



Choosing Child Care: Questions to Ask Provided by FamilyInfo.ca

Cost and Availability

- Do you have space for my child? If not, is there a waiting list and how long is it?
- What is the cost of care? Are there any additional fees? (e.g. sick time, vacation, late pick-up, application fees.)
- Is a fee subsidy available?
- Do you offer full- and part-time enrolment?
- What are the hours of care? How flexible are drop-off and pick-up times?

Learning and Play

- What would my child's typical day look like?
- Are there structured and unstructured activities? Individual and group play? Active and quiet times? Indoor and outdoor play? How much time is spent outside?
- How do play materials foster learning, creativity, and social interaction?
- Do you play TV shows and movies for the children? If so, how much time do the children spend watching TV and movies?

Food and Nutrition

- What kinds of meals and snacks do you provide?
- How is food stored, prepared, and served?
- Are there policies in place for managing food allergies?
- Are you able to accommodate my family's dietary needs?
- Is there a fridge available for breast milk and is there a schedule for feeding?

Care and Safety

- How do you ensure the health of the children? (e.g. sleep, cleanliness)
- What happens when a child is sick? Are they sent home or given medications? What is the procedure for distributing medication?

- Do you have an anaphylaxis plan in place for children with severe allergies?
- Do you accommodate children with special needs?
- How do you support a child with particular fears and anxieties?
- Are staff trained in emergency first aid and CPR appropriate to the age of the children?
- What safety measures are in place? (e.g. fire extinguishers, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, first aid kits, safety gates and plugs)
- What is your emergency evacuation plan?
- Do you toilet train children in your care? If so, how do you approach the training?
- How do you handle children's misbehaviour? (e.g. hitting, temper tantrum) How do you help children resolve conflict?
- How many children does one person care for at any time during the day?

Training and Qualifications

- What educational training do the caregivers have?
- Are staff registered as early childhood educators with the College of Early Childhood Educators?
- How long have staff worked there?

If you are considering home-based child care, here are some questions you can bring up with home child care agencies:

- How does they agency choose providers?
- What happens when providers are sick or on holiday?
- What is the agency's approach when working with providers?

And with individual home caregivers:

- How many children do you care for (including your own)? What are the ages of the children in your care?
- Who else lives in the home and may or may not have access to your child?
- What training do you have?
- What areas of the home do the children have access to?