

ASK YOURSELF

Is the center or child care home:

- conveniently located?
- within my budget?
- a place where I would enjoy spending my days if I were a child?
- in agreement with the way I am rearing my child?

Do I feel:

- good about the caregivers?
- that this is the right center or family child care home for us?

ASK THE PROVIDER

- for a certificate of compliance as a registered home if the operator takes care of 4, 5, or 6 unrelated children in his/her home; or a certificate of compliance as a child care center or a group day care home if the operator takes care of 7 or more children on any premises.



AFTER YOUR CHILD BEGINS CHILD CARE

- Talk with the caregivers often.
- Keep emergency information current.
- Know what you will do for child care if your child gets sick.
- Work together with the caregiver to meet your child's needs.
- Raise concerns with the center director or home provider as soon as they arise.



The Penn State Cooperative Extension *Better Kid Care Program* is supported in part by funds from the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, Pennsylvania Child Care/Early Childhood Development Training System.

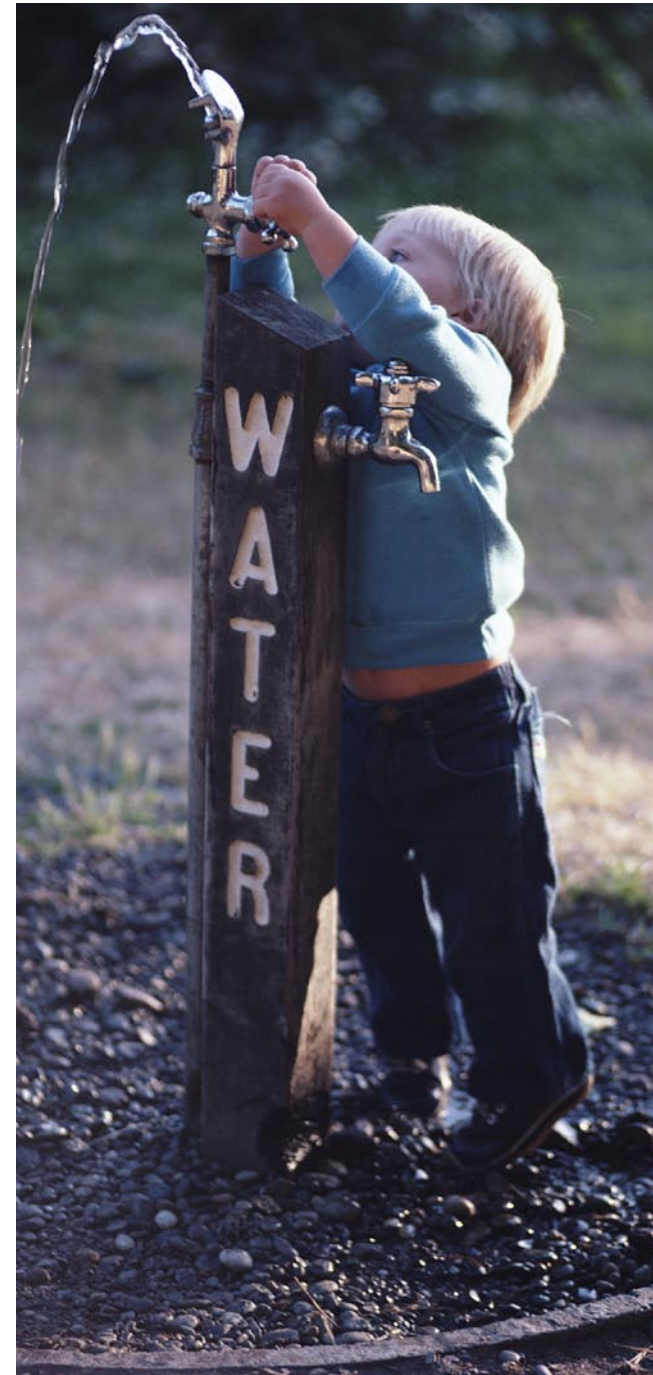
Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences research, extension, and resident education programs are funded in part by Pennsylvania counties, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension Work, Acts of Congress May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Pennsylvania Legislature. T. R. Alter, Director of Cooperative Extension, The Pennsylvania State University.

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Produced by Outreach Marketing Communications
U.Ed.OCE 01-0160ealb/mn/dm
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CHOOSING CHILD CARE

Better Kid Care

a guide to selecting quality care for your child



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College of Agricultural Sciences
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WHAT ARE THE CHOICES?

Choosing care for your child is a big step.

Your family has choices to make as you look for the right kind of care.

BEFORE YOUR VISIT

Decide on the needs of your family and ask the following questions:

- Do I want a child care center or a family child care home?
- How far do I want to travel to drop off and pick up my child? Should it be closer to work or closer to home?
- What are the center's or family child care home's hours of operation?
- What do the children do all day at the center or child care home?
- Do I know any families who have children attending this center or child care home?
- How much can I afford to pay?



VISITING THE CENTER OR HOME

- Call for an appointment with the director or home provider.
- Make sure you visit the center or home at least twice before making a decision.
- Visit at different times of the day to see what the children do in the morning, at lunch, nap time, or in the afternoon.
- Try to meet all of the people who will care for your child.
- In a center, the staff you see in the morning is often different from the staff you'll see in the afternoon.
- Spend time observing the classroom during free time and during organized activities.



THINGS TO ASK ABOUT

- How long have the providers worked there?
- Do the children get to choose from a wide variety of activities and work on them at their own pace?
- What is the method of discipline used?
- How many children are being cared for by one person?
- Do children spend most of the day playing (instead of watching TV)?
- Can you visit anytime without calling first?
- How will you hear about your child's day—by talking with the provider or in writing?
- Does the center or home provide lunch and snacks or does the parent send food from home? If they provide it, is the food healthy?
- How often do the children go outside?
- How does the staff approach potty training?
- Where will my child take a nap?
- Is the caregiver with the children when they are resting or napping?
- During what hours is the center or home open?
- How much does it cost and are there any additional fees?
- Do the providers attend training? If so, on what topics and how often?
- Does the center or home sponsor parent nights and parent programs?
- What happens if my child gets sick and cannot attend?

LOOK FOR

- A clean center or home with lots of child-made decorations at the children's height.
- A cheerful atmosphere.
- Caregivers who smile and play with the children.
- Providers who look at the children when they talk to them.
- A variety of toys and supplies that are right for your child's age.
- Caregivers who encourage children to do things for themselves.
- Caregivers who respect children and each other.
- Lots of books and story times.
- Soft areas where the children can relax.
- Patient child care providers.
- Lots of laughter.
- Children who are encouraged to be creative.

