



Examples of what to look for when visiting a licensed or certified child care setting

All Ages:

- Look for clean classrooms and toys that are within reach of children so they can access them on their own.
- Look for caregivers who are warmly interacting with children and supporting their play.
- Look for children to be actively engaged in play with access to enough materials so they do not have to compete for items to play with.
- Restrooms located in classrooms or very close by.

Infants:

- Babies eat when they need to and are held for feeding.
- Babies sleep when they need to and only sleep in cribs, not in swings, car seats, etc.
- There is a crib for each baby present.
- Babies have a safe place on the floor to have “tummy time” and explore as they start to crawl.
- Babies are held by caregivers frequently and not just moved from crib, to swing, to highchair.
- Caregivers talk to babies about what is happening in the classroom.

Toddlers:

- Caregivers understand that toddlers are not yet able to communicate and respond promptly to their cries and other signs of distress.
- Caregivers minimize the need to say no as toddlers are testing the limits and learning new physical skills. If the toddler is climbing where it is not safe, the caregiver redirects them to a safe area to learn that skill.
- Low tables and child-sized chairs are used for eating and activities rather than highchairs.
- Caregivers frequently read, sing, and play with toddlers.

Preschoolers:

- The classroom is arranged in interest areas and children are allowed to move freely from area to area for much of the day.
- Caregivers assist children in communicating effectively with their peers and adults by helping them learn emotional cues and demonstrating how to talk to others when a conflict arises.
- Toys and materials are on low, open shelves to allow children to access them independently.

School-agers:

- Materials and furnishings are age-appropriate.
- Children are provided time and space for completing homework with the support of caregivers.
- Children should be happy and busy with activities.

