

Checklist for Visiting Child Care Programs

When you visit a program, you get a chance to see it “in action” and decide whether a place that will provide high-quality care for your child. Use this checklist to help guide your visit:

LOOK around the program.

- Are adults spending most of their time interacting with children?
- Do adults get down on the children’s eye level regularly?
- Is the room clean, spacious, and inviting for children?
- Are activity schedules and emergency evacuation plans posted?
- Are the toys appropriate for the ages of children in the group?
- Are the toys stored on open shelves within children’s reach?
- Does the program have a clean, safe, fenced outdoor play area?
- Do the adults wash their hands and children’s hands regularly?
- Do the adults supervise children at all times by watching and listening?
- Do the adults redirect misbehaving children to more appropriate activities?



LISTEN to the sound of the room.

- Do children sound happy and enthusiastic?
- Do adults guide children’s behavior using calm, gentle reminders?
- Do adults use new words and phrases to encourage children’s thinking and language skills?
- Do adults talk to children during mealtimes, diapering, and playtime?
- Is the overall sound of the room pleasant?

ASK questions of the directors and staff.

- What is the daily routine like?
- How flexible is the routine?
- What kind of curriculum is used?
- How and when do children get to choose activities?
- What types of foods are served for meals and snacks?
- When are parents permitted to visit the program?
- How does the program keep parents informed?

