



Finding the Best CHILDCARE



- 1. START EARLY.** The last thing you want is to feel pressured into making a decision that doesn't feel right due to a time crunch.
- 2. RESEARCH WHAT QUALIFICATIONS YOU WANT TO SEE IN A PROVIDER.** It's important to be able to trust that you're leaving your child in good hands, and that the providers are professionals.
- 3. TAKE YOUR CHILD'S LEVEL OF COMFORT INTO ACCOUNT.** Of course, many children may have difficulty with any separation while getting used to such a transition. But, when possible and appropriate, take your child's preferences into account when choosing what environment is best.

ASK THESE QUESTIONS:

- What is your policy regarding sick kids?
- What is your discipline policy?
- What types of meals and snacks do you serve or prepare?
- What do you charge for late pick-ups?
- What is your overall child-care philosophy?
- What are your security / safety policies?
- How long has the center been in business/ have you been providing child care?
- What are the center's / your accreditations?
- How flexible are you with pickup/drop-off?
- What do you expect from me as a parent?
- How do you communicate with parents?
- How large is the group in which my child would be?
- How do you screen staff?
- What are staff's credentials and training?
- Do you / the staff have emergency training? Training in first aid? Training in CPR?
- What will my child's activities be on any given day? Is there a daily schedule?
- How do you handle teasing or bullying amongst children?
- What is your policy regarding supervision?
- Do you have a list of references?

	Considerations	What to look for...
CHILDCARE CENTER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can have waiting lists if popular • Extremely reliable • Myriad of available resources for learning and play • Levels of experience can differ greatly between centers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensed by state • Low child-to-teacher ratio • Qualified, consistent staff • Resources / programs offered (e.g. fieldtrips, arts & crafts, materials, etc.) • Safe, clean equipment • Good relationships between parents and staff • Comfort of your child in the environment and with the care provider
IN-HOME CHILDCARE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home-like environment • Potential flexibility in care arrangements • Family-style trips / outings • May not have qualified adult back-up in emergency or caregiver illness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensing, accreditation, up-to-date qualifications • Strong references • Low child-to-caregiver ratio • Safe, clean home environment • Good relationships between parents and caregivers • Comfort of your child in the environment
NANNY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level of care tailored to child's needs • High amounts of one-on-one time • Potentially most expensive option 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong references • Childcare philosophy similar to your own • Scheduling flexibility, reliability
FRIENDS & FAMILY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost-savings • Convenience and flexibility • Bonding time between child and caregiver • Potentially different child-rearing philosophies • Potential lack of training, background checks or credentials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An individual with whom parents can have a healthy, open dialogue in case problems arise • Reliability, consistency • Mutual understanding of expectations of caregiver • Comfort of your child with the given individual