

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
 - sterile gauze pads and surgical tape
 - thermometer (auxiliary use only)
 - medicine dropper or spoon
- 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?
- 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, or 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 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 toddlers that may be cared for by one staff person in a child care center.

One person may care for:

Age of Child	No. of Children
18 months - 29 months	7
30 months - 35 months	8

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 Department of Job and Family Services?
- Is the home provider listed with Child Care Connection? (Call 330-376-7706 or 1-800-407-5437 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 a Toddler Program



800-407-5437
330-376-7706

www.childcare-connection.org



Child Care Connection is
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Alliance of Information & Referral Systems



Parent's Role

As a parent of a toddler you'll want to carefully select child care. Use this guide along with the enclosed checklist to evaluate programs you are considering for your child.

1. Call

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

2. Visit

... at least two programs/providers.

3. Evaluate

... use our *Quality Indicator Checklist* to evaluate the program/provider.

4. Monitor

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

naptime

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

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?

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 a choking hazard?
- Are there high chairs with seat belts for the youngest toddlers and child sized tables and chairs for the older toddlers?
- Is the equipment child sized and easy to reach?
- Are there toys for different kinds of play?
 - books
 - climbing equipment
 - puzzles
 - sand and water
 - blocks
 - push and pull toys
 - art supplies
 - dress up clothes
 - balls
 - riding toys
 - music

daily schedule

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

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?
- Are children's hands washed before eating?
- Are individual children's cultural and religious food preferences met, if requested?

diapering/toilet training

- Are the diapering/toilet training 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?
- Does the caregiver wash the children's hands thoroughly after diaper changes?
- Is the changing table disinfected after every diaper change?
- Is the decision to begin toilet training made by the parents and the staff so that training is a joint effort at home and at the center/provider?
- Is toilet training started when the child shows interest and is physically ready to train?
- Are accidents treated casually as a natural part of the learning process?

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?