

# Santa Barbara Family Care Center Children's Resource & Referral Program



## Child Care Check List

### The Provider

- Can the provider provide references? (Be sure to check them.)
- Is the provider licensed? (Ask to see the license.)
- Are providers patient with parents who find it difficult to separate from their children?
- Does the provider enjoy being with children? Does he/she hug, rock, cuddle, talk, and sing to the children?
- Is the provider knowledgeable about child development stages and trained in early childhood education?
- Does the provider respect your family's values and culture?
- Does the provider regularly inform you about how your child is doing?
- Are you comfortable communicating with the provider about your child's needs?

### About the Program

- What is the adult-to-child ratio?
- Does the program have a high staff turnover?
- Are there opportunities for staff to learn more about early childhood education?
- Are there opportunities for parents to get involved?
- Is information shared about how you can support your child's learning at home?
- Are the rates affordable and the hours convenient?
- Is transportation to and from school provided?
- Do the provider's discipline methods match yours?
- What is the daily routine? Is it too strict? Is it too relaxed?
- Are the activities and toys right for your child's age?
- Are there plenty of materials and a variety of items for your child to play with?
- When applicable, how does the provider accommodate children with special needs?

### About the Environment

- Is the home or center clean and safe?
- Is the home or center cheerful and interesting but not over stimulating?
- Are there separate areas for diapering, sleeping, resting, and exploring?
- Is there adequate indoor and outdoor play space for children?

Ask the following questions if your child is or will be in a family child care home:

- Are firearms kept in the house? If so, are they kept in a safe place away from children?
- Are cleaning supplies and medications locked in a high cupboard?
- If the provider has a swimming pool, is there a four-sided fence with a locked gate?

### About Your Child's Progress

After you select a provider, drop in unannounced or call to find out how things are going. Consider the following:

- Ask your child about his or her day. Is he or she happy and adjusting well?
- Does your child look forward to being with the provider?
- Are you visiting at different times throughout the day, and do you feel comfortable with the routine?
- Is your child learning anything new?

Always remember to trust your instincts. You know your child and what is best for his or her well-being. If you have certain feelings, either positive or negative, chances are your child will feel them too.

*When you have narrowed down your choices, the Children's Resource & Referral Program will give you the California State License Number of the providers you are interested in and the telephone number of the local Community Care Licensing Division so that you can check for any complaints or licensing violations in the providers records.*

