

Observe the staff...

- Does the staff relate with children in a sensitive way? Children need to be treated with respect to gain self-confidence.
- Does the staff respond to what a child has to say? Children need to feel important within the group and they learn from interacting with adults.
- What kind of comments does the staff make about a child's work? The staff should show appreciation for each child's efforts and encourage them to create and express their feelings.

The overall atmosphere at the centre should be relaxed and conducive to free activity and healthy development.

While at the centre, take a look at the tenure of the licence displayed. A 24-month licence indicates a centre with a high standard of care while a 12-month licence is issued for meeting the minimum standard.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, always keep in mind these important factors:

- Is the arrangement convenient?
- Will your child get quality care?
- Can you trust the child care centre?
- Is the arrangement likely to be permanent?
- Is the arrangement within your budget?
- Will you and your spouse be happy with the arrangement?
- Will your child be happy with this arrangement?

If you are likely to answer "YES" to all or most of the questions, then the arrangement is probably a good one!

Grab a copy of our other brochures:

1. [Guidelines for first-timers](#)
2. [More than just Babysitting](#)
3. [Learning through Play](#)



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A service provided by
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Choosing a Child Care Centre for Your Child

Choosing a Child Care Centre *for your child*



Introduction

In choosing the appropriate child care arrangement, the age and personality of your child are important factors for consideration. As a general rule, children below three years of age benefit most from one-to-one interaction with adults.

When the children are older and ready for peer interaction, group care such as that provided by child care centres can provide socialising opportunities that are limited in today's families.

This brochure will provide you with some tips on choosing a child care centre.

The Child Care Centre

Child care centres provide full day and half-day care programmes to young children. Some centres offer flexible child care programmes to cater for the diverse work requirements of parents.

Most centres admit children from 18 months onwards, while some also provide infant care to children aged two months to 18 months. A centre's programme is aimed at educating and developing pre-school children through effective early childhood education.

Child care centres are licensed by the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports under the Child Care Centres Act (Cap. 37A) and Regulations. Centres are required to meet basic standards of health care, safety precautions, food quality and security measures. They also provide activities to stimulate a child's mental, physical and social development. Supervisors and teachers of child care centres are required to undergo child care and first aid training.



STEP 1: LOCATE CHILD CARE CENTRES CONVENIENT FOR YOU

Shortlist a number of child care centres that are most convenient for you. You can obtain information about existing centres by:

- Visiting our Child Care Link website at <http://www.childcarelink.gov.sg>; or
- Calling our Child Care Information Line at 6258 5812.

STEP 2: OBTAIN INFORMATION ON THE CHILD CARE CENTRES

After you have selected a few possible centres, contact the centres to get more information on the following areas:

Philosophy of Child Care Centre

Centres should have a philosophy that clearly reflects their policies, aims, values and beliefs on children's development, care and education. It is important that you agree with it.

Information on Operations

Below are some basic information that you should obtain about the operations of the child care centre:

- Age range of children
- Operating hours
- Availability of enrolment spaces
- Fee structure/Mode of payment
- Eligibility for government child care subsidy
- Notice period for withdrawal
- Availability of trial period
- Programme/Curriculum approach
- Centre-parent partnership

The Staff

Find out what training or child care experience the centre's staff has. The staff should not only supervise and instruct the children, but teach and nurture them.

The Programme and Curriculum

A good programme is organised and balanced. It should be developmentally appropriate and allow opportunities for your child's play and learning.

Centre - Parent Partnership

The bridges built between centre staff and yourself forms a partnership that would enhance your child's development and well-being. Find out how you can collaborate with the centre (e.g. participate in parent support group).

Meals and Snacks

The meals and snacks served should comprise breakfast, lunch and afternoon tea. The centre should provide a wide variety of nutritionally balanced food that is high in protein, carbohydrate and dietary fibre but low in fats and sugar. If your child has special dietary requirements, remember to discuss them with the centre during orientation.

Illness and Emergency Arrangements

Find out the centre's arrangements in cases of emergency and when your child falls ill.

STEP 3: VISIT THE CHILD CARE CENTRE

Once you have selected the centre that meets your requirement, arrange an interview with the supervisor and visit the centre with your child. Observe how the staff interacts with your child and your child's reactions in the new setting.

Observe the children...

- Are they happy and engrossed in their play?
- Do they turn to the staff for comfort, help and information? Active planning and guidance from the staff will help children in developing social relationships.
- Do they explore with materials and equipment? Children express their personal feelings through play and it also develops their desire to learn and experiment.

