



Selecting an Appropriate Child Care

A PEATC
Do You Know

Factsheet for Virginia's Parents

Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) is the section of the law that covers services for infants and toddlers.

Learn more about Part C services in Virginia at www.doe.virginia.gov ›
Special Education

"I continue to believe that if children are given the necessary tools to succeed, they will succeed beyond their wildest dreams!"
(Vitter, D.)

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What does quality look like?

Child Care Checklist

Nothing is more important to a parent than the care of their child. This is very true when considering placing your child in a child care program. There are many questions that go through your head: "will my baby get enough attention", "what if he/she cries all day", "what types of development activities will they offer"?

Although no one can replace the care that you give to your child, PEATC has developed a checklist to help inform you on what to look for in a quality child care program.

First Steps

Start Early

Start looking as far in advance as you can. No matter what type of care you are considering - a child care center or care in someone else's home - finding the right child care option can take some time.

Make a Call

Begin your search by calling your local experts - your Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agency. You will receive the facts about child care, and a list of child care options in your area that may meet your needs.

Childcare Aware of Virginia: <http://va.childcareaware.org/>
(804) 285-0846

Ask the questions:

- What are the licensing requirements in my area?
- How can I get information about complaints and licensing violations?
- Does my family qualify for any child care financial assistance programs?

Next Steps

Talk to other parents about their recommendations and experiences.

Visit the full range of child care programs in your community. Check out private child care centers in your neighborhood as well as the early childhood special education services provided by your local school division.

What to Look for when Visiting a Child Care Setting

- ✓ Do the children seem happy? Are they actively engaged with materials and each other?

- ✓ Is there a mission statement that commits to inclusive attitudes and practices? Is it posted?
- ✓ Is the travel time to the program reasonable for my family? (i.e.: bus, taxi, etc.)
- ✓ Are there ongoing opportunities for family involvement?
- ✓ Do the adults positively interact with the children, promoting critical thinking and social skills?
- ✓ Is the staff using an evidence-based developmentally appropriate curriculum?
- ✓ Do the staff members encourage interaction among all students?
- ✓ How much experience/training do staff member have in regards to working with children with special needs?
- ✓ Are accommodations imbedded for diverse learners?
- ✓ What is the adult to Child ratio?
- ✓ Has the child care provider been accredited by a national organization? The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and The National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) are the two largest organizations that accredit child care programs.

Stay Involved

The work isn't over when you find good care for your child. You and your child's caregiver are partners now. Here are some ways to be involved:

- Have parent-caregiver meetings regularly, and ask questions.
- Offer to volunteer time when needed, like participating in clean up days, fixing broken toys.
- Be there for your child's birthday party.
- Visit your child at child care and read a book aloud.
- Join in special events, like field trips, Career Day, Black History Month, or other holidays.

Even if you can't get time off from work during the day, you can still check in at drop-off and pick-up times. Ask the caregiver how things are going, and how your child is doing. Visiting and participating in events at your child's provider sends a strong message. It tells your child and your child's caregiver that you think what your child is doing and learning is important.

Resources

Infant and Toddler Connection of Virginia www.infantva.org

Child Care Aware of VA www.va.childcareaware.org

Infant Toddler Family Daycare <http://www.infanttoddler.com/child-care-resource-and-referral/>



The contents of this factsheet were developed under a grant from the US Department of Education, # H328M090002. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the US Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government. Project Officer.

