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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROS</th>
<th>CONS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CENTRE CARE:</strong></td>
<td><strong>CONS:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reliable – open every day, (except for statutory holidays)</td>
<td>• Less flexibility – rigid hours, usually 7:30 am-6:00 pm.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Licensed, therefore meets government standards</td>
<td>• Lack of control in how your child spends his/her day as curriculum is often pre-determined</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Activities/programs/toys are age-appropriate</td>
<td>• Cannot care for sick children; you may need back up care if child is ill.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Children can interact/make friends with peers</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Formally trained staff</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>HOME CARE:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Same caregiver daily; child can bond</td>
<td>• Not always reliable, if caregiver is sick back up will be needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• If licensed, care meets government standards. If not licensed, you are responsible for screening and interviewing to ensure standards are met</td>
<td>• May not be licensed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Smaller number of children, individual attention in a family setting</td>
<td>• Conflicts may be more difficult to resolve</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Flexible hours – can tailor to times needed</td>
<td>• Potential for less peer interaction depending on the child’s age</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Control/input on how child spends his/her day</td>
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