

Quality Child Care Checklist – Family Child Care Homes

Choosing care for your child is one of the most important decisions you will ever make!
Use this checklist to sort through options when you visit family providers.

Practical Considerations:

- ☐ Licensed or exempt
- ☐ Hours of operation
- ☐ Fees charged
- ☐ Ages of children / adult-child ratios
- ☐ Care of sick children
- ☐ Location easy to reach



Physical Facility, Health & Safety:

- ☐ Home is reasonably clean and orderly.
- ☐ No children are seen with soiled diapers or training pants.
- ☐ Detergents, cleaners and medicines are out of the children's reach.
- ☐ Electrical outlets are covered with safety caps.
- ☐ Household items like knives, scissors, and curling irons are stored out of the children's reach.
- ☐ Toys and equipment are in good repair with no sharp edges, splinters, or loose parts.
- ☐ A quiet area that can be darkened for napping with clean bedding for each child.
- ☐ Toileting area is easy for the children to access with potty chairs, safe steps, or whatever is needed.
- ☐ Has an area of the home where children can play out of the way of other family members.
- ☐ A fenced outdoor play area in which the provider can see all areas of the yard easily.
- ☐ Outdoor space is safe, with equipment to encourage physical skills.
- ☐ Home is warm, cheerful, and inviting.

Caregiver Competencies:

- ☐ Caregiver spends time with the children rather than ignoring them to carry out household duties or talk on the phone.
- ☐ Caregiver provides individual attention. For example, an upset child is held, talked to, and comforted.
- ☐ You can see the caregiver praising, noticing, and responding to the children.
- ☐ You can see the caregiver communicating effectively with the children, giving explanations in clear steps, answering the children's questions patiently, frequently bending or kneeling down to the child's level when talking.
- ☐ Children appear to be happy, comfortable, relaxed - laughing, smiling, involved in play.
- ☐ Children enjoy one another - smile at each other, hold hands, hug, help each other more than they fight or argue.
- ☐ Caregiver used the children's first names or nicknames when talking to or about them.

- ☐ Caregiver seems warm and affectionate with the children, smiling, cuddling, and speaking pleasantly.
- ☐ Caregiver encourages the children to do some things for themselves, patiently giving them time, help, and praise so that the child can learn to master the skill.
- ☐ Caregiver talks to infants, cuddles, and plays with them during the day. Infants are not left alone for long periods of time.
- ☐ Caregiver holds the infants when feeding them and talks and interacts when changing diapers.
- ☐ Caregiver is a person you would like your child to copy or imitate.

Program Materials:

- ☐ Attractive and well written story and picture books are available for the children.
- ☐ Caregiver encourages listening and talking through planned activities like storytelling, word games, doll play, etc.
- ☐ The home has materials for quiet play, such as puzzles, and active play, such as riding toys.
- ☐ Children can get at least some materials by themselves, and are encouraged to take care of the materials and put them away when finished.
- ☐ There are enough toys and materials so that each child can play without having to wait more than a few minutes.
- ☐ Caregiver encourages both boys and girls to play with all the materials. Caregiver does not give children the idea that a certain activity is only for boys or only for girls.
- ☐ Children can use creative materials, such as paint, crayons, big blank pieces of paper, clay, playdough.
- ☐ A wide variety to materials are available for children to use, such as large and small riding toys, pull toys, pounding toys, beads for stringing, puzzles, small and large blocks, nested toys, small building toys like Legos or Tinker toys.
- ☐ Children can play outside every day and physical activity is encouraged.
- ☐ TV is used rarely or never, computer screen time is limited and monitored, alternatives are always available, children are never forced or encouraged to sit in front of the TV.

Home Center Coordination

- ☐ Caregiver can tell you what meals and snacks will be served to the children this week.
- ☐ Menus sound nutritious and contain foods your child likes.
- ☐ Caregiver refrigerates infant bottles and foods and will feed according to your directions.
- ☐ Ask what the caregiver does if a child does not like a certain food being served and see if you agree with his/her method.
- ☐ Caregiver uses positive discipline and guidance methods and is consistent and fair with the children.
- ☐ Caregiver answers questions in a friendly, open way.
- ☐ You feel comfortable and could expect to share concerns about your child with the caregiver.