CHILD CARE CHECKLIST FOR PARENTS

Choosing Child Care for Your Loved One(s)

Selecting child care for your child is a big responsibility. The type of care that your child receives during the day will impact the type of person he or she becomes. The following is presented to you to use as a guide in evaluating the child care arrangements for your child. It is just that – a guide. It was developed using state licensing and registration requirements. Using this and other considerations, you as the parent, must decide what you want for your child.

As the parent, you should visit the child care facility several times before deciding to allow them to care for your child. Visit at different times of the day and go unannounced. If you are not welcomed into the facility, be concerned. Stay and observe what the children are doing. Watch and listen to how the adults talk to the children. Listen for the sounds the children are making. Do you hear laughter, questioning and conversation or do you hear shouting, crying and silence? How do you as the adult feel while you are there? Do you feel respected and welcome?

How Does Your Child's Day Care Rate?

The following is a checklist of observable behaviors to consider when selecting a childcare facility for your child. Go through the checklist and record either yes or no beside each item. Make yourself notes in the comment section. You probably will not see everything the first time you visit, so plan on several trips.

Count the number of yes marks that you have recorded. Then compare the number to the ratings below:

Total "Yes"	Recommendations	
45-56	This child care arrangement appears to be following practices that most Early Childhood professionals feel enhances the positive development of young children.	
35-44	This child care arrangement is doing many things that advocates for young children feel are important. Ask the provider about the items you checked no on to begin a conversation to help you decide how important these items are to you.	
25-34	This child care arrangement is not following practices as established through research on what is best for young children. Use the checklist to talk with the provider to determine if improvements can be made.	
Less than 25	This child care arrangement is perhaps minimal in meeting the needs of young children.	

This checklist is to be used as a guide and is not an endorsement of any program. You as the parent are responsible for any decision regarding childcare arrangements for your child. This checklist is provided by Imagine Nation Learning Center as an aid in your search for child care.

Child Care Center Visitation Information

Name of Center	
Address	
Phone	
Email	
Website	
Cost of Care	
Infants	
12-18 months	
18-24 months	
2 year olds	
3 year olds	
4 year olds	
School age	

Visitation Schedule:

Date	Time

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Questions		No	Comments
Qualifications			
Is the center licensed and is the license displayed?			
Does the Director or Provider have a degree or special training in			
Early Childhood Education?			
Is the staff/provider required to attend training regularly? What kind			
of training do they attend?			
Are there professional books and resources available for the staff?			
Do teacher/child ratios meet or exceed state requirements?			
In Texas Childcare Centers			
Infants – 1:4 or 2:10			
12-18 months – 1:5 or 2:13			
18-24 months – 1:9 or 2:10			
2 yr olds – 1:11 or 2:22			
3 yr olds – 1:15 or 2:30			
4 yr olds – 1:18 or 2:35			
School age – 1:26 or 2:35			
Is there adequate space for my child to play and explore freely?			
Safety Consideration			
Is someone trained in CPR and first aid always present?			
Are thorough reference checks conducted on all child care providers?			
Is there a security system in place that restricts access of strangers to			
the facility?			
Are well-defined written emergency procedures in place?			
Is the environment safe, clean and oriented to children?			
Will my child nap in a place that is quiet and safe?			
Is there a strict and enforced policy in place for releasing children to			
people other than their parents/guardians?			
Is there an open door policy that encourages parents to			
visit the facility at any time?			
Health Considerations			
Is there a regular cleaning schedule for all areas of the facility?			
(Centers should be use a professional cleaning service)			
Are toys and materials disinfected on a regular basis?			
Are consistent, classroom-specific efforts made to limit illnesses from			
spreading?			
Do caregivers wash hands regularly (after diapering, toileting,			
blowing noses, and before handling food)?			
Are children required to wash their hands often? (After toileting,			
blowing noses, playing outside, before eating?)			
Are medications stored out of the reach of children and			
administered properly?			
Does the facility or home require me to provide a physical and			
immunization records in order to enroll?			
Does the center or home know who to call in case of an emergency			
for my child?			
Is there a place for children who don't feel well to be isolated from			
other children?			
Are safety precautions in place regarding any animals in the childcare			
facility?			
Outdoor Play Area			
Is the outdoor play area fenced?			
Are there grassy areas and hard surfaces for children to play on			
outside?			
Is the outdoor play area equipment in good condition with no peeling			
paint, rust or splinters?			
Nutrition			
Does the facility serve nutritious snacks and meals?			
Are menus posted?	Ī		

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