



Resources for Child Caring

Raising the standard of care for children

WHAT TO LOOK FOR WHEN VISITING A FAMILY CHILD CARE HOME

Family child care is generally provided in a private home, often by the parent of a small child. This type of child care may offer a more relaxed, home-like environment and a less formal relationship with parents. When choosing a family child care home, it is important to find a setting in which you are comfortable. The provider should share most of your attitudes and values about children. Plan to visit the home to talk with the provider and observe them with the children.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT/HEALTH AND SAFETY

- ◆ Is the home reasonably clean and orderly?
- ◆ Are cleaning products and medicines kept in a locked cabinet?
- ◆ Are electrical outlets covered with safety caps?
- ◆ Are household items (knives, scissors, etc.) stored out of reach of children?
- ◆ Are toys and equipment in good condition with no sharp edges, splinters, or loose parts?
- ◆ Is there a quiet area which can be darkened for naps and is there clean bedding for each child?
- ◆ Is the toilet training area easy for the children to get to, with potty-chairs, safety steps, etc.?
- ◆ Is there an area in the home where children can play out of the way of other family members?
- ◆ Is there a fenced, outdoor play area in which the caregiver can see all areas of the yard easily?
- ◆ Is the home warm, cheerful, and inviting?

PROGRAM MATERIALS

- ◆ Are there materials available for quiet play such as puzzles and ethnic books?
- ◆ Are there active play toys available, such as riding toys?
- ◆ How often is the television on and are the children watching appropriate programs?
- ◆ Are there enough toys and materials for each child to play with?

**WHAT TO LOOK FOR
WHEN VISITING A FAMILY CHILD CARE HOME, continued**

SPECIAL QUESTIONS

Ask all caregivers the following questions when appropriate:

FOR INFANTS

- ◆ What records do you keep on diapering, eating, and sleeping?
- ◆ Do you provide food/formula or do I bring it?
- ◆ Do you provide diapers?
- ◆ How often do they go outdoors?
- ◆ How much time do they spend in cribs or playpens?
- ◆ Are children held when they are fed?
- ◆ What do you do to develop speech and language?
- ◆ What kind of learning toys do you have for infants?

FOR TODDLERS

- ◆ What kind of support do you give in acquiring new motor, language, and thinking skills?
- ◆ Do you give children a chance to develop some independence?
- ◆ Do you help children learn how to control their behavior?
- ◆ Do you give children opportunities to begin to learn to care for themselves?
- ◆ Are there daily opportunities to play with a variety of objects?
- ◆ How much outdoor play is each child allowed?

FOR PRESCHOOLERS

- ◆ Do you provide opportunities to develop fine motor skills?
- ◆ Do you offer activities which will develop a positive sense of mastery?
- ◆ Do you give children opportunities to learn cooperation, helping, and sharing?
- ◆ Do you offer experimentation with pre-writing and pre-reading skills?
- ◆ How much outdoor play is each child allowed?



**WHAT TO LOOK FOR
WHEN VISITING A FAMILY CHILD CARE HOME, continued**

FOR SCHOOLAGE CHILDREN

- ◆ What kind of recreational activities do you offer and does my child have to participate? What are alternatives if he or she does not?
- ◆ Would you help with homework or other studies?
- ◆ Will you provide care over vacation periods?
- ◆ Would you provide transportation to or from school if necessary?

FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

- ◆ Is the group small enough to provide attention to my child's individual needs?
- ◆ Do you have special equipment for my child?
- ◆ Have you had experience with a child who has special needs?
- ◆ Can you handle the emotional needs of my child and help others understand his/her needs?
- ◆ Have you had any special training and will you engage in any training in the future?

Information taken from <http://www.nccc.org/Choose.Quality.Care/qual.checklist.fee.htm>

(7/2008, RA 8/2006)

