

# What to Look for When Picking a Pre-K

## 1. RELATIONSHIPS

- Children and adults feel welcome when visiting
- Teaching staff engages in warm, friendly conversations with the children
- Children are encouraged to play and work together
- Teachers help children resolve conflicts by identifying feelings, describing problems and trying alternative solutions

## 2. CURRICULUM

- Ask if the curriculum addresses all aspects of child development
- Teachers work with individuals as well as small groups
- Materials and equipment spark children's interest
- Activities are designed to help children get better at reasoning, solving problems and getting along with others
- Children play with toys that "do something" like playdough and cups that stack

## 3. TEACHING

- Teachers carefully supervise all children
- Time is provided each day for indoor and outdoor activities
- Children's recent work is displayed in the room
- Teachers modify lessons to respond to the needs and interests of individual children

## 4. ASSESSMENT OF CHILD PROGRESS

- Program uses a variety of assessment methods
- Assessment is appropriate for each child and includes all areas of development
- Teachers use assessment methods to design goals for each child
- Families receive information about their child's development regularly

## 5. HEALTH

- Teaching staff have training in pediatric first aid
- There are policies regarding regular hand washing as well as cleaning and sanitizing all surfaces
- There is a clear plan on responding to illness
- Snacks and meals are nutritious and prepared safely

## 6. TEACHERS

- Teaching staff have educational qualifications and specialized knowledge about young children and early childhood development
- Program makes provisions for ongoing staff development
- Teaching staff have training in the curriculum and work as a teaching team

## 7. FAMILIES

- All families are welcome and encouraged to be involved
- Teachers talk to families about their home life and adopt curriculum and teaching methods to families served
- Use a variety of strategies to communicate with families
- Program information is provided in a language families can understand

## 8. COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

- Program connects with and uses local museums, parks, libraries, etc.
- Representatives from community programs are invited to share with the children

## 9. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- Facility is designed so staff can supervise all children by sight and sound
- Program has necessary furnishings
- A variety of appropriate materials and equipment is available and kept clean, safe and in good repair
- Outdoor play areas have fences or natural barriers that prevent access to streets and other hazards
- First aid kits, fire extinguishers, fire alarms and other safety equipment are installed and available

## 10. LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT

- The program administrator has the necessary educational qualifications
- The program is licensed and/or regulated by the applicable state agency
- The program's written policies and procedures are shared with families
- Appropriate group sizes and ratios of teaching staff to children are maintained