## Selecting Quality Child Care

### Child Care Checklist

#### Basic Information
- Do I understand the child care provider’s rules and policies?
- Am I required to pay for sick days, holidays, snow days, vacations, etc.?
- Is notice required before withdrawing my child?
- Are meals, diapers, etc. included in the fee?
- Is there a written contract or agreement, and do I completely agree and understand it?

#### Staff
- Do the caregivers regularly attend training courses?
- Does the program have qualified substitutes in case of staff illness or vacation?
- Does the provider have training and experience in child development or early childhood?
- Is care consistent and is there a minimal amount of teacher turnover?

#### Space and Furnishings
- Is there a safe and relaxed setting for nap/rest time?
- Does each child have their own place to store personal belongings?
- Are materials and furniture in good repair?
- Are the shelves at the child's level?

#### Health and Safety
- Are detergents, cleaners and medicines in a locked cabinet?
- Are electrical outlets covered with safety caps?
- Are household items like knives and scissors stored out of reach of children?
- Is the weekly/monthly menu planned and posted for parents to see?
- Staff are trained in First Aid/CPR/SIDS?
- Are first aid supplies readily available?
- Is the space clean and odor free?
- Are safety procedures for tornadoes, fire, etc. practiced regularly? Are they documented?
- Are toys and play areas sanitized daily?
- Is there a policy in place on caring for a sick child?
- Is there a procedure for notifying parents of a child's illness or distress?
- Do they have a policy and procedure for handling children's injuries?
- Are emergency numbers and procedures clearly posted?
- Is there a fire escape plan posted by each exit?
- Is the outdoor area safe to get to, is it fenced in and free of hazards?
- Are there precautions taken concerning drop-off and pick up procedures?
- Are the heat, light and ventilation appropriate?
- Are smoke detectors and fire extinguishers inspected regularly and in place?
- Is the license or certification clearly posted?
- Are diapering/toileting areas and procedures safe and sanitary?

(continued)
Health and Safety (continued)

- Is hand washing required after diaper changes and toileting?
- Is hand washing required before and after meal times?
- Are bathrooms clean and can children safely reach the toilet and sink?

Program Structure

- Does the daily schedule include active and quiet times?
- Is there a regularly scheduled outdoor time each day?
- Do you feel comfortable with the amount of TV shown while the child is in care?
- Does the program use positive guidance techniques?
- Is the daily schedule flexible to meet the child's needs?
- Are children allowed to make choices?
- Is problem-solving among children encouraged?
- Is a daily schedule posted and followed?
- Are children treated with respect?
- Do adults provide support through actions and words?
- Do I understand and agree with the philosophy of the program?
- Are providers positive, patient and accepting?
- Does the program welcome the culture and language of my child?
- Can activities be adapted to meet the special needs of my child?
- Are there an accurate number of adults present for the age group?
- Does the provider talk with the children, not at them?
- Is the environment cheerful, warm and inviting?
- Do the caregivers encourage the children to do some things for themselves?
- Does the program promote positive physical, mental and emotional health?
- Are children able to use creative materials, rather than coloring books?
- Do the providers use discipline and guidance methods similar to your own?
- Are there opportunities for parent involvement?
- Does the program welcome an open-door policy and encourage parents to visit?
- Is the artwork displayed at the child's eye level?
- Are there enough paints, blocks, musical toys, games, puzzles, etc?
- Notice the layout of the room. Is there enough space?
- Is the toilet convenient for the children to get to?
- Are well-maintained story and picture books available for the children?

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