

Daily Family YMCA of Bixby Quality Child Care Checklist

When you are selecting a quality child care setting, it is important to take your time to make an informed decision. The process of finding a caregiver who is right for you and your child will take planning. *So start early!*

Bring your child along to meet the provider and explore the home or site. Your child's first impressions are just as important as yours. Although a license ensures that minimal standards are met, it is *not* a guarantee of quality. A caregiver's training, experience, and nurturing personality are some of the important characteristics of a quality child care provider.

You should also feel comfortable asking questions or raising concerns. Providers should be willing and eager to share all aspects of your child's progress with you. This information includes the child's daily routine, eating, toileting, development, and individual interests. You have the right to visit or call at any time.

If you are exploring options for child care, consider the following list of questions.

The Provider

- Can the provider provide references? (Be sure to check them!)
- Is the provider licensed?
- Are providers patient with parents who find it difficult to separate from their children?
- Does the provider enjoy being with children? Does he or she hug, rock, cuddle, talk, and sing to the children?
- Is the provider knowledgeable about child development stages and trained in early childhood education?
- Does the provider regularly inform you about how your child is doing?
- Are you comfortable communicating with the provider about your child's needs?

The Staff

- Does the staff genuinely like children?
- Does the staff have education and experience in child care?
- Does the staff receive ongoing training?
- Is the staff trained in CPR and first aid?

About the Program

- What is the adult-to-child ratio?
- Does the center have a high staff turnover?
- Are there opportunities for parents to get involved?
- Are the rates affordable and the hours convenient?
- Is transportation to and from school provided?
- Does the provider's discipline match yours?
- What is the daily routine? Is it too strict? Too relaxed?
- Are the activities and toys right for your child's age?
- Are there plenty of materials and a variety of items for your child to play with?
- When applicable, how does the provider accommodate children with special needs?
- Is the program accredited or in the accreditation process?
- Does the curriculum offer a variety of activities?
- Will the program enhance your child's self-esteem?

About the Environment

- Is the home or facility clean and safe?
- Is the home or facility cheerful and interesting but not over-stimulating?
- Are there separate areas for diapering, sleeping, resting, and exploring?
- Is there adequate indoor and outdoor play space for children?