

Child Care Center/Preschool Checklist

The following is a list of questions to ask when choosing a child care center or preschool. When selecting a center first take some time to think about the type of care, cost and location which will meet your family's needs. Call the programs which appear to meet those needs and use the first section of this list to gather information. Make appointments to visit several locations which sound acceptable by phone. It's best to visit at a time when the children are active so you can observe the adult/child interaction.

- Briefly describe the program: _____

- How long has the center been operating? _____
- How many children are enrolled in the center? In each class? _____
- What precautions are taken to make sure a child is released to the proper adult? _____
- Names of two parent references: _____
- What do the fees include? _____
- Do I pay fees when children are gone due to illness, vacation or holidays? _____

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

Yes No

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is the setting bright, cheerful, clean and orderly? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are the indoor and outdoor play areas safe from dangerous equipment, materials, and other items? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are poisons and medications locked up? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are plans for fire and severe weather posted and drills carried out regularly? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is there a large variety of books, art materials, blocks, toys, games, puzzles, etc? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is there enough space indoors and out so all the children can move freely and safely? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are the restrooms adequate, accessible and clean? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Will I be notified if my child will be off the center grounds? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are meals and snacks appropriate and nutritious? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do children brush their teeth and wash their hands regularly? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | If the Center/Preschool transports children, are there individual seat belts for each child and car seats or boosters for children under age 4? |

INFANTS AND TODDLERS

Do the caregivers:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Provide stimulation by offering things to look at, touch, and listen to? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Spend time holding, playing with, and talking to the babies? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Care for the physical needs of diapering and feeding in a sanitary manner? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Cooperate with parent's efforts to toilet train their toddler? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do most staff have academic training in Early Childhood Education or Child Development? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Have most been in the program for a least a year? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are they warm, friendly, and calm in dealing with both children and adults? |

- Are there enough adults to give adequate attention to each child? Kansas regulations limit the maximum number of children to adults and total number of children per class as follows:

Age group	# Adults	# Children	Class Size
Infants	1	3*	9*
Toddlers	1	5*	10*
Preschool	1	12*	24*
School age	1	16*	32*

*These are **maximums**. Fewer children per adult and smaller groups are recommended unless staff are highly qualified.

- Are appropriate adult/child ratios maintained throughout the day?

PROGRAM

- Does the center have established educational goals for the children?
- Are activities planned with these goals in mind?
- Does the center staff evaluate itself regularly?
- Do children have opportunities to choose activities?
- Is the daily program planned to provide a balance and variety of:
 - Active and quiet time? Group and individual activities?
 - Indoor and Outdoor play? Adequate rest times?
- Are there activities which stimulate:
 - Intellectual development? Physical and muscle development?
 - Language development? Creativity - art, music, dramatic play?
- Is the child's social and emotional development encouraged?
- Are simple, consistent limits of behavior set and maintained?
- Do teachers assist children in problem solving?
- Do adults bend down to the child's level when talking to them?
- Are children comforted when needed?

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

- Are parents encouraged to visit the center at any time?
- Do staff take time to talk to parents and make them feel welcome?
- Can parents get regular feedback on children's behavior? How?
- Are there opportunities for parent participation?

****Child Care Centers and Preschools must be licensed by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. If you are concerned about what you see at a center, call the Health Department at 268-8351 or the Child Care Association at 682-3962.**

