

Military Family Services
National Capital Region



Vetting a Child Care Provider

Questions You Can Ask When Screening a Child Care Provider

Vetting a Child Care Provider

Choosing the right child care provider can be one of the most important decisions you will make as a parent. It takes time, planning and patience to find the right care that best suits your child/ren and family. Whether you chose a licensed or unlicensed facility, part time care such as a preschool or nursery school, have a caregiver or babysitter come into your home, drop your child off to a child care provider, use before and/or after school care, here are some questions and tips to ask your provider. Getting answers to some of these questions can help when making an informed decision on what works best for you and your family.

Child care provider's name:

Phone:

Email:

Address:

Questions

What is the provider's experience working in child care?

What is your caregiver to child ratio?

How many children are in the program?

How do you gradually integrate children into the program when they first begin?

What does your daily schedule look like?

How much time is spent outdoors?

Do you allow screen time?

How do you keep the parents informed about the child's day?

Is the provider registered with the College of Early Childhood Educators?

What is your transition process between routines?

What is included in the monthly fees? (Meals and snacks, diapers and wipes, sunscreen...etc.)

If meals/snacks are provided, do they accommodate for allergies, aversions, intolerances, religious practices?

What is your policy on communicating any observations and concerns about a child's development with parents?

Do you have a parent handbook I can read?

What is your policy or procedure should I decide to withdraw my child from care?

What kind of programming does the provider offer?

What is the policy if my child is sick?

What happens if the care provider is sick?

Do you take the children offsite for outings? If so, what kind of places would you go to and what mode of transportation would you take to get there?

Do you have any pets? If so, how do they get along with children?

Are there any smokers in the house?

What is your policy on guiding behaviours?

Do you have first aid/CPR training?

My child requires specific medication/treatment. Are you able to administer this medication/treatment?

Do you have a space for children to be able to take naps?

What is your late pick up policy?

Do you provide occasional care on evenings and weekends?

Do you accept children with complex needs?

Do you have experience with children with complex needs?

My child has difficulty in engaging with peers and needs help with socialization. How do you encourage socialization?

What communication tools and strategies do you use that encourage and help develop communication to support children who are non-verbal?

Do you assist with referrals to service providers and/or specialists in the community?

My child has a history of wandering/eloping. What safety measures are in place to ensure my child's safety (both in indoor and outdoor spaces)?

Do you have a recent police record check for the vulnerable sector?

Would you feel comfortable coming over to our home to spend time with my child so that they can get familiar with you? (in case of nanny or babysitter)

What are your fees?

Do you offer receipts for care?

Is there a contract I need to sign for my child to attend?

Do you have any references?

Things to note

- Check if plug outlets are covered.
- Try to visit while the provider has other children in care so you can observe how they are with them.
- Is the care provider engaged with the children? (sitting or crouched to the child's level)
- Did you feel welcome? Was the visit inviting? Listen to what your gut is telling you.
- Are there any documents or artwork on the walls?
- Did the children in the program appear happy and engaged?
- Does the environment appear to be clean?
- Do the toys and equipment appear to be clean and in good quality in working order?
- Do they have an outdoor space?
- Check and see if they have any gross motor items (scooters, tricycles, balls, etc.)
- Check and see if they have anything that helps foster fine motor skills (puzzles, crayons, etc.)
- Did you leave feeling confident that your child would be well cared for at this facility?

Notes: