

# Five Steps to Choosing Safe and Healthy Child Care

- 1. Look.** Visit the child care programs you are considering. Are children watched at all times, including when they are sleeping? Do adults and children wash their hands (after using the bathroom, changing diapers, eating, etc.)? Is the play space organized and are materials easy to use? Are materials available at all times? Is the outdoor area a safe place for children to play? Are positive behavior guidance techniques used?
- 2. Check.** Are medicines labeled and out of children's reach? Are cleaning supplies and other poisonous materials locked up, out of children's reach? Is there a plan to follow if a child is injured, sick or lost? Are first aid kits readily available? Are nutritious foods and beverages served to children?
- 3. Count.** Count the number of adults and the number of children they supervise. In centers and family child care homes, children should be in groups of no more than:
  - » One caregiver per three or four infants
  - » One caregiver per three or four young toddlers
  - » One caregiver per four to six older toddlers
  - » One caregiver per six to nine preschoolers
- 4. Ask.** Have the adults been trained to care for children? Is there always someone present who has current CPR and first aid training? Are the adults continuing to receive training on caring for children? Have satisfactory criminal history background checks been performed? Has the program been inspected by the licensing agency within the last 12 months? Will you be given a copy of the program's policies?
- 5. Be informed.** For more information on choosing a safe and healthy child care setting, contact your local Child Care Resource and Referral agency. To find your local agency, contact Child Care Aware® at:

**1-800-424-2246**  
**ChildCareAware.org**

For a more in-depth list of child care questions, download our booklet, *Is This the Right Place for My Child?: 38 Research-Based Indicators of High-Quality Child Care* at [childcareaware.org](http://childcareaware.org).

Child Care Aware® is committed to helping parents find the best information on locating quality child care and child care resources in their community. In partnership with Child Care Resource & Referral agencies (CCR&R), Child Care Aware® builds consumer awareness and supports families in making choices for the care and education of their children.



America's most trusted child care resource.

For additional resources or help finding your local Child Care Resource & Referral agency (CCR&R), call:

**1-800-424-2246**

**TTY Line: 1-866-278-9428**

**ChildCareAware.org**

For local information contact:



Child Care Aware®, a program of Child Care Aware® of America, is partly funded by the Office of Child Care (OCC), Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health & Human Services.