



What Should I Ask When Visiting a Daycare Center?

Ask about the child-to-staff ratio.

- How many children are there for each staff member? A ratio of one staff member for six to eight small children is recommended. One staff member for 10 to 14 older children is recommended.
- Are the younger and older children separated? Keeping younger and older children separated reduces the number of infections that are passed around.

Ask about the center's policies.

- What are the center's policies on discipline and other important issues?
- Are the policies in writing? (Ask to see a copy.)
- How does the center accommodate vacation and sick time for parents?

Ask about staff training.

- What are the training requirements for staff members?
- Are all staff members certified in basic first aid and CPR?
- Are all staff members trained in child development?
- Are all staff members trained in the identification of abused children?
- Are all staff members trained in preventing illness and injury?

Ask how the center cares for sick children.

- Does the daycare center keep a record of health-related problems, such as illnesses, injuries, and accidents, for each child?
- Does each child need to have vaccinations or a physical exam before enrolling?
- How are medications given to children?
- How are parents told about illness among the children?
- When must children stay home because of illness?

Choosing a Daycare



Caring for Kids!

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Check building safety.

- Are poison control phone numbers and emergency phone numbers clearly posted?
- Are there smoke and carbon monoxide detectors throughout the building?
- Are safety gates used in areas for small children?
- Are electric outlets covered?
- Are sharp corners of furniture covered?
- Does the daycare staff regularly disinfect all surfaces?

Check playground safety.

- Are the children safe from strangers?
- Are young children prevented from getting to high or dangerous places?
- Does the playground have soft surfaces, such as wood chips, under the swings and slides?

Check the daycare safety policies.

- Is there an emergency plan in place?

What can I do to keep the daycare safe for my child?

- Ask your child every day about what happened at daycare.
- Visit with the staff at the daycare center.

What are signs of concern to look for?

- The management staff can't offer you a written copy of the daycare policies.
- The staff fails to answer your questions and address your concerns.
- Unexplained accidents happen more than once.
- Your child tells you about problems or is not happy with their daycare.

**If you suspect there are problems,
contact the state agency that governs daycare centers in your area.**