

## SELECTING A QUALITY CHILD CARE PROVIDER

*Quality child care includes caregivers who provide loving care and guidance; a setting that keeps children safe and secure; an environment that promotes physical activity and healthy eating; activities that allow children to develop and learn; and a program philosophy that fits your family's needs. Use this checklist when looking for a child care program for your child.*

### Caregiver/Teacher

- Caregivers are patient, warm, accepting
- Caregivers and children look happy to be together
- Caregivers speak to the children at eye level
- Children's needs are quickly met even when things are busy
- There is enough staff to ensure basic safety
- Caregivers have completed CPR, first aid, and early childhood education training

### Setting

- The atmosphere is bright and pleasant
- Children are visible to caregivers at all times
- There are separate areas for resting, quiet play and active play
- There is enough space for children
- All work and pictures are at children's eye level and reflect diversity

### Physical Activity Environments

- There is a fenced outdoor play area with a variety of safe equipment
- Active play is encouraged and includes both structured and unstructured activities, indoors and outdoors
- Children under age 2 do not watch TV; TV is limited for children over age 2 to 30 minutes a week of educational programming
- Computer time is limited to 15-minute increments
- Caregivers act as role models by participating in active play, indoors and outdoors

### Activities

- There is a daily balance of free play, story time, planned activities, and nap time
- A schedule and activity plan are posted daily
- There are enough toys and materials for the number of children
- Toys are clean, safe, and within reach of the children

### Program

- Program philosophy and values are similar to yours
- Positive guidance is used and children are comforted when needed
- Parents are encouraged to visit any time
- Contract fees, late charges, and other policies are reviewed
- License and emergency plans are posted
- Caregivers communicate daily with parents about their children
- Regular meetings are scheduled to discuss children's development

### Food Environments

- Meals and snacks are scheduled and provided at regular times
- Meals and snacks are healthy and do not include unhealthy foods such as soda, candy, and chips
- Fresh drinking water is available to children indoors and outdoors throughout the day
- Juice is not served to children under age 1 and is limited to 4-6 ounces of 100% juice for children ages 1 to 6
- Food is not offered as a reward or denied as a punishment
- Breastfeeding is supported
- Celebrations and parties include only healthy foods
- Caregivers act as role models by eating healthy foods alongside children

### For more information:

YMCA Childcare  
Resource Service  
800-481-2151  
[www.ymcacr.org](http://www.ymcacr.org)

San Diego County  
Childhood Obesity Initiative  
[www.OurCommunityOurKids.org](http://www.OurCommunityOurKids.org)