

## Five Steps in Finding Quality Day Care

### 1. Look

Visit several child care centers or homes.

Visit each location more than once.

Does the place seem safe?

Do the caregivers seem to like children?

Do they talk with each child at eye level?

Are the children happy?

Are there plenty of toys within a child's reach?

### 2. Ask

Ask questions about the level of training of caregivers.

Have they taken child development classes?

Are they experienced in CPR?

Is the facility accredited?

### 3. Listen

What does the classroom sound like?

Do the children seem content and involved?

### 4. Count

Count the number of children versus caregivers.

A small number of children per adult is most important for babies or younger children.

### 5. Be Informed

Call Collaborative for Children to find out more about licensing requirements, parent education, staff-child ratio, accreditation and more.

\*Information provided by Child Care Aware

**Your first step in finding child care: Call 2-1-1**

Alternate numbers for child care resource and referral

713.600.1234 or 1.888.833.6805

## Child Care Checklist for Parents

### Basic Information

- The hours suit my schedule.
- The fees fit my price range.
- Meals and snacks are appetizing.
- Transportation is available.
- The group size and age grouping are acceptable.

### The Environment

- The setting is clean and cheerful.
- Children seem happy.
- Staff members and children get along well.
- There is a balanced daily routine.
- Children are comforted when needed.
- There are rules the children can understand and follow.
- There is a safety plan to follow in emergencies.
- Safety precautions are established.
- Different kinds of space are available for quiet play, active play and outdoor play.
- There is enough space for all activities.
- There are enough books, paints, blocks, musical toys, games and puzzles, etc.
- Children can get things for themselves.

### Staff

- They have been trained to care for children.
- Most staff have been in the program for at least one year.
- Disciplinary methods are acceptable.
- They are warm and friendly.
- Staff members take time to discuss a child's progress with parents regularly.
- Children are treated as individuals.
- In a family day home, ask how long the provider has been caring for children.
- Staff members seem to have enough time to look after all children.

### Parental Involvement

- Parents can visit unannounced.
- Parents are involved in decision making.
- There are opportunities for parents to be involved with the program.
- Parents have a chance to speak with staff when they drop off and pick up children.

### Final Considerations

- References are provided.
- People who have used this service speak well of it.
- I would be happy here if I were a child.
- I feel comfortable leaving my child here.