

Choosing high-quality child care

- Is the provider using a licensed program?
- Are providers experienced in caring for infants and young children?
- Have you reviewed the provider's website, social media and customer reviews?
- Are there clear check-in and check-out procedures?
- Are all children clean, happy and attended to?
- Is the environment clean, safe and free of choking hazards and open outlets?
- Are all providers trained in infant safe sleep, first aid and abusive head trauma?
- Have all providers undergone comprehensive background checks?
- Is a single child ever left alone with a single provider?
- How many children are cared for by the provider? What is the provider-to-child ratio?
- Does your provider talk to you about concerns and/or ask you questions?



Trouble finding care?

- Try to keep an open mind — what are you willing to negotiate?
- Consider a larger search area or different travel routes.
- **Get on the waitlist:** It might not be as long as you think, especially if you get on the waitlist early.
- Check out childcare.gov for more search tools and resources.
- **Have a backup plan:** Make a plan with a trusted friend, family member or community support.

Additional Resources:

Child Care Aware® of Missouri
mo.childcareaware.org/

Child Care Information for Families
dss.mo.gov/fsd/child-care.htm?

Adapted from the Arizona Department of Child Safety-Office of Prevention

SUSPECT CHILD ABUSE?
CALL 800-392-3738



Who do you trust with your child?

High-quality child care is

Good for kids!

- Promotes child health and development and early identification of health or developmental concerns
- Children begin school ready to learn and socialize in structured environments
- Increases academic achievement and high-school completion rates

Good for families!

- Lowers family stress
- Allows parents to join the workforce
- Fewer instances of Children's Division involvement & foster care placement



“We need to ensure children have the tools to succeed in school and throughout their lives.”

Brian Schmidt, Kids Win Missouri

A safe caregiver:

- Has experience and patience in caring for babies and young children.
- Can calmly and appropriately handle challenging behaviors and emotions, including fussy babies.
- Understands that young children must always be watched.
- Will only be watching a limited number of children to ensure all children are receiving adequate care and attention.
- Will never shake, hit, yell at, make fun of or withhold food from a child as punishment.
- Does not potentially expose children to alcohol, drugs or weapons.
- Keeps your child clean and safe.
- Has first aid, safe sleep and abusive head trauma training.
- Keeps all dangerous household items and cleaners LOCKED, UP & AWAY.
- Talks to you about your child’s day and asks you questions or discusses concerns.



Help your caregiver

- Make sure the caregiver has your phone number to call if they need help or have questions.
- Make sure the caregiver has other trusted family or friends to contact if they cannot reach you.
- If the caregiver is in your home, make sure they know your home address in case emergency personnel are needed.
- Discuss techniques, transitions and routines that work for your child.
- Make your expectations very clear.

**Trust your gut.
Trust your child.**

Trust your child if they tell you something concerning or begin behaving differently.

Is your child suddenly:

- Sullen and laughing/playing less?
- Either less verbal or using explicit, harmful or self-deprecating language?
- Struggling with behavior and emotions?
- Coming home with odd or unexplained injuries?

Has your child said the caregiver:

- Gets mad, yells at, or hits them?
- Calls them mean names or puts them down?
- Laughs at them or scares them?

**POISON CONTROL
CALL 1-800-222-1222**



ctf4kids.org