Evaluating Child Care Programs

Here is a general checklist of things to look for when evaluating the quality of a particular child care program. For more information, additional checklists, or other resources, please contact the Referral Department at 585-654-4720.

Experience/References

☐ Providers have completed the required NYS training hours
☐ Referrals and references are provided
☐ Child Care Centers employ staff with appropriate educational requirements

Child Indicators

☐ Children in the program are visibly happy
☐ Provider competently meets the needs of each individual child
☐ Provider treats your child in a manner that you are comfortable with

Discipline Indicators

☐ Discipline policy is fair, effective and consistent with your own
☐ You agree with how the children are disciplined by the provider

Program Specifics

The program should:

☐ Provide parents with a schedule of activities
☐ Provide parents with a menu if food is served
☐ Be authorized to administer prescription medication if your child needs it
☐ Greet each child and family at the start/end of each day
☐ Offer a variety of activities for the children
☐ Have a variety of toys for children of all ages
☐ Have a napping policy with sufficient space for each child

Health & Safety

☐ Dangerous materials must be stored out of reach of children
☐ There should be outlet covers in all electrical outlets
☐ Children and caregivers should wash hands frequently
☐ Diapers should be changed at appropriate intervals
☐ There should be a working phone
☐ Emergencies like fire and injuries are planned for
☐ Facility and all surfaces (including toys) are kept clean
☐ Program follows all required ratios of adults to children and group size

Fees

☐ Inquire about any fees that may be required when a child is not present or when the program is closed.
☐ If needed, find out if subsidy payments are accepted.
Additional Indicators of Quality Child Care

☐ Continuity of care – maintaining the relationships that children form with caregivers
☐ Constant communication between children, families, and caregivers
☐ Family involvement (parental open door policy and opportunities to participate in field trips)
☐ Developmentally appropriate programs for every child
☐ Balance of active, quiet, indoor, and outdoor play based on the abilities and interests of the children

For information on Summer Camps and what parents should know, visit the Department of Health Website: [http://www.health.ny.gov/publications/3601/](http://www.health.ny.gov/publications/3601/).