

Choosing a Preschool

1. Attention to Children

What is the teacher-child ratio of the preschool? _____

Is there enough staff to give my child the attention he needs? _____

Is there a combination of whole-group teaching/discussion, small group, and individual attention?

2. Welcoming

Is it a comforting and welcoming place? _____

Can you tell that the staff cares for and respects the children? _____

Is there children's art work and dictated stories on the walls?

Is there a well-kept play yard that is used daily?

3. Happiness

Do the children seem happy there? _____

Are they interacting with the staff in a loving and cheerful way? _____

4. Well Trained Staff

Is the staff required to continue to take courses and workshops in early childhood education, language development, and best practices and strategies for development of the whole child?

5. Speech and Language Role Models

Are the teachers and other staff good models for speech and language?

Do they articulate well, speak slowly and clearly enough for children to understand, use and explain new vocabulary, and use good grammar? _____

Do they at times use some syntax just a little above each child's level in order to teach new sentence structures? _____

6. Social Skills

Are the children working cooperatively? _____

Are they sharing toys and materials? _____

Are they learning social (pragmatic) skills? _____

Do they enjoy being with their classmates? _____

7. Reading, Writing and Math

How is reading and the learning of the alphabet and sounds integrated into each day?

Does the staff make the children feel successful with reading and understanding books and stories? _____

Do they read to children, in groups and individually, throughout the day? _____

Are numbers and counting emphasized in daily activities (cooking, taking attendance, distributing snacks, etc.)? _____

8. Schedule

What is the daily schedule? _____

Is there a combination of structured activities and ones chosen by each child? _____

Do children have an opportunity to play outside for physical activity every day?

9. Centers

Are there exploration centers, like areas for sand and water, art centers, puzzles, dramatic play areas, and block areas? _____

Are their picture books readily available for children to look through? _____

10. Getting Along with Others

How does the staff teach children to resolve conflicts? _____

Do they emphasize communicating with kind words and listening to each other? _____

What is their approach to teaching social-emotional skills? _____

11. Discipline

How is discipline handled? _____

Does the staff involve parents in dealing with behavioral issues? _____

Are appropriate behaviors and rules discussed with the whole class? _____

Are there visual cues that remind children of expected behavior? _____

