



# Resources for Child Caring

*Raising the standard of care for children*

## QUESTIONS TO ASK OF A POTENTIAL CAREGIVER

### About fees and basic business information

- ◆ What is your fee schedule?
- ◆ What are your hours?
- ◆ Can you do part time care?
- ◆ Do you charge for holidays that you are closed?
- ◆ Do I pay even when my child is absent?
- ◆ Do I pay for your vacation time?
- ◆ How much vacation do you take? Will the child care stay open?
- ◆ What is the policy on caring for ill children?
- ◆ How is administering medication handled?
- ◆ How many times in the last year has the child care closed because you are ill?
- ◆ What happens when your children/spouse are sick?
- ◆ Do you charge an enrollment fee/last week in advance?
- ◆ Do you get paid in advance?
- ◆ Do you charge for overtime/late payments/etc.
- ◆ How much notice is required to formally withdraw from care?
- ◆ May I see a copy of the center's budget?
- ◆ What is your child-to-provider ratio?
- ◆ How many infants are on site?
- ◆ Are you licensed by the state?
- ◆ What kind of insurance do you have?
- ◆ Is your First Aid/CPR certification current within the last two years?
- ◆ Will you be transporting my child in your car? If so, do you have appropriate car seats?

### Personal Information

- ◆ Do you have a favorite age to work with?
- ◆ Why have you chosen to do child care?
- ◆ How long do you plan on being in the child care field?



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## Questions to Ask of a Potential Caregiver - Personal Information, continued

- ◆ Do you have background/education in child development?
- ◆ Is your First Aid/CPR certification current within the last two years?
- ◆ Have you completed a training in Sudden Infant Death Syndrome?
- ◆ Have you ever had to handle an emergency? What did you do?
- ◆ Describe how you disinfect toys and your sanitary practices.
- ◆ How do you minimize the spread of germs?
- ◆ Are you a member of any professional groups? If yes, are you active?
- ◆ What are the sexes/ages of the children enrolled?
- ◆ Why did the last child leave?
- ◆ Who has been here the longest and how long have they been with you?
- ◆ What kinds of professions do other children's parents have?
- ◆ Is your family involved in your child care business?
- ◆ Are any other people around? What do they do?
- ◆ Is smoking permitted in the house after child care hours?
- ◆ Do you have any employees?
- ◆ What are the backgrounds of your employees?
- ◆ How long have they worked for you?
- ◆ Are there any pets in the home? Are they included in the child care environment?
- ◆ Are you bilingual? If yes, what language do you speak?
- ◆ May we bring items for our child from home? What would you suggest?

## Activities

- ◆ Describe what you do with the children while I am gone each day.
- ◆ Do you always hold infants when they are being fed?
- ◆ Do you pick up the baby whenever he/she cries?
- ◆ What is the daily schedule? Is it firm?
- ◆ How often do you change diapers?
- ◆ What developmental activities will you do?
- ◆ How do you deal with a child that will not nap?
- ◆ Will I get a written or verbal report on my child each day?
- ◆ More generally, how do you communicate with parents?
- ◆ Who provides/washes the crib sheets/blankets?
- ◆ Who cleans the infant toys? How often are toys disinfected? (This should be done daily.)
- ◆ When do you feel babies should be weaned from bottle or breast?
- ◆ How do you feel about breastfeeding?

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## Questions to Ask of a Potential Caregiver - Activities, continued

- ◆ How do you use pacifiers?
- ◆ What outside play space is there? What toys?
- ◆ How is television used in your child care setting? What shows? What videos?
- ◆ How is music used in the child care setting?
- ◆ Is a playpen used with infants or toddlers? How?
- ◆ What rooms will be used for child care?
- ◆ What cribs/toys etc. will be provided?
- ◆ How do children participate in cleanup? Toys? House?
- ◆ Is the house cleaned during or after child care hours?

## Providers Philosophies

- ◆ How do you handle meal time/food, nap time, potty training?
- ◆ What is the policy on discipline? When is it started?
- ◆ How are your own children disciplined? Is that philosophy different?
- ◆ What would you do if a child hit you?
- ◆ May the parents come by at any time?
- ◆ In what ways are parents encouraged to be involved?

## Miscellaneous Questions

- ◆ What is the child turnover rate?
- ◆ Do you own your own house?
- ◆ Do you have a gun? If so, where is it stored and how?

A final word of advice: Trust your intuition, and visit in person with each provider you are considering. Make several visits to the child care program at different times of the day. Get and check references. Before making a final decision, ask yourself the following:

- ◆ Is the child care environment safe? Clean? Does it smell good?
- ◆ Do I like the provider? Trust the provider?
- ◆ Is there open communication? Am I comfortable with the provider?
- ◆ Is ample attention given to each child individually? Are the toys/activities age-appropriate?
- ◆ Do the children appear happy?
- ◆ Is the overall environment comfortable?

(7/2008)

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