

5 STEPS TO FINDING QUALITY CHILD CARE

1

Start Early

Finding the right child care program can take some time. Start your search early, as many programs have wait lists for specific ages.

3

Visit and Ask Questions

Visit all child care programs you are considering. Review our site visit guide on the back of this sheet or bring it with you.

2

Get A Referral

Contact Your Local Child Care Resource & Referral Agency

Begin your search by calling your local **Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) Agency**. A referral specialist will search for child care programs in your area that meet your family's needs and check if the programs have openings.

Make sure to ask your CCR&R these questions:

- What are the regulation requirements?
- How can I get information about complaints and violations?
- Does the child care program participate in YoungStar?
- What do the different star levels mean?
- Are there programs available to help with the cost of child care?

Disclaimer: Wisconsin Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies provide referrals – not recommendations. We do not endorse any specific child care provider or program. All responsibility for selecting a child care program remains solely with the legal parent or guardian.

4

Make a Choice

Consider the information provided by your local CCR&R and what you saw on your visits to make the best choice for your child and family. Trust your instincts!

5

Stay Involved

After you make a choice, stay involved. You and your child's provider are now partners.

Here are some ways to get involved:

- Talk with your child's provider on a regular basis.
- Visit your child at the child care program and read a book with the group.
- Join in special events and holidays, like field trips, Valentine's Day, etc.



Child Care Resource & Referral Network

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CHILD CARE

KEY INDICATORS OF QUALITY

Visit all child care programs you are considering.
Find out about these key indicators of quality:

Provider's Education and Training

- Ask about education and ongoing training completed by the child care provider.
- Are child care providers and other staff trained in CPR and First Aid?

Business and Professional Practices

- Does the child care program have a parent handbook outlining all their policies and procedures?

Learning Environment and Curriculum

- Are there areas and materials available to promote meaningful and engaging play? For example, art, blocks, books, dramatic play, math, science, and sensory (sand/water).
- Does the program have a daily schedule that allows for active and quiet periods?
- Are infants allowed to follow their own schedule?
- Does the child care provider engage in conversation during activities?

Health and Well-Being

- Does the child care program provide time for physical activity?
- Are nutritious meals and snacks provided?
- Is the program clean and safe both indoors and outdoors?

Resources



Use the checklist in [Your Guide to Regulated Child Care](#), a summary of child care rules, to help evaluate the programs you are visiting.

Thriving Wisconsin is the administrator of the Nation's only Joint Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies and Family Resource Centers.



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