

Choosing Quality Child Care Child Care Checklist

Licensing:

- Is the facility licensed, and the license displayed?
- Is the licensed capacity adhered to?

Policies and Procedures:

- Are written policies on fees, holidays, parent responsibilities, etc, available?
- Are there specific, appropriate written goals, objectives and curricula?
- Do the program philosophy, values and disciplinary methods coincide with your own? Corporal punishment in Family Child Care Homes and Child Care Centers is illegal.
- Are parents encouraged to visit the center or home at any time?

Caregivers:

- Are the providers appropriately trained and working at increasing their skills?
- Are there enough staff to supervise the children at all times and give them individual attention?
- Do the caregivers respond and talk to all children in a positive, warm and understanding way?
- Are the expectations of the provider appropriate for the ages of the children being served?
- Do the caregivers encourage children in expressing emotions, problem-solving, and self-help skills?

Programs & Activities:

- Does a regular daily schedule allow for indoor and outdoor play, small and large group play, "alone time," and some flexibility in routine?
- Are the activities and materials provided varied, appropriate for the children's abilities, and focused on the areas of social, emotional, physical and intellectual development?
- Are the materials and activities related to art, music, role-playing and other creative experiences available?
- Is television watching allowed, and if so, closely monitored?
- Are walks to the park or library part of the program?
- Are snacks and/or meals, toileting and napping routines appropriate/consistent with your own?

Choosing Quality Child Care Child Care Checklist Continued...

Environment:

- Is the facility or home safe, clean and free from health hazards?

Look for: unblocked exits; toys and furnishings in good repair and free of sharp edges; posted emergency phone numbers and evacuation plan; covered wall sockets; fire extinguishers; out-of-reach cabinets for poisons and medications; sufficient heat, light and ventilation; first aid supplies to be utilized by trained staff; shock absorbing material under safe climbing equipment.

- Is there adequate space for indoor play, outdoor play, napping, eating, isolating a sick child, and storage of equipment and children's belongings in individual containers?
- Are the equipment and play materials provided interesting to children and appropriate for their age levels?
- Is the atmosphere colorful and inviting, one in which you would like to spend your days?

Help Promote Healthy Development & School Readiness By:

- *Being warm, loving and responsive
- *Responding to your child's cues & clues
- *Talking, reading & singing to your child
- *Establishing routines
- *Encouraging safe exploration & play
- *Watching carefully selected TV shows
- *Using discipline as an opportunity to teach
- *Recognizing that your child is unique
- *Choosing quality care & staying involved
- *Taking time to take care of yourself

Housing & Neighborhood Services Department

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A Guide To Help You Make The Most Important Decisions For Your Children...



City of Oceanside
Oceanside Child Care Committee

Child Care Solutions

Child care is an important, sometimes overwhelming, issue for you and your child. The decisions you make today will affect your child's emotional, physical, social and educational success in the future.

The City of Oceanside is committed to its children and offers a wide variety of services from child care to recreation and fitness programs. The City has a full-time Child Care Coordinator and a working Child Care Committee to serve the issues and needs of Oceanside residents. In addition, Oceanside is home to a long list of organizations and agencies that also serve the ever-changing needs of today's families.

Where to Begin Your Child Care Search?

Contact YMCA Childcare Resource Service at 760-471-2751 or online at www.YMCACRS.ORG

Whether looking for full or part-time child care, no matter what the age, your solution is a phone call away. The YMCA Childcare Resource Service matches your needs with child care programs in your area.

The Childcare Resource Service:

*Maintains a comprehensive database of licensed family child care homes and centers within San Diego County

*Tracks providers' licensing status, languages spoken, age groups served, schedules offered and other critical information.

What You Should Know About Licensing

Most child care centers and family child care homes are licensed by the State of California. Licensing is intended to assure a minimal standard of health and safety protection for children. Licensing does not guarantee a high-quality child care experience. Because each child and program is unique, parents are encouraged to visit and interview several providers before making a final decision. Parents may also contact Community Care Licensing (619-767-2200) for further information about any child care provider.

When choosing a program, consider your child's needs, personality and interests, as well as the structure, format and experience of the child care provider.

Family Child Care Homes

Family child care is licensed care provided in the caregiver's home. It offers a small group setting which may provide individualized attention for your child. The homes must meet health and safety requirements. Fifteen hours of health and safety training, including CPR & First Aide are required of providers prior to licensing. Typical licenses permit from 6 – 14 children. Education, hours, group size and educational services/program type vary.

Child Care Centers & Preschools

Staff in private centers must follow the minimum licensing standards for education, experience and teacher-child ratios. Most Preschool and Center-based care is centered around a developmentally age appropriate curriculum.

Child Development Programs

These programs follow California Department of Education's standards for staff education, experience and teacher-child ratios.

Subsidized Programs - Offer full and part-time free or reduced-cost child care to families who qualify based on income and family size.

State Preschool – These programs offer fully subsidized (free to those who qualify) child care for 3-5 year olds and operate nine months of the year, three hours each day. Extended child care may be available to provide full day care for an additional charge.

HeadStart – These programs offer fully subsidized (free to those who qualify) full and part-time child care for children ages 0-5 and operate in centers as well as in family child care homes. Funding is available to serve children with special needs.

School Age Programs

The ***Oceanside*** and ***Vista Unified School Districts*** offer before and after school programs to residents of Oceanside. Contacting the school district office would connect you to the various programs that are available.

Many community organizations, including Non-profit and Private entities, offer before and after school child care programs. Depending on the need for your child care to be near your home, work, or children's school, the YMCA Childcare Resource Service (760-471-2751) will provide you with a number of child care options.

Are You A Provider?

If you are a provider, or are interested in becoming one, there are several resources to help you build your career or business.

MiraCosta College – Offers programs and degrees in early childhood education.

Community Care Licensing – Provides orientation to those seeking to become family child care providers or those interested in starting their own child care center. For more information call 619-767-2200.

If you have recently become licensed to provide family child care or center based care and are not currently listed with the YMCA Childcare Resource Service, or need to update your listing call 760-471-2751.

Parent Support Groups & Education

Parenting Link provides information on parenting classes and in-home parenting support. Call 1-866-4FAMILIES or 619-297-9600 for more information or check out on the web at www.informsandiegofamilies.com

Other informational websites for parents:

www.iamyourchild.org

www.familyeducation.com

www.connectforkids.org

www.childparenting.about.com