



What is quality child care?

It's a fact

Research shows that high quality child care plays a positive and long-lasting role in the social and intellectual development of children, no matter what their social, cultural and economic background.

Lack of access to high quality child care can cause high stress for working parents: worry about their children's well being while at work, and conflicts with employers and co-workers due to lateness or absences.

Lack of high quality child care also keeps women from entering and participating fully in the paid labour force.



Does this child care program provide quality care?

Whether quality child care is provided in a home or group setting, it has common features:

- A nurturing, warm environment
- Small group sizes to ensure children receive individual attention and are encouraged to interact co-operatively.
- A program that is appropriate to the children's ages, and is stimulating and enjoyable.
- Age-appropriate toys and creative materials that encourage learning through playing.
- Inclusive care for children with special needs.
- Respect and appreciation for individual and cultural diversity.
- A safe and hygienic environment.
- Nutritious snacks and meals.
- Non-profit care, so that all funding goes directly into serving the children.

A good relationship with parents

- This means the program's child care philosophy is clear and discussed with parents.
- Parents are welcome to visit the program anytime.
- Parents and caregivers understand and agree about their respective roles and responsibilities.
- Parents receive daily reports about their child.
- There's a willingness to listen to and act on parents' concerns.

Caregivers are key to quality

Look for:

- Well qualified, experienced caregivers.
- Caregivers who relate to children with sensitivity, understanding and warmth.
- Caregivers who communicate openly and consistently with parents about their children.
- Caregivers who've worked in a centre or provided care in their home for a long time so that children can form stable and secure relationships with them.
- Adequate compensation and working conditions to attract and keep good caregivers.

Parents should insist on quality child care

Everybody benefits from high quality child care – children, parents and all levels of society. It's the key to healthy early development. Don't settle for less. It's what your children and your family deserve.

