

## PICK THE RIGHT DAYCARE FOR YOUR FAMILY

HELP ME CONNECT is a navigator connecting expectant families, families with young children (birth - 8 years old) and those working with families to services in their local communities that support healthy child development and family wellbeing.

Use the link below to find a tutorial on how to best use "HELP ME CONNECT" in your search for the right daycare for your family. You will also find other resources to support you and your family in meeting your parenting goals.

<https://familywiseservices.org/find-parenting-support/parenting-resources/>

*This checklist was created for families inquiring about potential child care providers.*

*We recommend that you make an onsite visit to any provider that you are considering.*



# DAY CARE CHECKLIST

## WHAT TO LOOK FOR NOTES:

Provider Name:

Provider Phone Number:

Provider Address:

Date of on-site visit:

## BASICS

Is the childcare provider licensed? If so, is the license posted?

What are the hours of operation?

How many hours of childcare do I need?

Do I need childcare assistance? If so, applied? When?

Does the childcare provider accept childcare assistance?

Is there enough space for the number of children enrolled?

How many staff per child?

What age group does the program provide?

Are the age groups all together or separated?

Does the program meet my child's needs?

Ask about contracts that cover financial obligations such as: payment schedule, discounts, bad weather, and sick day policies.

## PHYSICAL SETTING

*Check for:*

Sharp edges, uncovered outlets, open stairs, exposed harmful products, cleaning products, smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, radiators, covers, and window safety guards, carbon monoxide detectors.

*Ask about:*

Fire drills, weather emergency plans, fire escapes, secondhand smoke, policy on people coming in and out of the location.

Is the setting clean? (Check bathroom, kitchen, sleeping, and play areas.)

Is the changing area safe and sanitary?

Do the providers wash hands after each diaper change?

Are potty chairs or child-size toilets available?

Is the sleeping area in a quiet location?

What is the washing protocol for cleaning sheets and blankets?

Are there areas for active and quiet play?

Are there infant playpens, swings, and toys available?

Is there floor space to crawl on?

Does the classroom have enough space for all age children to move around freely?

Are there safe toys on low shelves within the children's reach?

Is there an outdoor play area, is it fenced in? Free of hazards? Does it have shade?

Is there air conditioning and heat throughout the year?

From the central point in the room, can a provider see the entire area?

Is there an entry point where visitors can check in and out?

Are children signed in and out each day?

## CARE PROVIDER

How does the provider encourage potty training?

Is the provider clean and neatly groomed?

Does the provider get down on the child's level to talk with them?

Does the provider have training in early childhood education or child development?

Is the provider CPR and first aid certified?

Share your beliefs on teaching religious values and ask if religious values are taught. Are they?

If they are a family care provider, is there back-up care if ill or on vacation?

What are the provider's discipline practices? Are they legal and are they acceptable to me?

How does the provider encourage safe and independent learning?

Does the provider positively reinforce good behavior and enhance child's self-esteem?

Does the provider help make children feel good about themselves by being attentive and accepting?

Does the provider provide guidance strategies to encourage self-control and use of appropriate social skills?

## ACTIVITIES

What is the daily schedule? (Naps, play time, story time, activity time, individual time, outside time)

Are activities appropriate for the age group?

Is the schedule and curriculum posted on a daily/weekly basis?

Are there field trips arranged? If so, what is the safety protocol?

Are meals and snacks provided?

Are the toys and equipment clean, safe, age-appropriate and at a child's level to be reached?

How often is the play area and entire room cleaned and sanitized?

Are children encouraged to participate in the same activities, regardless of gender?

Does the program have craft projects, sports equipment, drama activities, and games that would interest a broad spectrum of child types?

Do the children have gross motor opportunities?

Are the children taken outside frequently? Infants and toddlers?

Is transportation an option? If so, how much? Are seat belts and child safety seats available?

## **PARENT'S ROLE**

Are unannounced visits encouraged?

Does the provider share the child(ren)'s activities daily?

Are you encouraged to give your opinion on what, if anything, needs to be changed?

Are there formal parent-provider conferences/reports on your child's development that are offered regularly?

Does the provider provide a variety of opportunities for parent's involvement?

## **FIRST IMPRESSIONS**

Do the children sound and look happy?

Are there visible positive interactions between child(ren) and provider(s)?

Is the atmosphere child friendly?

Is there children's artwork displayed?

Is there décor at children's eye level?

## **INFANTS AND TODDLERS**

Are there daily report records tracked on feeding, sleeping, diapering, and developmental milestones that are provided to parents daily?

Are diapers provided?

Will the provider use cloth diapers, if requested?

Are wipes provided?

Is formula provided?

Is there a safe place to store breast milk if need be?



How will breast milk be warmed?

Is the child held when fed?

Are infants checked on a regular basis for wet diapers?

How are infants laid to rest? How often are they checked while they sleep?

**NOTES:**