



APPLESEED LEARNING CENTER

presents

“10 Important Factors To Consider When Choosing A Childcare Center”



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1. Attitude/Energy

Is the staff warm and welcoming? Do they pay individual attention to each child? When you walk in the facility, is it total chaos when you walk in? Children will thrive in an environment that is controlled, engaging and supportive.



2. Recommendations by Others

One of the best ways to measure the quality of a childcare center is by asking other parents for a referral. Also, when you are visiting a center, talk to parents of children who are ready enrolled. Ask about the experience their children are having and if they are satisfied with the quality of service.



3. Communication

How does the staff communicate with parents about what is going? How will they report to you about any problems they are having? Do they encourage feedback from parents? How would they like to receive feedback? Open communication can help improve your child's overall experience.



4. Training, Licensing, Credentials and Accreditation

A well-educated and experienced staff will provide high quality interactions and activities for your child. Make sure to ask the following questions when looking at a childcare center:

- Does the director have experience caring for children?
- Who is on staff? Is there a place to view staff biographies?
- How is the staff screened?
- Does each staff member have the right credentials and experience?
- Does someone have current CPR and first aid training?
- How does the childcare center conduct its own training on an ongoing basis?
- Does the staff continue to receive training about the changes in childcare industry?
- What type of accreditation have you received?



5. The Facility

Make sure to inspect the layout of the facility for cleanliness and organization. Is the layout open for children to play and crawl? Also, look for cleanliness and ask about the daily cleaning routine. You can check for health inspection results using local government websites.



6. Staff Turnover

High staff turnover can negatively affect your child. The constant turnover of staff members interrupts a child's schedule and routine. Building a trusting relationship with someone and having consistency helps make a child's day go much easier.



7. Curriculum

Familiarize yourself with each childcare center's curriculum. Ask each center how it prepares children for school. Ask about the reasoning behind the chosen curriculum and its advantages. Compare the different curriculums to each other and decide which one would benefit your child the most. The time your child spends each day at the childcare center will help to establish a foundation for learning.



8. Daily Schedule

What does a typical day look like? What types of activities will your child participate in? Is a daily schedule available for parents? Getting an idea of the daily schedule will help you determine whether your child will enjoy his or her day.



9. Location

Is the location convenient for you? Is there plenty of parking? It is in a safe area?



10. Child Care Licensing in Pennsylvania

When you visit each facility, look for licenses and certificates, as they are required to be posted in a conspicuous place.

- *Child Care Centers* are licensed by the Department of Public Welfare. Centers are inspected annually to ensure they meet health and safety standards.
- *Family Day Care Homes* are registered by the Department of Public Welfare. Only a random sample of 15% of Family Day Care Homes are inspected annually.
- *Preschools* are required to be licensed by the Department of Education as Private Academic Nursery Schools and meet rigorous academic standards. A program cannot represent itself as a "preschool" without this license.