

Guidelines for Choosing a Preschool in Salt Lake

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The following guidelines, based on the NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards, can help you identify high-quality early education programs for your children in Salt Lake County



Preschool and child care programs should focus on children:

- Watch to see that children interact with other children and adults, so they can build healthy relationships.
- Ask about the curriculum, which should include a variety of activities appropriate for the children's ages and needs.

Preschool and child care programs should have qualified staff:

- The staff should have the educational background to promote your child's learning and development. Ask what degrees and training teachers have.
- Ask how long teachers and staff have been with the program. Teachers that stay in the program longer are more able to focus their attention on the children and establish bonds with them.

Preschool and child care programs should build relationships with families:

- Program staff should work with families to meet their child's needs. Ask how information and concerns are communicated between staff and families.
- Check that the program's policies allow families to visit their child during the day.

Preschool and child care programs should be well-run:

- Check that the program is licensed by the city and state. The facilities need to be age-appropriate and well maintained, both indoors and outdoors.
- Outdoor play is important and should be a daily element of the program.
- Check whether the program has policies and practices to help keep children safe from preventable illness and injury.
- Ask about the child-to-teacher ratio, which helps determine how much individual attention your child will get. For example, there should be at least one adult for every ten 4-year-olds.

Evaluating a program based on these standards will help you choose a high-quality program for your child that will allow them to get a great start on learning.

Early Years Are Learning Years is a regular series from NAEYC (www.naeyc.org) providing families with tips for giving their young children a great start on learning.