

CHOOSING GROUP CHILD CARE

STAFF TRAINING/EDUCATION

- Are caregivers formally trained in Early Childhood Education? If not, what kind of training do they have?
- [Is the care licensed?](#) If not, have you done the research and the screening to ensure that this is a safe environment?
- Licencing ensures supervision of government regulations on staff-child ratios, group sizes, caregiver training, physical setting, and programs.
- Are the staff-child ratios in accordance with those determined in the [Child Care & Early Years Act](#)?
- Is the chef trained in food preparation?
- How long has the staff member worked with children?

HOURS OF OPERATION/PROCEDURES

- What are the hours of available care?
- Do the hours of operation match your needs?
- What holidays are/are not included?
- Do they charge for late fees? How much?
- When is a child considered sick?
- If the home childcare provider is sick, is there a replacement or back-up?

ENVIRONMENT

- Is the atmosphere secure, warm, inclusive and encouraging?
- Are the caregivers warm and enthusiastic –do they take genuine interest in the children?
- Are toys age-appropriate?

- Are play areas safe (indoor and outdoor)?
- Is the curriculum posted and updated weekly?
- Is the centre meeting the specific needs of all children/abilities?
- Is the menu meeting the needs of all children (consider food allergies)?
- Are there split groups?

STAFF TURNOVER RATE

- How often does staff change? Low staff turnover ensures that a secure relationship can be formed between the caregiver and child.

TIPS

- Visit centres/agencies and observe the interaction between caregivers and children.
- Interview supervisors/caregivers to find out policies and attitudes toward children.
- Ask to see the [Child Care & Early Years Act License](#) and/or their last City Inspection Report.
- Choose child care that best suits your needs.

LOCATING CHILDCARE

- [City of Toronto](#) www.toronto.ca/children
- [Peel](#) peel.cioc.ca
- [Durham](#) www.durham.ca
- [York](#) www.york.ca

RESOURCES

- [Child Care & Early Years Act](#)

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/14c11>

CENTRE CARE VS. HOME CARE: A COMPARISON

	PROS	CONS
CENTRE CARE:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliable – open every day, (except for statutory holidays) • Licensed, therefore meets government standards • Activities/programs/toys are age-appropriate • Children can interact/make friends with peers • Formally trained staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less flexibility – rigid hours, usually 7:30 am-6:00 pm. • Lack of control in how your child spends his/her day as curriculum is often pre-determined • Cannot care for sick children; you may need back up care if child is ill.
HOME CARE:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same caregiver daily; child can bond • If licensed, care meets government standards. If not licensed, you are responsible for screening and interviewing to ensure standards are met • Smaller number of children, individual attention in a family setting • Flexible hours – can tailor to times needed • Control/input on how child spends his/her day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not always reliable, if caregiver is sick back up will be needed • May not be licensed • Conflicts may be more difficult to resolve • Potential for less peer interaction depending on the child's age

For more information on childcare options, financial assistance, and parenting resources, please contact the Family Care Office.

416.978.0951 www.familycare.utoronto.ca

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**FAMILY
CARE
OFFICE**