



Infant Toddler Child Care Checklist

Keep the following statements in mind when you are looking for an infant or toddler program, along with the advantages and disadvantages found in the First Steps booklet. You can discuss with the provider some of these statements directly; you will get answers to many of them just by observing the program. Add any questions or concerns you may have to this list.

About the Provider

- The provider is gentle, loving, and friendly. The provider seems to enjoy the children.
- The provider talks, plays, comforts, and seeks eye contact with your child.
- The provider responds to your child's cues to be fed and changed.
- The provider understands your child's individuality.
- The provider encourages and understands each child's development.
- The provider encourages your toddler's independence in daily tasks (washing hands and eating, etc.). The toddlers are able to make choices.
- The provider handles conflicts without losing patience, shaming a child, or frequently displaying anger.
- Your child receives the provider's undivided attention periodically.
- Your infant or toddler responds well to the provider.
- The provider is flexible and understanding enough to adjust to the various moods of the children.

About the Environment

- The environment is safe and clean. The smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors and fire extinguishers are working. The electrical outlets and all wiring are covered.
- The furniture and equipment is in good condition (no broken or missing pieces, etc.). There are enough of both to accommodate the children.
- All dangerous items (cleaning supplies, medicine, kitchen knives, etc.) are stored out of reach of the children. The cabinets have child proof locks on them.
- The toys provided are safe and interesting to your infant or toddler. The toys reflect a diverse population (i.e., gender, race, ethnicity, and disabilities).
- The provider offers a variety of activities for the children daily. The activities are appropriate for the different ages.
- The children go outside when the weather permits. A safe yard or neighborhood playground is available.

- The provider has a diapering station. It is located where the provider can supervise the other children. The provider sanitizes the surface. The provider always wears gloves and washes hands.
- Each infant has a separate crib or playpen for naps. The crib meets safety guidelines. A quiet place for the infants to sleep is provided. The sheets are washed regularly.
- The floor is kept clean and free of small objects.
- The environment is home-like, comfortable, and soothing. The environment is well ventilated and heated appropriately.
- The provider has potty seats and foot stools for toilet training.

Continued



Infant Toddler Child Care Checklist (continued)

About the Environment (continued)

- The provider cuts the food into bite-sized pieces.
- The cooking area is sectioned off for the safety of the children.
- The infants and toddlers are allowed to explore the environment. The environment stimulates and promotes learning. Children have room to move around even during sleep.
- Parents are welcome to visit the home or center at any time.

Other Topics to Discuss

- Learn the type of food that is served or whether you will provide your child's food. Ask if you need to provide diapers and wipes, etc.
- Ask if the provider accepts breast milk or if you need to provide formula. All bottles should be properly labeled. The provider should maintain your infant's feeding schedule.
- The provider respects the individual language, culture, and values of your family.

- The provider has ongoing education and training in early childhood courses. They work well with children.
- Low ratio of children to staff. See the First Steps brochure for examples.
- The provider has worked in a child care program for at least one year.
- The provider has a back-up plan in place if they are sick or is on a planned vacation.