

Five Steps to Choosing Safe and Healthy Child Care

1. Look. Visit several different child care programs before you decide which one is best for your family. Do they look safe? Are the children supervised at all times, even while they are sleeping? Do all caregivers and children wash their hands often, especially before and after eating and after using the bathroom or changing diapers?

2. Check. Are toxic substances like cleaning supplies and pest killers kept away from children? Does the child care program have first aid kits? Does the child care program do practice fire drills once every month? Is the playground equipment safe, with no sharp edges, and kept in good shape? Does the child care program keep medication out of reach from children?

3. Count. Count the number of adults and the number of children they will each be supervising. Be certain there are enough adults to supervise all of the different activities that are planned.

4. Ask. Ask about the training and experience of all adults who will be with your children. Do they have first aid and rescue breathing training? Are their discipline policies compatible with your philosophy? Are children able to choose among activities? What do the adults know about child development? Does the child care program have records proving that other children in care are up-to-date on all their required immunizations? Have all caregivers gone through a background check?

5. Be informed. For more information on choosing a safe and healthy child care setting, contact your local child care resource and referral agency. To find your local agency, contact Child Care Aware at:

1-800-424-2246

www.ChildCareAware.org

If you are a parent who is seeking child care for a young child, choosing good child care is one of the most important decisions you will ever make for your child.

To help you make the right choice for your child, researchers have identified 13 guidelines to think about when choosing a child care program. Research shows that if the program follows all these guidelines, it is more likely to be a safe and healthy place for your child.

A Parent's Guide to Choosing Safe and Healthy Child Care outlines all 13 guidelines as well as includes a comprehensive checklist to assist parents in their search. The health and safety tips included in this publication are excerpted from *A Parent's Guide to Choosing Safe and Healthy Child Care*, produced by the National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care.

For more information on health and safety in child care, please check out these Web sites:

<http://nrc.uchsc.edu>

<http://mchb.hrsa.gov>

This tip sheet provides guidelines for parents and consumers in choosing safe and healthy child care in various settings. The best source of information on quality child care is the child care resource and referral organization in your local community. For help locating a local agency contact Child Care Aware.


Child Care Aware is a national initiative, conducted by the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA), committed to helping parents find the best information on locating quality child care and child care resources in their community. Child Care Aware, in partnership with local child care resource and referral agencies, builds consumer awareness and supports families in making choices for the care and education of their children.

ChildCareAware™
America's most trusted child care resource.

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1-800-424-2246

www.ChildCareAware.org

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