

# Selecting & Evaluating Quality Child Care

## Questions to Ask When Choosing a Caregiver

One of the most difficult decisions you will make as a parent has to do with who you will choose to care for your child. Regardless of the setting, this individual is the caregiver that will have responsibility for your child when you are not there.

This decision should be made very carefully, and only after asking yourself and the caregiver some important questions.

*Below are some questions to consider when you decide who to care for your child.*

### *First Impressions*

- Do you get an overall good feeling about the caregiver?
- Does the provider appear open, honest, and calm?
- Does the caregiver respond to you and your child with friendliness and warmth?
- Does the caregiver appear comfortable with you there with your child?
- Does your child like the caregiver?

### *Activity & Interactions*

- Does the caregiver:
  - Show respect, fairness, and compassion?
  - Respect your attitudes and goals for your child?
  - Offer praise and guidance?
  - Have a sense of humor?
  - Interact with your child rather than just “watch” him or her?
  - Help your child to make choices rather than just simply tell him/her what to do.
  - Encourage healthy eating habits?
  - Help your child get along and play safely with other children?
  - Set limits in a positive way to help your child learn what he/she can and cannot do?

- Help your child express and label their feelings – both positive and negative?
- Respect your views on using appropriate language with children and/or how to address issues such as religion, sex, illegal substances, etc?
- Is the caregiver organized and have a plan for time spent with your child?

### *Education & Experience*

- Does the caregiver have training or education that helps him/her understand a child’s growth and development?
- Does the caregiver have any knowledge of community resources for families and children?
- What is the caregiver’s personal and professional background?
- Did the caregiver supply you (or the center) with both personal and professional references?
- Has the caregiver ever been fired from a job? If so, what is the reason?
- Did the caregiver have a clean background check before being hired?
- Does the provider have experience caring for children of the same age as your child?
- Does the caregiver speak the same language as your child?

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### *Dependability*

- What are the hours the caregiver is available?
- Does the caregiver expect the hours to change?
- Does your caregiver have problems with tardiness or not showing up for work?
- Does the provider have adequate means of transportation?
- Does the caregiver get sick often?
- Does the caregiver have dependents at home that he/she is responsible for when sick?

### *Communication*

- Does the caregiver talk with you about what your child does while they are with him/her?
- Does the caregiver welcome your help with activities, field trips, parties, problem behaviors, etc?
- Does the caregiver work well with others?

### *Discipline*

- What type of discipline does the caregiver use when your child misbehaves?
- What behaviors should receive discipline?
- Does the caregiver share your same beliefs on disciplining children?
- Does the caregiver respect your views on disciplining your child?
- What does the caregiver do when they are frustrated or upset?

### **For more information, contact:**

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