

## Look, Listen & Ask

- Are families and children welcomed, and are children greeted in a loving, respected way?
- Is the overall atmosphere bright, cheerful and child-focused, without being overwhelming?
- Do the child care staff really listen to you, and see your child and every child as a unique and special individual?
- Are the caregivers and teaching practices responsive to differences in children's abilities, interests and experiences?
- Are the majority of planned developmental activities individualized or in small groups?
- Are child care personnel willing to work with you and develop individual goals and plans to achieve them?
- Does the program accept children who are not yet walking or toilet-trained?
- Are caregivers trained and experienced in CPR, first aid, early childhood education and special needs?
- Are therapeutic services such as OT, PT and speech therapy provided on site, if possible?
- Are daily, weekly, monthly and special event schedules shared with families?
- Do child care personnel perform child and family advocacy functions for you if necessary?
- Is communication open between staff and parents? Are caregivers always ready to respond?
- Is the facility safe, secure and physically accessible (i.e., ramps, outside play area, bathrooms)?
- Is the program licensed and/or accredited?
- Are learning materials and toys sufficient, safe, clean and within reach of all children?
- Are the sounds of children predominantly happy? Does it appear the children and adults enjoy being together?
- Is there a daily balance of active and quiet activities? Are they right for each ability and age level?
- Do learning materials, books and pictures reflect diversity, including children with special needs?

### Ask the director or child care provider.

Remember to think about your child's needs, your family's needs, and the needs of the other children and families.

- Are you aware of national quality standards?
- Is the program licensed by the state?
- Are you accredited or working toward national accreditation?
- Do you have a philosophy or mission statement that I could see?
- May I have a copy of your policies and/or parent handbook?
- What are your guidelines and procedures for involving children with special needs?
- How are families involved in the program?
- How will my child be introduced to the adults and other children?
- How do you handle sick children?
- Do you have an orientation for new families?
- What do you consider "Special Needs"?
- What educational opportunities are provided for you and your team?
- How do you handle transitions?
- How is discipline administered?

**Take this page with you as you look for a program for your child. Ask questions and feel free to take notes about what you see and hear.**