

INDICATORS OF QUALITY CHILD CARE

1. The caregiver's personal characteristics are vital to consider. These characteristics will be based on your own beliefs and values. Generally, the caregiver should be loving, honest, caring, clean, and concerned.
2. The caregiver should treat the children with respect.
3. The caregiver should be adequately trained. It has been proven that child care providers who have received child-related education provide a more stimulating, enriched environment for children. They are more responsive and comforting and spend more time talking and socializing with the child.
4. Evaluate the adult/child ratio in the center. Preschoolers, toddlers, and infants in smaller groups are more talkative and socially interactive. The experts agree that the ratios should be:
 - FAMILY CHILD CARE: 1 adult to five children
no more than two infants
 - CHILD CARE CENTERS: 1 adult: 3-4 infants or toddlers
1 adult: 4-6 2-year-olds
1 adult: 7-8 3-year-olds
1 adult: 8-9 4-year-olds
1 adult: 8-10 5-year-olds
1 adult: 10-12 after-school children

(NOTE: Suggested and required ratios are different!)
5. Become familiar with the curriculum. There are many approaches to educating children. There is not one model curriculum. Compare educational philosophies and established goals for children when selecting a program for your child.
6. Is the caregiver stable? Consistency of a caregiver is critical in allowing the child to develop secure relationships with adults. It is an important step in the development of trust in young children. Select a caregiver who can remain with the child for a long period of time.
7. Children will have a more successful experience if their parents are actively involved.
8. The environment should be safe and clean. Children should be adequately supervised. First-aid supplies should be accessible and an emergency plan and sick child policy established.
9. The food that children are served should be well balanced and represent the food groups. The preparation and serving areas should be safe and clean. Children should not be forced to eat or be punished or rewarded with food.
10. Recreation equipment should be appropriate, accessible to all children, and in good repair. Children should spend time with both large and small groups.

Emphasize to the students that people are the key to quality care giving.
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