



# Child care & early education center visit checklist

Choosing the best program for your child is an exciting and important decision. It sets the stage for the first five years of development and all that comes next. As you explore options and visit different centers, reference this guide — created by parents and early childhood educators — to help you choose a safe, enriching environment and high-quality learning experience for your child.

## Learning and development

- ☐ What are the learning philosophies and research behind the curriculum?
- ☐ How are progress and development assessed and documented for each child?
- ☐ Do the curriculum and teaching methods align with research about school and future-ready skills?
- ☐ Is the program accredited or working toward external accreditation of any kind?
- ☐ Are babies introduced to basic sign language to communicate their needs?
- ☐ How do you foster children's independence and self-help skills?
- ☐ How is social-emotional learning built into the program?
- ☐ Are children given daily time to play outdoors?
- ☐ How do teachers address challenging behaviors?
- ☐ What guidelines are in place to supervise technology use?
- ☐ Are children happily and busily engaged in interesting and diverse activities and projects?
- ☐ Do children have choices between individual and small-group activities, both inside the classroom and outdoors?
- ☐ Do you see displays of what the children are doing and learning?
- ☐ What kinds of books and materials are in the classroom? How are they chosen?
- ☐ Are there dedicated spaces for activities such as STEM, art, and movement?

## Family support

- ☐ Do you offer parent conferences and progress updates/portfolios?
- ☐ How many days is the center closed throughout the year?
- ☐ Are there any currently enrolled families willing to speak about the center?
- ☐ How do you prepare families for their first day?
- ☐ Will I get daily communication about my child's day?
- ☐ Are there opportunities for parents to meet each other and build a community (e.g., events, parent groups, classroom volunteers, etc.)?
- ☐ What resources are available to support parenting education and learning at home?

## Notes

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