



Guidelines to Securing a Quality Childcare Provider



At some point in the child rearing stage, most families hire a childcare provider, whether in-home or out-of-the-home, to help in the process of caring for their children.

Following are twelve recommendations for finding safe and competent childcare:

- 1** Referrals and recommendations are a must! Ask friends, family and neighbors about a particular person or program.
- 2** Is the person or facility licensed to work with children? Check for state licensing of Family Day Care or Center Based Facilities by contacting Community Care Licensing (Department of Social Services) or local law enforcement.
- 3** Interview and ask questions! Parents can pick up on 'vibes' and determine if it is someone you would like and feel comfortable with or would even want in your home to care for your child. Listen to your "gut" instincts!
- 4** Have the children present during the interview process. Children have incredible antennae. Both children and parents need to be comfortable with the child care arrangements.
- 5** Ask for a resume when interviewing for in-home care and credentials for out-of-home care. Check on past references.
- 6** Check the provider's background through DOJ (Department of Justice), the National Sex Offender Public Website (www.nsopr.gov) and Megan's Law website (www.meganslaw.ca.gov) for any type of criminal history.
- 7** Discuss expected duties/responsibilities, emergency situation protocol, hours/fee of service. Review your family/house rules and safety rules; provide a list of emergency contact information. Discuss all possibilities before work begins and before any potential emergency situation arises. Have a checklist posted with all of the important information.

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- 8 For out-of-home care, make certain that the facility allows for unexpected family visits. Appear unannounced and at different times during the day. A childcare facility should be a safe and nurturing environment all the time! Check to make sure it is!
- 9 For Family Day Care and Center Based Facilities it is important to inquire about all employees who will have contact with your child (see #5 and #6 above).
- 10 Be sure that the physical structure of any facility is safe and secure.
- 11 Ask about restroom policies and procedures. Some questions are: Where are the bathrooms located? Are they in an open, high traffic area or secluded? Are they appropriate for the age of the child? Who takes the child?
- 12 Question the supervision, especially during nap time. A quiet, darkened room can be a more vulnerable time for young children. Parents need to find out where the adults will be and what they will be doing during that time. Check classroom schedules.

Although we cannot be with our children all of the time, it is still our job as parents to help Keep Our Children Safe!

