



### **What does high quality child care look like?**

The task of choosing the right child care program is difficult for any parent. You have many things to consider while looking at any program. The tuition, teachers, curriculum, etc. can be on the top of the list for any parent. While these are important, you should also keep in mind other points that make a program a place where you can feel at ease in sending your children. Complete the form on our website for local programs in our area. To receive referrals outside the area, call Child Care Aware at 1-800-735-2966. The following are some suggestions you can take with you in your search.

- Don't take your first impression lightly. If you have reservations after touring a program, there is probably a good reason why. Continue with your search. However, if once you have toured several programs, and you seem to have reservations with all the programs, you could be experiencing anxiety with placing your child in a new situation and generally trusting others to care for them. This is a normal feeling that many parents experience.
  
- Interaction: Take time to observe the interaction between teachers and children.
  - Is the communication positive and effective? Calm voices and little or no sarcasm would be good indicators of this.
  - Are the teachers asking open-ended questions to the children? Open ended questions are those that require more than a "yes or no" answer. For example: Tell me about the picture you drew? *or* What do you think makes it grow so tall?
  - Do the teachers communicate with the children in a respectful and caring way? Yelling is not an effective way to get children to listen.
  
- Kid-friendly Classrooms: Evidence in a classroom that shows an environment conducive to learning may include:
  - Center areas, such as: music center, dramatic play center, science and math center, library center, block and transportation center, writing center with materials out to interact with
  - Children's artwork hung on the walls
  - Children interacting, laughing, and playing with each other
  - Photos, posters and/or books of people that look like you and your family as well as photos of a variety of other families

There are many factors that go into finding a high quality child care program that is the right fit for your family. If you need additional information about help with paying for child care, check out [this link](#).