

5C ✓ CHECKLIST

Count, Content, Caregiver, Contract, Communication

**Take the Time Choosing
Child Care and Early
Learning Experiences**



Action for Children



5C CHECKLIST

Choosing the right child care for your precious child takes time. It is important to start early. Visit at least three child care options. Take time in each place to look and ask questions.

Count

Count the number of children in the group.
A smaller group size is better.

OHIO LAW FOR FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES:

- **Small:** A maximum of six children, including the caregiver's own children under age six, with no more than three children under age two
- **Large:** Between 7 to 12 children, must be licensed by the state and have a second caregiver.

OHIO LAW FOR CHILD CARE CENTERS:

One adult for every...

- five infants (under 12 months)
- six infants (12 to 18 months)
- seven toddlers (18 to 30 months)
- eight toddlers (30 to 36 months)
- 12 three-year-olds
- 14 four- and five-year-olds
- 18 school-age children under age 11

Remember that licensing regulations are only minimum health and safety standards.

Ask to see a license and current inspection report.



Content

Quality programs have a variety of activities that help children grow and learn.

- Are there quiet and active things for children to do?
- Is the setting clean, bright and safe?
- Do children look like they are having fun?
- Are there plans for fire and other emergencies?
- If licensed, does the program have a Step Up to Quality (SUTQ) rating?
- Take a tour and see where your child will eat, sleep and play.



Caregiver

Make sure that the caregiver is someone you feel will keep your child safe and help your child learn.

- Does the caregiver enjoy being with children?
- What is the caregiver's experience with children?
- Does the caregiver have special training in working with young children?
- Is the provider on the USDA Food Program? A provider cannot charge for USDA sponsored meals and snacks.
- How will the caregiver meet any special needs that your child has?



Contract

Before you make any decision, ask to see a contract. It is best to have everything in writing, especially information about costs, times of operation and supplies.

- What is the cost?
Does the program accept child care subsidies?
- What are the drop-off and pick-up times?
- What are the rules for children to follow?
- Has the caregiver had background check?
- What supplies does the parent need to provide? What supplies are provided by the center or family child care provider?
- Ask for references. Speak with the references over the phone or in person before you sign any contract.
- Make time to stop in for a visit without an appointment. Centers and homes should have an "open door" policy.



Communication

It is important to know how you will get or give information to the caregiver.

- Do you feel that the caregiver will listen to you?
- How will you share information about your child's needs?
- Make sure there is a scheduled time for you to talk with the caregiver each day (This could be when you drop off or pick up your child)

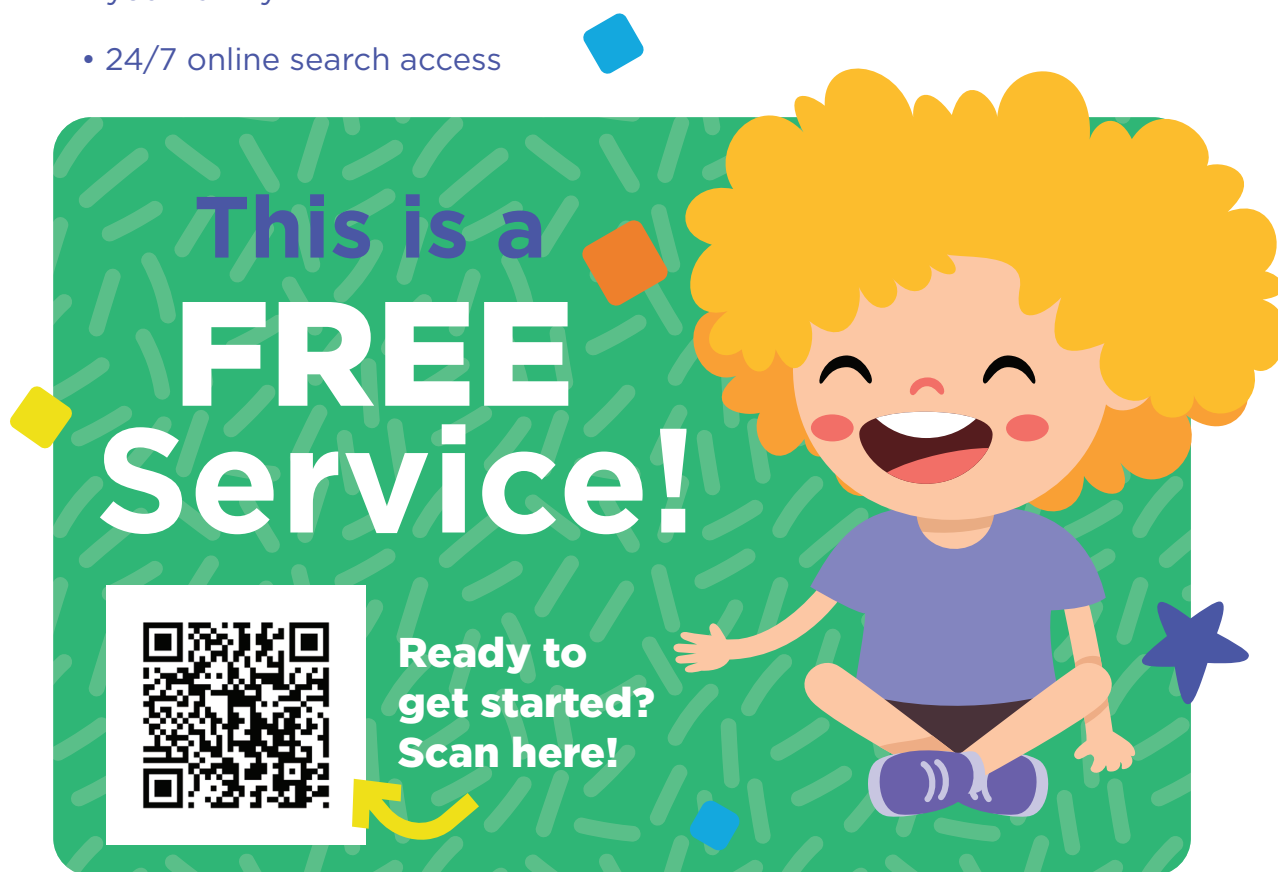
Before you decide, be sure that the program is a good match for your child and your family. Remember, the caregiver is your partner in the care and education of your child.

Are you looking for child care for your infant, toddler, preschooler, or school-ager?

Every day we help parents take the guess work out of choosing child care.

Action for Children can help with:

- Locating full & part time child care and early learning programs in licensed centers, preschools, family child care homes and before & after-school programs
- Guidance and support through the child care search process
- Information on how to choose the right quality environment for your family
- 24/7 online search access



For more information call 614-224-0222, email childcareresources@actionforchildren.org or visit: www.actionforchildren.org