

# CHOOSING CHILD CARE CHECKLIST

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The Choosing Child Care Checklist gives you information to consider when exploring your child care options. Use this resource to help you make the best child care decision for your family.

PROGRAM NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

## 1. HEALTH AND SAFETY

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- The setting is safe and clean.
- Children and adults wash hands at the appropriate times throughout the day.
- Emergency evacuation plans are posted, and drills are practiced regularly.
- The procedures for dropping off and picking up my child are explained and clear.

## 2. ACTIVITIES AND EXPERIENCES

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- There are different areas for rest, meals, quiet play, and active play.
- Children can play alone or in groups.
- There is a daily schedule posted with a balance of story time, activity time, nap time, and play time.
- My child will be able to develop a variety of skills.
- The routines in place will work for my child.

## 3. RELATIONSHIPS AND INTERACTIONS

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- The child care educators are friendly and supportive.
- The child care educators interact with the children on the child's level.
- My child will receive individual attention.
- I am comfortable with the guidance and discipline used with the children.
- Families are allowed to visit at any time.
- Families can participate in activities and events at this program.
- The child care educators share information with families about daily activities and routines.
- My child will enjoy spending time at this child care program.
- I will feel comfortable leaving my child at this child care program.

## 4. ADDITIONAL THINGS TO CONSIDER FOR INFANTS

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- The staff have training related to safe sleep practices and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).
- Infants are laid to sleep on their back in individual sleep spaces without loose bedding or toys.
- Daily notes track my infant's feedings, diaper changes, and naps.
- This program accommodates and respects feeding choices (breastfeeding, breast milk, formula).

## 5. ADDITIONAL THINGS TO CONSIDER FOR SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN

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- There are plenty of reading materials and educational games that my child can use.
- There is always an adult supervising the children.
- There is transportation to and from school.
- Care is available during school vacations or other days school is not in session.

# What are the Next Steps to Take in Your Child Care Search?

## **CHECK LICENSING REPORTS**

Licensing reports can be viewed by the public and show how well a program meets child care licensing standards. Child Care Aware® of Missouri provides these records with all referrals. You may also view program licensing reports online at:

<https://webapp01.dhss.mo.gov/childcaresearch/searchengine.aspx>



## **MAKE SURE YOUR CHILD IS IN SAFE HANDS**

All employees in a licensed child care program go through background screenings and fingerprinting. All background screenings include a Missouri state criminal background check, child abuse and neglect records, and sexual offender information. Background checks can also be done on any caregiver, neighbor, nanny, etc. by contacting Missouri's Family Care Safety Registry (FCSR).

For more information about the FCSR, call 1-866-422-6872 or visit the website at <https://health.mo.gov/safety/fcsr/>.

## Help Create a Positive Child Care Experience

- Talk and read stories to your child about going to child care.
- Visit with other families whose children go to child care.
- Communicate with the child care educator or individual caring for your child.
- Share information that will help the child care educator meet your child's needs.
- Make sure there are clear, written agreements to prevent misunderstandings.
- Find out how you can get involved at your child's program. You may be able to volunteer at your child's program, or the program may need donations of useful items.
- Respect the program policies: pay on time, pick up your child before closing, keep sick children at home, etc.
- Show child care educators your appreciation. Say thank you, offer to help, or donate useful items.

