

Families often select a child care center to care for their children while at work. In New Jersey, a child care center is defined as a program that provides care for six or more children under the age of thirteen, who attend for less than 24 hours per day.

The New Jersey Office of Licensing inspects centers before they receive a license to operate. The license ensures that basic health and safety guidelines are met. National accreditation, offered by such organizations as the National Association for the Education of Young Children, ensures that higher standards of quality have been met.



CCCC
Community
Coordinated
Child Care
2 City Hall Plaza, 3rd Floor, Rahway NJ 07065
973-923-1433
www.cccunion.org



United Way of
Greater Union County

Visit us at www.cccunion.org for child care referrals and more!

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Selecting a
Child Care Center

Since centers differ widely in philosophy, fees, activities, and staff qualifications, it is vital for parents to visit and compare programs before enrolling their children.

When selecting a child care center, visit several programs, check references, and ask the following questions. Simply check off the boxes if the answer to the question is "yes" and add up the checks for each column to compare centers.

If you have any questions, please call a child care specialist at 973-923-1433.

Centers

1 2 3

Health and Safety

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Is there a current license issued by the NJ Office of Licensing posted? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Is the staff-to-child ratio sufficient?
State law requires the following ratios:
1: 4 for children under 18 months
1: 6 for children 18 months – 2 ½ years
1:10 for children 2 ½ - 4 years
1:12 for 4-year olds
1:15 for 5-year olds |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Is the outdoor play area fenced in with a variety of climbing and riding toys? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Is the area clean and child-proofed? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Do the children and staff wash their hands before touching food, after diapering and toileting, and coming in from outside? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Are the meals healthy and fixed in a clean kitchen? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Are the toys in good repair and suitable for the child's age? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | What is the plan in case of disaster – fire, flood, earthquake, power outage, terrorism, etc.? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Are diaper-changing tables cleaned and sanitized after each use? |

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Are tables used by the children cleaned and sanitized before and after using them for playing or eating?

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What is the plan if a child is injured, sick, or lost?

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Are first aid kits easy for adults to get to?

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Are adults warm and welcoming? Do they pay individual attention to each child?

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Are children watched at all times, even when sleeping?

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Do adults handle children's behavior in positive ways, without yelling or using any physical punishment?

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Have all the adults had their backgrounds checked nationally?

Learning Environment

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Is there a daily schedule posted?

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Is there a good balance between active play and quiet time?

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Does the daily schedule include story time?

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Does the program allow children to explore and learn through play?

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Do caregivers make eye contact when speaking to a child?

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Do children and adults talk to each other?

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Do the children appear to be happy?

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Is the program arranged in specific areas such as blocks, art, books, dress-up, table toys and puzzles?

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Is playground equipment in good condition? Is there a sand, wood chips or rubber surface underneath? Is the playground (or yard) checked daily for dangerous objects? Is it fenced in?

Parent Policies

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Can parents visit at any time?

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Do the fees and hours fit your needs?

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Do you agree with the programs discipline policy?

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Are there planned parent conferences?

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Do you enjoy visiting the center and like the staff?

Staff Training

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Does the director have a college degree and at least one year of experience?

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Do the teachers in the classroom have a CDA (Child Development Associate) Credential, an Associate's degree, or a Bachelor's degree?

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Is everyone trained in first aid and infant/child CPR?

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Is there a training plan for everyone working with children which includes attending training throughout the year?

Administration

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Is there an acting manager left in charge when the director is out?

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Do the teachers communicate with parents regularly? How?

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Is the child care center nationally accredited?

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Is there a written policy for the care of sick children and giving medicine?

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Are the same caregivers in the classroom day-to-day?

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Do the caregivers treat children with respect?

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Are you given written policies?

_____ Totals per center visited