

Checklist for Self-Selecting a Childcare Provider

TO CHOOSE WISELY AND FEEL CONFIDENT WITH
YOUR CHOICE



Things to do

- Interview your prospective caregiver by phone or in person.
- Ask for references.
- Find out what their prior experience is and what qualifications they have, ie: Early Childhood Education/Child Development, Baby Sitter's Course, and Standard First Aid & CPR.
- Set up a meeting between you, your prospective caregiver, and your child(ren) to see if they're compatible: Do they interact well? Are they patient? Are they firm and fair? Do they enjoy working with children? Are they aware of age-appropriate games and activities? Are they capable of following your rules and instructions? Do(es) your child(ren) like them?
- Be clear and discuss both parties' expectations before leaving your child(ren) alone with the caregiver.
- Consider drafting a contract between parents and caregiver.
- Give them a tour of your home (include your child(ren)); show them how to operate appliances and doors, where things are, what your child(ren) can and cannot use, emergency equipment and exits.
- Visit and inspect the caregiver's home if your child(ren) will be there.
- Leave your caregiver with a list of emergency contacts; how to reach you, as well as a friend or neighbour close by if you cannot be reached.

Things to discuss

- Time period of care: Will this be a regular contract? What is the start time for your caregiver and expected return time for you?
- Compensation and method: How much do they charge per hour? Per child? Will you pay them each time, or on a weekly/monthly basis? Would they like cash, cheque, or bank transfer?
- Location: Your house? Caregiver's house? An alternate location?
- Transportation: How will your caregiver get to and from your house? Or, how will your child(ren) get to and from the location of care?
- Specifics about your child(ren)'s needs: dietary, allergies or medical conditions, toilet use, behaviour, or any other "need to know" information.
- Specifics about rules and boundaries for your child(ren). ie. bed times, consequences of good or poor behavior, sibling cooperation, TV or computer usage, etc.
- Expectations regarding what your caregiver can and cannot do while looking after your child(ren). ie. alcohol consumption, inviting friends over, use of PC, etc.



Please note this checklist is only a sample of suggested criteria. It is the parent's responsibility to investigate the character and caliber of the caregiver.

Optional Home Safety Checklist for Childcare Providers



Items for inspection	Checked	Observations / notes
Overall atmosphere is welcoming and child-friendly.		
Home is clean and tidy.		
Furniture, equipment, & toys are clean and in good repair.		
Inside play areas are easily supervised and well lit.		
Home is equipped with working smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, and has minimum 2 emergency exits.		
Cleaning supplies, medications, and other hazardous materials are inaccessible to children.		
Stairs are safe (clear, handrail, & have option of gates or doors for toddlers).		
Kitchen is stocked with healthy and age appropriate food.		
Beds are available for guest children; bedrooms have windows or emergency exits.		
Outdoor play area is safe; fenced in, good visibility for supervision, clear of dangerous lawn equipment, etc.		
Family vehicle is in good repair and has appropriate car seats & safety devices.		
Home has First Aid kit and Emergency Contact phone list.		
Family members show a positive and caring attitude, and are willing to share their home.		