

# Childcare Center Checklist

*courtesy of All Aboard Childcare Education Centers*

With the abundance of day care centers available today, choosing one can be a difficult and sometimes overwhelming task. How do you make an evaluation, and ultimately make the right choice for your individual child?

Start by scheduling a visit to each of the centers you are considering. Pay particular attention to the following:

## Staff

Ask about their training and education. Staff members with degrees and/or special training will be better able to help your child learn and grow, both developmentally and emotionally. Note whether or not children are handled with respect, flexibility and patience. Also note:

Y N

- Is the staff friendly and do they greet you when you come for a visit?
- Do they seem happy to see you or are you viewed as another issue to deal with?

## Facility

Find out if the center is licensed by NYS, and/or offers additional credentials and training. Then observe the following:

Y N

- Are there safe indoor and outdoor areas and equipment?
- Are work areas orderly and clean?
- Are rooms airy and attractive with good lighting and cheerful colors?
- Are bathrooms and diaper-changing areas sanitary?

## Program

How your child spends his/her day is of utmost importance. Observe the your child's age group and note the following:

Y N

- Is there a scheduled program which includes a curriculum?
- Is creative play included?
- Is there an abundance of both play & educational materials, and are they in good condition?
- Is there supervised rest time?
- Is television ever used as a "time filler?"
- Is there frequent communication with parents?

## Adult to Child Ratio:

Ask how many children each adult is responsible for. Because you want your child to receive plenty of attention, the fewer children assigned to each adult the better. This is especially important for younger children — babies should have an adult to child ratio of no more than four infants to one adult; toddlers should have an adult to child ratio of no more than five toddlers to one adult; and preschoolers should have an adult to child ratio of no more than seven preschoolers to one adult.

## Social Issues

How is good behavior encouraged?

---

---

How is unacceptable behavior dealt with?

---

---

## Social Issues (continued)

How is social development fostered?

---

---

- Do the children seem to be generally happy and well cared for?

## Safety

Y N

- Are there rounded table corners and other furniture safety features?
- Are there non-toxic play materials?
- Is a first-aid kit visible?
- What is the process for dropping off and picking up your child?
- Is there a security system in place?
- Are cleaning materials and medicines kept safely out of reach of children?

## Health

Y N

- Is the facility heated/air conditioned and is the temperature comfortable?
- Are healthy meals served, and would you eat them?
- Are healthy snacks offered?
- Is the kitchen area clean?
- Is handwashing practiced?
- Are there separate cribs for infants and separate cots/mats for others?

## The Final Decision

After reviewing your findings and eliminating the facilities that are not up to par, examine your gut feelings about your remaining choices:

Which place appealed to you the most?

---

---

Where did you feel most comfortable?

---

---

At which place did your child express the most positive feedback?

---

---

Although your first instinct can often be the one to follow, make sure to factor in the answers to the above questions. Once you do, you'll enjoy the rare peace of mind that comes with knowing that you made the right choice.

We encourage you to visit All Aboard with your checklist in hand! We are confident that you will find everything you want for your child, and more.