

Child Care Checklist

By Laura Cooper Peterson

☐ Initial Impressions

- ☐ Is your initial reaction upon entering the site a positive one?
- ☐ Is the atmosphere relaxed and happy?
- ☐ Is this a place my child would enjoy?
- ☐ Would my child be safe here?
- ☐ Do you and your child feel welcome?
- ☐ Can you hear laughter and the sounds of children playing?
- ☐ Do staff members seem interested in your child and did they make an effort to talk to him or her?
- ☐ Do the rooms seem well organised, clean and tidy?
- ☐ Is the reception area clean, tidy and organised?
- ☐ Is there anything that appears to be out of place?
- ☐ Were you offered introductions of all staff and a tour of the centre?
- ☐ Would I/we feel comfortable using this program?
- ☐ Would my child learn new things every day at this program?

☐ Facility

- ☐ Is the provider certified by the Department of Public Welfare and is the certification notice posted?
- ☐ Is the building light and pleasant to be in with good ventilation and/or air conditioning?
- ☐ Does the building seem modern and well maintained?
- ☐ Is there plenty of space for the children to play?
- ☐ Are there plenty of corners where children can go for quiet play?
- ☐ Are the sleeping areas separate to the play areas?
- ☐ Are separate spaces available for the different age groups?
- ☐ Is the quantity of toys and materials sufficient for the number of children in the classroom?
- ☐ Are there appropriate toys and materials for children of all age groups?
- ☐ Is the classroom arranged in a way that toys and materials are accessible to children?
- ☐ Are the furnishings in the classrooms child sized?

- ☐ Are there obvious hazards such as dangerous substances, electrical cords, uncovered electrical outlets, cleaning materials, or medications accessible to the children?
- ☐ Are fire extinguishers on site?
- ☐ Are fire escape plans/emergency evacuation plans posted?
- ☐ Are the toilets and sinks clean and easy for the children to use?
- ☐ Are the sinks and bathroom stocked with appropriate supplies?
- ☐ Does the provider encourage you to drop in and visit at any time?
- ☐ The Outside
 - ☐ Do the children have an opportunity to play outside each day?
 - ☐ Does the outside play equipment accommodate children of all different ages?
 - ☐ Is the outside area free of litter and obvious hazards such as broken glass?
 - ☐ Is the outdoor play equipment sturdy and in good repair?
 - ☐ Are children being supervised by the child care provider?
 - ☐ Is there an outside area with plenty of shade?
 - ☐ Do children two years and younger play separately from the older children?
 - ☐ Are the child care providers interacting with the children?
 - ☐ Does the center encourage use of the outside area for learning activities as well as free play?
- ☐ Management, Staff and Supervision
 - ☐ Who manages the child care centre? Can you meet him/her?
 - ☐ Does the manager also supervise the staff?
 - ☐ What are the child to carer ratios at the centre?
 - ☐ What background checks are completed on staff?
 - ☐ What qualifications do staff members hold?
 - ☐ What is the staff turnover rate?
 - ☐ What is the centre's procedure for dealing with complaints against staff?
 - ☐ Does the centre hold adequate insurance?
 - ☐ Are children supervised at all times?
 - ☐ How do staff members deal with behavioural issues?
 - ☐ Are children supervised when they go to the toilet?

- ☐ Does staff communicate daily with parents about their child's progress?
- ☐ Does staffing allow for each child to receive individual attention?
- ☐ Does staff sit and read to the children?
- ☐ Does staff seem patient and receptive to children's needs?
- ☐ Is staff respectful of children?
- ☐ Is staff respectful of parents?
- ☐ Does staff encourage children's sharing, manners, and other good behaviors?
- ☐ Does staff appear lively, smiling, and interacting in a positive manner with the children?
- ☐ Does staff involve children in daily learning activities?
- ☐ Planned Activities and Programs
 - ☐ Do the children have a consistent routine that they can understand and follow?
 - ☐ Does the centre offer a range of programs for the children to participate in?
 - ☐ How are these programs developed? Are they designed to be educational? Do they take into account the cultural and religious diversity in the group?
 - ☐ Do the children seem occupied and engaged?
 - ☐ Are the children involved in activities that promote learning?
 - ☐ Is there a policy on discipline?
 - ☐ What percentage of your child's day will be spent on planned programs and what percentage will be spent on free play?