

HIGH QUALITY CHILD CARE MATTERS

The first five years of a child's life are critical learning years that shape later success. 90% of the brain develops by the age of five. Consider this information when looking for a child care program to support your child's growth.

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TYPES OF CHILD CARE FACILITIES & ADULT TO CHILD RATIOS

Child Care Center



FAMILY HOME CHILD CARE



GROUP HOME CHILD CARE



*EXCEPTION: preschool programs are not required to be licensed by the state of Montana, but may still provide high-quality learning environments with similar adult to child ratios.

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ASK THESE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROGRAM

LEARNING

- Are the play spaces organized with age-appropriate toys, books, puzzles, blocks etc.
- Is there structured and unstructured play time?
- Are there opportunities to read and sing throughout the day?
- Is the program following the national guidelines for screen time?

COMMUNICATION

- Are parents welcome in the facility? Do they get copies of the policies?
- Is regular communication with families happening?

SUPERVISION

- Are children always supervised? Even during rest time?
- Are caregivers warm, welcoming, and interactive with the children?
- Are clear and simple safety rules established?
- Is clear, consistent, and fair guidance being used with the children?
- Is there appropriate staff to child ratio?

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Are proper health and safety procedures being used?
- Is a caregiver present at all times certified in First aid/CPR?
- Is there an emergency plan in place?
- Is there adequate outside time built into the daily schedule?
- Is breast feeding supported?

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Consider the 10 NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) Program standards.

1	Relationships	•The program promotes positive relationships among all children and adults.
2	Curriculum	•The program implements a curriculum that is consistent with its goals for children and promotes learning and development in each of the following areas: social, emotional, physical, language, and cognitive.
3	Teaching	•The program uses developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate and effective teaching approaches that enhance each child's learning and development in the context of the curriculum goals.
4	Assessment of Child Progress	•The program is informed by ongoing systematic, formal, and informal assessment approaches to provide information on children's learning and development.
5	Health	•The program promotes the nutrition and health of children and protects children and staff from illness and injury.
6	Staff Competencies, Preparation, and Support	•The program employs and supports a teaching staff with the educational qualifications, knowledge, and professional commitment necessary to promote children's learning and development and to support families' diverse needs and interests.
7	Families	•The program establishes and maintains collaborative relationships with each child's family to foster children's development in all settings. These relationships are sensitive to family composition, language, and culture.
8	Community Relationships	•The program establishes relationships with and uses the resources of the children's communities to support the achievement of program goals.
9	Physical Environment	•The program has a safe and healthful environment that provides appropriate and well-maintained indoor and outdoor physical environments.
10	Leadership and Management	•The program effectively implements policies, procedures, and systems that support stable staff and strong personnel, and fiscal, and program management so all children, families, and staff have high-quality experiences.

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LOOK FOR THESE QUALITY INDICATORS



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