

What should I look for when choosing an Infant/Toddler Program for my Child?

If the answers to some of these questions are still not clear after you have seen the facility and observed a classroom or family child care home, do not be afraid to ask as many questions as you need in order to get your answers! A high quality facility will feel comfortable responding to all your questions.

STAFF QUESTIONS:

- ✓ Do the teachers socially and verbally interact with the children by cuddling, seeking eye contact, responding to their smiles, and being playful?

- ✓ Do the teachers give the toddlers clear limits so they understand what they can and cannot do?

- ✓ Are the required amount of staff present to care for the children?
FAMILY CHILD CARE HOME: At least 1 teacher for 8 children—only 5 can be ages 0-5.
CHILD CARE CENTER: At least 1 teacher for 5 infants; 1 teacher for 6 toddlers. A higher quality center will have less children per adult.

- ✓ How many months/years have the teachers been employed at this facility/this classroom?

- ✓ Do the teachers share information with me upon arrival and/or pickup about my child's day?

- ✓ Are the teachers patient and understanding when children become upset?

- ✓ How much early childhood education does my child's teacher have? What kind of training do teachers participate in yearly?

SETTING QUESTIONS:

- ✓ What are the procedures for keeping the room and the toys clean?

- ✓ Does the air smell clean indoors?

- ✓ Are the children's/teacher's hands being washed when entering the classroom, before and after meals, and after a diaper change?

- ✓ Are all the exposed outlets in the room covered?

- ✓ Are there any choking hazards in the room or outside? (objects less than 1¼ inches diameter and 2½ inches long/spheres less than 1¾ inches in diameter)

ACTIVITY QUESTIONS:

- ✓ Are the babies given the opportunity to explore (lay on their stomach, crawl, cruise around furniture, walk) on their own, or are they restrained in seats and swings for most of the day?

- ✓ Are the children read to daily?

- ✓ Are there toys available for the children to reach independently?

- ✓ Do the children get to spend time outside every day? (except in harsh weather conditions)

GENERAL QUESTIONS:

- ✓ What is the sick child policy?

- ✓ Are the infants placed on their backs to sleep?

- ✓ Are my questions, comments, and visits welcomed?

- ✓ What is the star rating of the facility (Facilities are rated from 1 to 5 stars with 5 being the highest)? How did they get their stars?

