



CHOOSING QUALITY CHILD CARE

Finding the right child care option for your family is crucial for your child's development. Follow these tips to make sure you make the best decision for your child.



Start Early

Finding the right child care option may take some time. Start looking as far in advance as you can.



Ask Questions

Ask about Adult to Child Ratio, Group Size, Caregiver Qualifications, and Staff Turnover.



Make a Call

Call the Early Learning Coalition of Flagler and Volusia at 386-323-2400 for a child care listing.



Make a Choice

Make the best choice for your child and family based on your research.



Visit

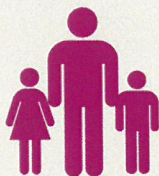
Visit the child care options you are considering.



Stay Involved

Constantly check in with your child's caregiver, finding out how your child is doing.

THINGS TO CONSIDER



Adult to Child Ratio

The fewer the children for each adult, the better for your child.



Group Size

The smaller the group or classroom, the more calm, safe, and like family it will be.



Qualifications

The caregiver's training and education is important. They may be better equipped to help your child learn.



Turnover

It's best if children stay with the same caregiver at least a year. Getting used to new caregivers takes time and energy that could be spent learning.

Questions to Ask Checklist

Child Care Staff

- Does the staff greet children when they arrive? Does the staff seem to really like children?
- Does the staff see your child and every child as a unique and special individual?
- Does the staff get down on each child's level to speak with the child?
- Does the staff meet children's needs quickly even when things get busy?
- Is the staff trained in CPR, first aid, early childhood education, and special needs?
- Will the staff work with you to develop individual goals for your child and plans to achieve them?
- Does the staff, through appropriate teaching practices, respond to differences in children's abilities?
- Are there enough staff to serve the children?

Setting

- Is the atmosphere bright and pleasant, but not overwhelming?
- Can staff see the entire playground at all times?
- Are there different areas for resting, quiet play, and active play?
- Is there enough space for the children in all of these areas?
- Is the facility safe, secure, and physically accessible (i.e. ramps, accessible outside play area, bathrooms)?

Activities

- Is there a daily balance of play time, story time, activity time, and nap time?
- Are the activities right for each age group?
- Are there enough toys and learning materials for the number of children?
- Are toys clean, safe, and within reach of all children?
- Are the majority of planned developmental activities individualized or in small groups?
- Are daily, weekly, monthly, and special event schedules shared with families?
- Do learning materials, books, and pictures reflect diversity, including children with special needs?

Other

- Do you agree with the discipline practices?
- Do you hear the sounds of happy children?
- Are children comforted when needed?
- Is the program licensed or regulated?
- Are surprise visits by parents encouraged?
- Is communication open between staff and parents?
- Does the program keep up with children's changing interests?
- Are parents' ideas considered?
- Are there ways for you to get involved?
- Are therapeutic services provided on-site, if possible?
- Do child care personnel perform child and family advocacy functions for you, if necessary?
- Will your child be happy there?

