

# CHOOSING QUALITY



A Program of the Children's Coalition  
for Northeast Louisiana

QUALITY IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING CHILD CARE, BUT ISN'T ALWAYS EASY TO SPOT. THIS CHECKLIST WILL HELP YOU RECOGNIZE THE KEY ELEMENTS OF QUALITY AND MAKE AN INFORMED DECISION WHEN CHOOSING THE BEST CENTER.

- **Start Early:** Start looking as far in advance as you can. To learn about the programs in your community visit [LouisianaSchoolFinder.com](http://LouisianaSchoolFinder.com) and contact Child Care Connections at 318-323-8775 for customized child care referrals to meet your family's unique needs.
- **Make a call:** Contact the centers you are interested in and schedule a visit.
- **Visit the centers:** See the reverse for a list of suggested questions and things to look for during your visit.
- **After your visit:** Trust your instincts and your child's reactions to the teachers and the environment.



## MORE INFO:

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[childrenscoalition.org](http://childrenscoalition.org) | 318-323-8775

## QUESTIONS TO ASK:

- Is the program licensed by the Louisiana Department of Education?
- Do program staff have Child Care Civil Background checks?
- Does the program accept funding from Child Care Assistance?
- Do teachers have an Early Childhood Ancillary Teaching Certificate?
- What curriculum does the center use?
- What is the staff child ratio and group size for my child's age?
- Will my child have a primary caregiver/teacher?
- Are you welcome to drop in at any time?
- Do teachers track my child's development to ensure they are meeting appropriate developmental milestones?
- Do teachers hold regular parent teacher conferences?
- Are there opportunities for parent involvement activities?

## THINGS TO LOOK FOR:

- Are teachers and children talking, reading, & playing together?
- Is the teacher down on the child's level, making eye contact with the children?
- Are teachers talking in positive tones?
- Do they respond patiently to children's questions?
- Do they ask the children questions that prompt the children's thinking?
- Are children supervised at all times? (They should always be in sight and sound of teachers.)
- Are babies placed on their backs to sleep?
- Do babies spend part of their play time on their tummies?
- Do caregivers respond promptly to crying babies?
- Are babies held when being bottle fed?
- Are children playing together side by side?
- Are children encouraged to work together to solve problems?
- Do children move freely from one activity to another?
- Is there enough space and materials to encourage play?
- Are the following within reach of the children?
  - Books, Blocks, Puzzles
  - Art & writing materials
  - Musical instruments
  - Pretend play materials like puppets and dress-up
  - Science materials like plants, funnels, and magnifying glasses
  - Sensory materials like sand and water