

Questions to Ask when you are touring a child care center!

General Child Care

- What's your general philosophy on child care?
- How many children attend the center? What is your child to caregiver ratio?
- What do you serve for meals and snacks? Or do parents need to provide food? (If your child has allergies, be sure to ask about how they handle that.) If babies are taking bottles, ask how they handle frozen or pumped breast milk or formula preparation.
- What activities do you do with the children? What is a typical day like?
- How do you handle discipline or behavioral problems? For instance, how do you handle biting, hitting?
- Family-specific questions: if you use cloth diapers, be sure to ask about that, or if you have an unusual schedule that requires some flexibility, bring that up as well.

Child Care Policies

- Can parents drop by whenever they'd like or swing by to breastfeed? What are your visitation policies in general? Who else is allowed to visit during care?
- What happens if we're late to pick-up or need to miss a day due to vacation or illness?
- What's your sick-child policy? What are your policies regarding immunizations?
- What is the potty-training procedure? (Some centers will start potty training your child once they reach a certain age.)
- Do you transport children in a vehicle? Where would you go? Ask to see the vehicle or bus, and inspect the seating arrangements.

- How, and how often, do you sanitize the toys and materials used by the children?
- Is there a wait list?
- What are the tuition and fees? Are there any types of discounts available (paying in advance, second sibling discount, etc.)?
- What are the center's policies and hours for holidays?

Employees

- What degrees or certifications does your staff have? What training do they have? Do you conduct background checks on all your employees?
- How long has the current staff been here? Do you experience high employee turnover?
- Do you have a nurse on staff for medical care? Do you administer medicine and/or emergency allergy treatments?

Safety and Communication

- How do you keep parents up to date on their kid's daily activities or behavior? Do you offer a daily report?
- What security measures do you take for your facility?
- Are you licensed? Are you accredited? By whom?
- Do you have references I can contact?
- A well child-proofed space will have:
 - Covers on every outlet
 - Cribs out of reach of blinds or windows
 - Window blind pull strings are out of reach or fastened with anchors
 - Stairs blocked by gate
 - Changing tables and high chairs with straps
 - Clean toys in good condition (no broken toys)

- No small objects around that children can choke on (especially important in centers that cover multiple age groups)
- Potentially toxic substances (like medications and cleaning supplies) secured
- Do the center's policies seem to foster cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development?
- Is there a daily, structured routine?