

Checklist for Choosing Quality Child Care

You have a lot to consider when selecting a child care provider. Use this checklist to help determine the right provider for you.

What to look for

- Staff are happy, engaged, and provide individual, positive attention.
- Staff interact at the child's level, promoting listening, talking, and play.
- The environment is cheerful, clean, and safe with well-maintained equipment.
- A daily schedule includes free play, naps, meals, outdoor/indoor play, and learning activities.
- Children have opportunities to make choices throughout the day.
- Meals/snacks are nutritious, with a posted menu offering healthy choices.
- The outdoor play area is safe, fenced, and supervised.
- Handwashing is practiced after key activities.
- Emergency numbers and evacuation routes are clearly posted.

Toddler care considerations

- Caregivers engage by talking, describing, and reading aloud.
- Nap times are relaxed and stress-free.
- A clear policy on toilet learning is in place.
- The setting is child-proofed for safe crawling and walking.

Preschool care considerations

- The schedule is flexible to accommodate individual needs.
- The provider actively interacts with the children.
- Consistent limits are set to help children learn to make their own choices.

School-age care considerations

- Age-appropriate activities are available when school is out.
- Adequate space is provided for homework.
- The provider supports children with projects, homework, and engaging activities.

General considerations

- Ensure the cost fits your budget.
- Confirm hours and holidays align with your work schedule.
- Consider if your child will be happy and if you feel comfortable with the program.
- Request and contact references to learn about others' experiences.
- Ask if the program is accredited or involved in quality initiatives.
- Ensure staff and volunteers undergo references and background checks.
- Review staff education, experience, and tenure, including First Aid and CPR training.
- Confirm first aid kit availability and staff training to administer medication.
- Verify adult-to-child ratios and group sizes.
- Ensure the program encourages parental visits and family involvement.
- Review policies for drop-off/pick-up, emergencies, and child safety during transitions.
- Understand what's included in the cost and any additional fees.
- Ask about absence/vacation policies and daily communication with parents.
- Ensure the KDHE license is posted.

Visit KDHE's website for a complete list of child care licensing requirements - including licensed capacity, provider compliance checks, and more. kdhe.ks.gov/280/Child-Care-Licensing

Learn more about finding quality care on our website!



877-678-2548



ks.childcareaware.org

