



Childcare Checklist

Congratulations on deciding to find high-quality childcare for your family!

We know about the emotions that you are facing during this time. Nevertheless, realdealchildcare.com is here to the rescue. After years of experience and numerous visits to childcare centers across the country, realdealchildcare.com developed a comprehensive childcare checklist designed to assist parents during their childcare search!

These simple yet detailed questions are designed to give you a real sense of what to expect in a licensed childcare center. Various states will have different regulations; however, these questions are selected to inform families about what to expect from a childcare program.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, "every week in the United States, childcare providers care for nearly 11 million children younger than age five whose mothers are working. On average, these children spend 36 hours a week in childcare, and some spend even more." Selecting high-quality childcare can be a challenge; however, children ages 0-3 experience quality and positive interactions as this period in their lives are crucial to their development. The following exercise is a checklist of questions to help guide families through their childcare search. As you use this checklist, we recommend that you visit no more than three centers per day after doing some initial research. Use "checkmarks" to answer the "Yes" or "No" questions. For more information, visit us at realdealchildcare.com. Good Luck!

Frances M. Goff

Frances M. Goff M.Ed., LDT, CALT
Director, The Happy Tree CDC

GENERAL INFORMATION

	1	2	3
Center Name			
Hours of Operation			
Email Address			
Address			
Telephone Number			
License Number			
Application Fee			
Supply Fee			
Deposit Fee			
Meal Fee			
Reenrollment Fee			

Staff Information

	1		2		3	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
The Staff completed FBI background and criminal background checks.						
The Staff completed preservice training in Early Childhood Education.						
The Staff has been able to observe the classroom prior to getting hired.						
The Staff is certified in CPR and First Aid/SIDS Training.						
Is Staff up to date on their TB shots (If required).						
The Staff is current on the required yearly training or more specific fields such as: Behavior, Stages of Development, Nutrition						
The Staff are knowledgeable about hand washing procedures.						
The Staff are trained in COVID-19 procedures or infectious diseases.						
The Staff are trained in food handling procedures.						
The Staff are trained on fire and disaster safety drills.						
The Staff are trained on attendance procedures. Signing in/out children						
The Staff can physically hold an infant while feeding and understands correct feeding procedures.						
The Staff can understand bathroom procedures for those who are toilet trained.						

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

	1		2		3	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
The center entrance looked organized.						
Were you greeted upon arrival?						
Did the center smell clean?						
Was the child-care license on display?						
Was the center director available?						
Were the classrooms clean and organized/Lockers available for children's belongings.						
Were there child size furnishings in each classroom and in good working shape.						
Were lesson plans posted along with a classroom schedule (Curriculum Resources are documented on lesson plan).						
Was the teacher responsive to the student's needs (Observation of teacher interreacting with student/encouragement of play).						
Were food allergies posted in classroom (This will inform teacher what the child may be allergic to and carry out proper procedures in the case of an emergency.						

SAFETY INFORMATION

	1		2		3	
	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO
The center will ensure that each parent has a code to enter the building or ensure that front doors are always secure.						
The center will ensure that each child is signed in/out and by the teacher and the parent.						
The center will only allow those designated (by parents) to pick up the child.						
The center will conduct monthly fire drills; disaster drills, stay in place drills and terrorist drills.						
Are doors equipped with emergency lights?						
Does the center have smoke detectors/fire extinguishers and carbon monoxide sensors installed?						
Does the center have an emergency evacuation plan? / How often is it updated?						
Can anyone come into the center to visit children?						
Does the center have cameras installed?						
Is the playground fenced in?						
Does each class go onto with their own class or are they combined with other classes?						
Are the playground rules posted outdoors?						
Is there a policy on sick children and when not to bring children into the center?						
Does the center dispense medication?						
Are children's health alerts posted in each class?						
Is there a procedure at the end of the day for making sure that children are not left in the building after closing?						
Are all classrooms equipped with first aid kits?						
Are outlets and wires appropriately covered to ensure that children are always safe?						

CURRICULUM INFORMATON

	1		2		3	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Does the center adopt a responsive, relationship-based curriculum? (Meaning that the teacher-child relationship is focus on responsive caring, respect, reflect, and related planning guides)						
Does the preschool encourage learning through play as a method of free play to teach children about how to work together and play together?						
Do they use Learning Choice Boards?						
Does the center use a Daily application or Log to record the child's day (dispositions, diapers, foods, lessons, play)?						
Are parents communicated with daily/ weekly basis/ monthly?						
How often are children read to by the teacher?						
Does the meet NAEYC's accreditation standards?						
Do the children go outdoors daily?						
Is there a weekly or monthly theme for learning?						
Age-appropriate activities are given to each classroom?						
What assistant learning technology is used when teaching children?						
Were children's artwork displayed / Did it look authentic?						
Was the classroom setup to allow children to be creative?						
Does the teacher know what the needs are of the children in her/his care?						
Does the teacher know how the children learn?						
Does the teacher know the importance of her emotional connection with the children that she/he cares about?						
Does the teacher view partnership with families as an important relationship?						

Does the teacher respond to a child's family culture?						
Does the teacher individualize the curriculum for each child including children with disabilities?						
Does the teacher understand the value of transitions, routines, and schedules?						
Are books read to children daily / By the teacher or by the computer?						
Is there an evaluation or progress report given at the end of the year or during the program?						

CLASSROOM IMPRESSIONS

	1		2		3	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Was the room clean and neat?						
Were cups or trash on the floor?						
Were the hands and faces of the children clean?						
When you walked into the classroom was there excessive crying or distress from the children?						
Was the ratio posted for your child's age group?						
Was there enough furniture in each class?						
Did you get a sense that the teachers were engaging in meeting the children's needs?						
Do the children watch television?						
Does the center have a child abuse policy?						
When you walked into the classroom did the children seem happy?						
Did the teacher introduce herself to you?						
Did you like the classroom overall?						
Where the children listening to the teacher?						
Did the teacher seem engaged with the children?						