University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Trace: Tennessee Research and Creative Exchange

Family | UT Extension Publications

5-1-2002

SP455-Selecting a Quality Child Care Center

The University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service

Follow this and additional works at: http://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_agexfami

Recommended Citation
"SP455-Selecting a Quality Child Care Center," The University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service, SP 455-5M-5/02(Rev) E12-5315-00-048-02, http://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_agexfami/33

The publications in this collection represent the historical publishing record of the UT Agricultural Experiment Station and do not necessarily reflect current scientific knowledge or recommendations. Current information about UT Ag Research can be found at the UT Ag Research website.
This Parenting, Children and Teens is brought to you for free and open access by the UT Extension Publications at Trace: Tennessee Research and Creative Exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in Family by an authorized administrator of Trace: Tennessee Research and Creative Exchange. For more information, please contact trace@utk.edu.

SELECTING A QUALITY CHILD CARE CENTER

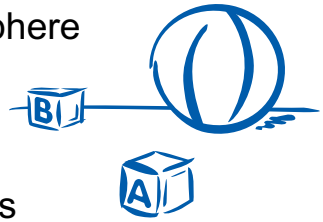
Choosing a child care center is one of the most important decisions you will make for your child. Before selecting a center, visit and ask yourself these questions:

ARE THE TEACHERS:

- ☐ Warm?
- ☐ Affectionate?
- ☐ Responsible?
- ☐ Safety-conscious?
- ☐ Loving toward children?
- ☐ Trustworthy?
- ☐ Honest?
- ☐ Creative?
- ☐ Educated in child development?
- ☐ Experienced?
- ☐ Relaxed and calm?
- ☐ Enthusiastic?
- ☐ Healthy?
- ☐ Supported by their director?

OBSERVE THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT. LOOK FOR:

- ☐ Variety of play materials
- ☐ Large supply of play materials
- ☐ Different learning centers (for example: blocks, art, music, books,science, imaginary play, climber, puzzles & games)
- ☐ Pictures on walls at child's eye level
- ☐ Quiet areas in room
- ☐ Bright atmosphere
- ☐ Soft furniture
- ☐ Cleanliness
- ☐ Prevention of safety hazards



OBSERVE THE PLAYGROUND. LOOK FOR:

- ☐ Large area of green grass for running and playing
- ☐ Safe equipment
- ☐ Variety of climbers and toys
- ☐ High fence surrounding entire playground

QUESTIONS TO ASK THE DIRECTOR AND TEACHERS CONCERNING EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

- ☐ Do children have large segments of time for free play?
- ☐ Do children go outside at least twice a day?
- ☐ Do teachers give five- to 10-minute reminders before a new activity begins?
- ☐ Do teachers move children in small groups to new activities instead of moving the entire class at once?
- ☐ Is there a teacher in the room at all times?
- ☐ Do teachers make routine activities (hand-washing, eating, diaper changes) fun and educational?
- ☐ Do teachers use an educational curriculum for planning activities and monitoring the development of children?
- ☐ What is the teacher-to-child ratio? (children need individualized attention)
- ☐ What is the total group size per classroom?

Agricultural Extension Service
The University of Tennessee
SP455

SELECTING A QUALITY CHILD CARE CENTER

QUESTIONS TO ASK THE DIRECTOR AND TEACHERS CONCERNING CENTER POLICIES AND SAFETY:

- ✔ What is the sick child policy?
- ✔ Do teachers have access to emergency information?
- ✔ Are diaper tables washed and bleached after each use?
- ✔ Do teachers wash hands regularly, especially after diapering and wiping a child's nose?
- ✔ Are doors leading to outside areas locked when not in use?
- ✔ Are fire drills conducted monthly?
- ✔ Are sign-in and sign-out sheets kept for attendance records?
- ✔ What are the emergency procedures for fire, an injured child, severe weather, etc.?
- ✔ Is the center affordable?
- ✔ Is the center convenient?
- ✔ May parents drop in to visit?
- ✔ Do teachers and director respect multi-cultural families?
- ✔ Do teachers plan safe field trips and include parent participation?

HOW CAN YOU FIND ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS?

1. VISIT! While visiting the center, talk to the director and teachers. Call and make an appointment if you want to speak at length with the director and teachers.

2. OBSERVE! Ask the director if you can drop in at an unannounced time.

3. TALK to families already using the center.

4. USE YOUR FEELINGS as well as the facts. If you have a bad feeling about the center, but you're not sure why, keep looking for other centers until you find one that feels right.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON SELECTING QUALITY CHILD CARE, CONTACT YOUR COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE OR CALL:

TENNESSEE'S CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL SERVICE
1-800-462-8261

MATT DEVEREAUX,
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR
1-865-974-7193

Visit the Agricultural Extension Service Web site at http://www.utextension.utk.edu/ and the Family and Consumer Sciences Web site at http://www.utextension.utk.edu/fcs/

SP 455-5M-5/02(Rev) E12-5315-00-048-02
The Agricultural Extension Service offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, sex age, disability, religion, or veteran status and is an Equal Opportunity Employer.
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK IN AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS The University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and county governments cooperating in furtherance of Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914.
Agricultural Extension Service
Charles L. Norman, Dean