1-800-407-KIDS for verification.)

Disclaimer

Child Care Connection does not endorse, rate, recommend, or evaluate child care resources, programs, or providers and therefore, Child Care Connection does not assume, warrant, or guarantee quality care. Any information about a caregiver/provider has been provided solely by that caregiver/provider. Child Care Connection believes that consumers are in the best position to evaluate and choose resources appropriate to their child's needs.

Choosing an Infant Program



a program of Info Line, Inc.

800-407-5437

330-376-7706

www.childcare-connection.org

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Parent's Role

As a parent of an infant, you need to consider even more things when choosing the best child care. Use this guide along with the enclosed checklist to evaluate infant programs in licensed centers and family child care homes.

1. Call

... several programs/providers to find out details on cost, hours, programs available, and location.

2. Visit

... at least two programs/providers and evaluate them to make the right choice for you and your child.

3. Monitor

... the program/provider you have chosen on a daily basis but also drop in unannounced. If you have questions or concerns about the care your child is getting, communicate those concerns to the caregiver or to the director of the program.

4. Evaluate

... the program/provider while you are making your choice and every day you drop off and pick up your child.

caregiver

- Does the director of the child care program have a degree or coursework in early childhood development?
- Does the home provider have experience with children your child's age?
- Do you and the caregiver share the same views on crying, feeding, discipline, schedules, and toilet training?
- Is the caregiver warm, nurturing, and patient?
- Does the staff member/home provider:
 - Greet the child and parent warmly?
 - Laugh with, talk to, and listen to each child?
 - Use positive discipline?
 - Give love and attention to each child?
 - Work well with other adults?
 - Participate in on-going, in-service training on issues relating to the care of the children?

environment

- Is the center or family child care home bright and cheerful?
- Is the center/home clean?
- Are there lots of pillows and mats for soft, cozy areas; carpets and tile areas for a variety of experiences?
- Are electrical outlets covered?
- Are there gates at stairwells and doorways?
- Are there smoke detectors and fire extinguishers?
- Are there at least two exits to the outside?
- Are cleaning supplies and other dangerous substances out of reach of children?
- Is there room for the children to move with a separate, low partition to keep very small children safe from those learning to walk?

naptime

- Does each child have his/her own crib?
- Are the infants permitted to sleep according to their own needs?
- Is the room darkened and soothing attention given to each child as he/she falls asleep?



daily schedule

- Is the daily schedule posted and does it indicate the activities which will be included in the day?
- Are the children free to choose their own activities?
- Is there time for active play; for quiet play?
- Is there time for outdoor play when the weather permits?
- Do parents receive a report daily on their child's day, including eating, sleeping, and the fun they had while playing?

meals/snacks

- Are nutritious meals and snacks provided?
- Are children given finger foods when old enough and encouraged to feed themselves?
- Are menus posted?
- Are meal times relaxed and enjoyable?
- Is food ever withheld as a punishment?
- Are individual children's cultural and religious food preferences met, if requested?

diapering

- Are the diapering areas clean, well ventilated, odor-free, and away from feeding areas?
- Are children closely attended to during diaper change?
- Are soiled diapers changed immediately and is the baby thoroughly cleaned after each dirty diaper?
- Are diapers disposed of in a separate closed container?
- Does the caregiver wash hands thoroughly after each and every diaper change?
- Is the changing table disinfected after every diaper change?

equipment

- Are there a variety of objects to stimulate the senses of sight, hearing, and touch?
- Are the toys appropriate to the ages of the children?
- Are the toys large enough to avoid being choking hazards?
- Are there enough infant seats, high chairs with seat belts, and strollers for the number of children?
- Is the equipment child sized?