

A Parent's Guide for Seeking Child Care

Whether you are seeking regulated child care (North Carolina star licensed child care homes or centers) or unregulated child care (nannies, babysitters, summer camps and/or afterschool programs), there are certain questions you should ask. Print this out, and use the following as a rough guide when interviewing your child care provider.

☆ *Supervision*

- How do you supervise the children?
- If the care is regulated, does your program meet state teacher:child ratios? (www.ncchildcare.net)

☆ *Education and Experience*

- What is your educational background? (degrees such as Child Development or the Child Care Credential, training such as in CPR/First Aid, and licensing?)
- What ages of children have you worked with?
- How many years of experience do you have?
- Do you have children of your own?

☆ *Caregiver and child interactions*

- Do you have planned activities? What do they include? Are they age- and developmentally appropriate?
- Do you provide field trips and outings?
- How do you communicate with parents? What do you think is important to share with parents?

☆ *Health and Safety*

- Do you smoke? Have pets?
- Do you transport children? How? (check for valid driver's license and driving record)
- Do you provide meals? Snacks? What types of food do you serve?

☆ *Discipline*

- What is your discipline philosophy? What kind of rules do you have?

☆ *Other questions might include*

- What is the most important thing you've learned when caring for children?
- What are some of the things my child will learn while in your care?
- What is a typical day like for a child while in your care?
- How would you work with my toddler who cries when I leave?... If he refuses to go to bed? ...If he has a nosebleed? If he is injured while in your care? If he is hurt by another child? If he hurts another child?
- Do you teach values – religious or otherwise – to children in your care? How do you do this?
- If regulated care, what is your vacation and sick policy? Do you have written policies and a handbook for parents?

Don't forget to perform a background check (www.nccourts.org) and reference checks. Also, take time to observe the program or your child in the care of whomever you are considering hiring.