



Observe

FINDING QUALITY CARE

OBSERVE

Observation is the single most important guide when choosing an early learning program for your child.

Narrow your list to 3-5 providers. Visit each facility or home. Meet with the providers or center directors, and tour the facilities.

Here is a checklist for you to use when touring each center or home.

Health and Safety ✓

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Equipment is in good repair |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Electrical outlets are covered |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Facility is clean and free of litter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | The program's emergency route is posted. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Emergency phone numbers are posted near every phone and in every room |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | The doors are locked and visitors are required to sign in |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | All toys are clean and in good condition |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | The playground has safe surfaces and is fenced in. There are both sunny and shaded areas |

Environment Basics ✓

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | The room is warm and inviting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | The children are happy and involved |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | The furniture is child-sized and the materials are at the children's level |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | All materials in the room are age appropriate for the children |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | There are enough equipment and supplies in the room so children can either play alone or share |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Providers are with the children and within eyesight of them at all times instead of always at their desk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | The community's diversity and culture is reflected in the room and group of children |

Daily Activities ✓

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Nutritious meals and snacks are provided to children |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Nap & story time are built into the day |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Both structured and unstructured art, science, and language activities are available |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Children are exposed to music |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Puzzles, blocks, and a make-believe station are provided |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Children have a time during the day to choose their own activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Activities are varied and include both outdoor playtime and an indoor quiet time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | A schedule of activities is posted and available for you to review |



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Adult-to-Child Ratios ✓

Please note:

Qualistar Early Learning recommends a higher ratio of adults to children than the state of Colorado requires.

| Ages of Children | Colorado Requirement | Qualistar Quality |
|--|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| 6 weeks to 18 months (infants) | 1 staff member to 5 infants | 1:3 |
| 12 months to 36 months | 1 staff member to 5 toddlers | 1:3 (18-24 months) |
| 24 months to 36 months | 1 staff member to 7 toddlers | 1:5 |
| 2 1/2 years to 3 years | 1 staff member to 8 children | 1:6 |
| 3 years to 4 years | 1 staff member to 10 children | 1:8 |
| 4 years to 5 years | 1 staff member to 12 children | 1:8 |
| 5 years and older | 1 staff member to 15 children | 1:8 |
| Mixed age group 2 1/2 to 6 years | 1 staff member to 10 children | 1:8 |
| Note: If 20% of the group is the age of the youngest child then the staff ratio for the younger age group must be used | | |

Provider/Child Interactions ✓

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Look for signs of mutual respect and appreciation between providers and children |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Providers need to be at the eye level of the children when talking to them |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Provider should be listening closely to each child and using encouraging language when talking to them |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Children should be asked questions and not just given directions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | The provider must attend to children who are upset |