Choosing a Child Care Center

To decide on a center in which to place your child is a difficult and time consuming task. This checklist will give you an idea of important questions to ask and lead you to a positive approach to finding and keeping quality child care.

It is best to visit at least two or three centers. Visit at an active time of day, and plan to have time to sit and observe staff, children, and activities. Be sure that “unannounced” visits are acceptable. Once you have chosen a center, continue to monitor the program for any changes.

This form allows you to rate three centers, in the appropriate box, rate on a scale of 1 to 5.

BUILDING 1 2 3

Impression of outside \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Impression of inside \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Clean, sanitary \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Equipment plentiful \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Equipment condition \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Playground variety \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

OFFICE

Someone to greet you \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Knowledgeable about center \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Asks for your child’s name \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Knows children’s names \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Willing to show entire center \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Parent sign-in \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Info area \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Lesson plans available \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Menu displayed \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

License displayed \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

STAFF

Qualified \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Turnover \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Annual training \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Appearance \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Enthusiastic \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Affectionate \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Trained in First Aid \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Have Fire training \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

CLASSROOMS

Active \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Children noisy but involved \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Children happy/relaxed \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Ratio appropriate to age \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Routines scheduled, but flexible \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Several choices for children \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Mix of structure and free play \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Regular time spent outdoors \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Activities promote cooperation \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Learning is by discovery \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Room decorated \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Pictures at children’s level \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Furniture is child sized \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Themes follow logical order \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Child made projects \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Science area \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Dramatic play \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Manipulative area \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Language area \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Art Area \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Other:

Are there daily reports about children? Yes No

How are medical emergencies handled?

How are parents involved?

I like this center because:

I dislike this center because: