

Evaluating a Potential Child Care Professional

Questions for Thought

Does the child care professional...

- Listen to children when they speak and respond with interest and respect?
- Accept and value the children's ideas and suggestions?
- Display a sense of humor?
- Respond with care and understanding to a child who may be fearful, shy, upset, hurt, or angry?
- Encourage children to cooperate with each other?
- Promote the development of problem-solving skills and a sense of independence?
- Set reasonable limits for behaviour and respond to inappropriate behaviour in a fair, consistent, respectful manner?
- Initiate conversations with the children other than instructions, announcements, and commands?
- Take time to be alone with individual children?
- Allow children a choice in many situations?
- Make the children feel good about themselves?

Does the program...

- Combine both individual play and group activities?
- Provide opportunities for children to explore their environment in different ways — i.e. through music and creative movement, fantasy, play, construction toys, games, outdoor play, and field trips?
- Offer a balance between free play and organized activities?
- Have a consistent yet flexible schedule?
- Follow routines for rest, toileting and mealtimes in a relaxed manner?
- Reflect our multicultural society?

Are the facility and environment...

- Safe, e.g., cupboards with cleaning agents are locked, kitchen knives are out of reach, stairways are gated, fire extinguisher is accessible, operational and non-expired smoke detectors, plug covers, etc.?
- Clean, warm, and inviting?
- Well-lit and at a comfortable in temperature?
- Displaying children's artwork?
- Inclusive of areas for a child to play alone, areas for both quiet and active play, and a safe outdoor play area?
- Offering a good supply of varied, challenging, and age or developmentally appropriate toys and play materials in good repair and easy for children to access?

Questions to Ask

Why did you join the child care workforce?

Do you have any plans for further child care training?

How do you help a new child become comfortable?

How do you discipline children who are misbehaving?

How do you handle difficult situations or behaviours — for example, how would you deal with a child who won't stop crying, refuses to eat, or won't cooperate?

Do you plan a daily program? What is a typical day/week?

How often do you go outside, create art, play music, have free-play or story-time?

Does your program have any special features?

What arrangements do you have for children who do not sleep at rest times?

Do you transport children?

Do you have a contract or other business forms?

Where are medications stored? Do you give medications? Do you use a checklist to make sure children receive the correct medications at the correct time? Is your First Aid up to date?

Can I call you or stop by regularly to find out about my child's progress?

How often do you use TV, DVDs, or streaming services, and what type of shows?

What are your procedures in case of a child falling ill, having an accident, fire, earthquake, etc.?

Do you charge a fine for late pick-up?

How much notice do I have to give you if and when I want to withdraw my child?

Do you have liability insurance?

What are your arrangements for when you are ill, on vacation, or otherwise unavailable?

Can you give me at least two (2) references, preferably of families who have used your services and setting?

Can I view your last licensing inspection report (if the facility is licensed)?

Who else may have access to my children? Have they had a criminal record check?