CHECKLIST FOR SAFE, QUALITY CHILD CARE



Quality child care in the early years helps create a strong foundation for children's lifelong success!

Families in Colorado have choices when it comes to child care. No matter what kind of care you decide on, use this checklist to make sure the program is safe and will provide quality care to support your child's early learning and development.

Types of Child Care



Care that takes place in the home of the child care provider and serves more than four children on a regular basis; must have a Colorado child care license.

Child Care Center

Care that takes place in a dedicated school building or community center; includes Early Head Start and Head Start; must have a Colorado child care license.



License-Exempt Child Care

Three types of child care situations do not require a license (license-exempt). License-exempt child care includes care provided by a family member, friend, nanny or neighbor.

NEED SUPPORT TO FIND CHILD CARE? WE'RE HERE TO HELP!

STEP 1: LEARN ABOUT YOUR OPTIONS



Search for a licensed family child care home in your community at **ColoradoShines.com**. For each program, you'll find details about its licensing history, inspection reports, and if any complaints have been filed against the program.



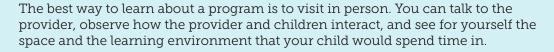
Families can also call the Colorado Shines Child Care Resource and Referral Line to connect with a friendly navigator for one-on-one help to find child care. Call 1.877.338.2273 or complete this online form.

YOU MAY QUALIFY FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO HELP PAY FOR CHILD CARE!

The Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP) supports families with lower incomes to pay for quality child care.

Learn more about income requirements and find out if you qualify for financial support through CCCAP.

STEP 2: VISIT, OBSERVE AND ASK QUESTIONS





CHILD CARE CHECKLIST:

Name of Program/Provider:	_ Date of Visit:
How many children are cared for?	What training have the providers had?
 Are other caregivers are present? Have providers had background checks? 	What is the daily schedule of activities?
What is the adult-to-child ratio and group size?	 Are TV, computers, or other technology used with children? If so, how often and how are the devices used?
 What are the hours? What days is the program closed/ provider not working during the year? 	 Does the provider have a plan in place in case of a disaster, like a fire, tornado, or flood?
What is the age range of the children cared for?	 Does the provider have an emergency plan in case a child is injured, sick, or gets lost?
Is the program licensed by the State of Colorado?	Are there ways for parents to be involved?
	 Is there a list of current parents to contact for a reference?
Safe Sleep for Infants	 Is there a safe outdoor area for children to play?

☐ All infants are put to sleep on their backs.

☐ The sleep spaces have a firm surface, like a mattress in a crib, covered by a fitted sheet with no other bedding, bumpers, blankets or stuffed animals.

If you have a baby, make sure the provider adheres to these practices proven to reduce the risk of Sudden Unexplained Infant Death Syndrome (SUIDS).

☐ Provider is trained on safe sleep.

☐ Infants have their own sleep space that is the same every day.

☐ Infants do not sleep in swings or car seats.

Provider can see/hear infants at all times, including during sleep.

☐ Provider regularly checks on infants during sleep.



Things to Look For...



Health and Safety

	Licensed and in good standing with the State.		Doors are locked at all times.	
	Supplies and equipment are clean and work		All toys are clean and in good condition.	
	well. Electrical outlets are covered.		Outdoor area (if applicable) is fenced in and safe for play.	
	Staircases are blocked with secure gates.		Animals (including their food, cages, litter	
	All potentially hazardous items are removed or out of reach of children.		boxes, etc.) are secured in a separate area of the home.	
Da	aily Activities	Le	arning Environment	
	Nutritious meals and snacks are served.		☐ The space is pleasant, clean, and there are different areas for resting, quiet play, and active play.	
	Playtime, storytime, activity time, and nap time are part of every day.			
	Providers play with children to help support their learning.		There is enough room for children and providers to move around.	
	A variety of materials (puzzles, blocks, music, make-believe materials) are available.		The children appear happy and at ease with the provider and with other children.	
	Children play for much of the day and have time to choose their own activities.		Furniture and materials are the right size and type for the age of the children.	
	time to choose their own activities.		There are enough toys and learning material for the number of children.	
Pr	ovider / Child Interactions			
	Provider speaks to and treats children warmly and respectfully and gets down on a child's level when talking with them.			
	Provider seems genuinely interested in what children are doing.			
	Providers and children seem to enjoy being together.			
	Provider listens to each child and is encouraging and positive.			
	Children are asked questions and not just given directions.			
	Provider quickly responds to and cares for children who are hurt or upset.			