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# Tips on Choosing Child Care



Choosing quality child care for your family is a very important decision. You want to find a safe, healthy environment that supports the social, physical, intellectual, creative and emotional development of your children.

Start early. Make a call. Go on a tour.

*Here are some tips on what to look for when choosing child care:*



## Environment & Facility

- Is the centre clean and attractive?
- What are the hours of operation? And what days of the year is the centre closed?
- What is the number of days that one must commit to care?
- Does the centre offer flexible days (part-time and back-up/emergency care)?
- Does the centre charge late fees?
- Review the child care license which should be posted and easily accessible to parents. Are there any conditions listed on the license?
- What are the centre's health and guidance policies? Ask to review to ensure they fit with your own practices.
- Are the learning materials and toys clean and kept in good repair?
- Are the classrooms warm and inviting and room for the children to play?
- Is the physical environment safe and secure?
- Does it have easy access to outdoor play area?
- Does the centre have web cameras?
- Can parents visit at any time?



## Curriculum & Programming

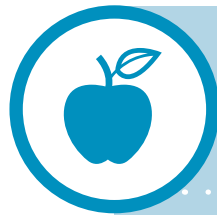
- Is there an induction/transition program offered?
- Are there age appropriate toys that allow for creativity and skill building?
- What type of materials and resources are available for children?
- Is there an art enrichment program? Literacy program? Science program? Music program? French program? Sign language for infants?
- Does the centre offer a Montessori program? And/or a Kindergarten type program?
- Does the centre have a daily timetable which you can see?
- What are the daily routines and how can you incorporate my child's and other children's routines?
- Are developmental assessments completed for the children? Is there an opportunity for the parents to meet with the teachers?





## Staff

- What are the qualifications for the Director of the Centre? The Assistant Director?
- What are the qualifications for teachers? Do they have CPR? First Aid?
- What are the child to teacher ratios at the centre?
- What is the onboarding training for teachers?
- Are teachers sensitive to the needs of children of different ages?
- Are teachers engaged and involved with children?
- Teachers should give each parent time to discuss the daily routine and any parent concerns
- Do the teachers fill out daily reports?
- Are developmental assessments completed? How often?



## Nutrition - Food & Mealtimes

- Does food meet the standards in Canada's Food Guide?
- What will the children eat and drink during the day?
- What time do children eat?
- Do teachers sit with children during meals?
- Is the food catered or is there an on-site kitchen?
- Is the food additive and preservative free? Fresh?
- Does the centre accommodate dietary restrictions and allergies?
- Is the centre a tree nut, peanut, shellfish and pork product free facility?
- Is water offered and available during the day?
- Is there a menu on display and does it look interesting and varied?



## Health & Safety

- Do teachers and children wash their hands before and after diapering or toileting?
- Are medications stored in locked containers, out of reach of children?
- Is all indoor and outdoor equipment clean and safe?
- Do teachers have training in child care first aid?
- Does the centre accommodate dietary restrictions and allergies?
- Are there procedures in place to document any accidents?
- How will you be advised if your child is sick or has an accident?



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