

Top Five Things to Consider When Choosing Childcare:

1. Education:

- You want to ensure that your child is learning and growing at all points throughout the day.
- Are curriculums and routines in place?
- Is the daily schedule posted and does it lend towards children growing in all aspects? (social and emotional skills, cognitive learning, language, literacy, gross and fine motor skills.)
- Are adjustments made based on individual children's needs and abilities?
- Are the activities and surroundings consistent with a nurturing atmosphere?
- Children learn 85% of everything that they are going to know by the time that they turn four, it is very important that their learning experience lays fertile ground for them to grow on.

2. Environment:

- You want to ensure that there is a great vibe when you walk in.
- Is the center neat and clean? Is it satisfying to the senses?
- Are the equipment, toys, and furniture in good repair?
- Are safety procedures being followed? (Are chemical in locked cabinets? Are cords stapled and out of the way? Are outlet plugs covered? Etc.)
- Do the classrooms seem to have enough space for the children?
- Do the children seem generally content, and as though they have the ability to enjoy themselves?
- Your instincts are very important, make sure that you feel good about the center before enrolling.

3. Communication

- You want to ensure that you feel comfortable to express thoughts and concerns to teachers as well as management.
- Are policies and procedures well communicated at time of enrollment, and do you have a useful understanding of how the center operates.
- Is there an open door policy allowing you to visit at any time?
- Are the teachers willing to work with you on problem solving to aid in your child's development?
- Is the management easy to find and approachable, do you feel like you can bring concerns to them, and they are quick to find a solution.
- You will be able to collaborate and cooperate through your communication, make sure that you feel comfortable to do so at any point.

4. Staff

- You want to ensure that the teachers at the facility are genuinely passionate about the children.
- How long have they been in childcare?
- Do they have any continued education in the field?
- Are they able to form a good relationship with your child and make them feel like they are an integral part of the group?
- Are they approachable and generally in high spirits?
- Your child's teacher can make all of the difference in their learning experience and developmental process.

5. Location

- You want to ensure that they childcare facility is in a convenient location.
- Is the center centrally located to your home and workplace?
- Is it in a safe area?
- Does the center look inviting, as a first impression does it feel approachable?
- Choosing a center in close proximity can reduce commute time and allow for time to visit the center if and when needed.