



Comfort Play & Teach



Choosing Child Care/Kindergarten

When looking for a child care or school setting that is just right for your child, allow enough time to compare many, to have all your questions answered and to meet the educators who will teach and care for your child. The time your child spends in these learning and care environments should be **Comfort, Play & Teach** time. Be sure that the centre or school you choose makes both you and your child happy!

Comfort

- Look at the learning environment. Does it have comfortable and organized spaces for children to play, explore and interact? Are there soft furnishings and natural materials? Do the windows let in enough light? A learning environment should be interesting and inviting, and should make your child feel at home.
- Make sure that the standards that ensure your child's health and safety are being met. Is the centre or school clean? Are the learning materials in good repair and safe? Are the children receiving proper meals or snacks that are nutritious? If you have concerns about issues that affect your child's well-being, find out how to have them addressed. Parents have a vital role in ensuring that children receive quality education and care.

Play

- Notice the kinds of activities available to the children in the classroom. Do the choices include math, language, science and nature, building toys, blocks, art, music and a drama area? Is there time for children to explore freely, pursue their own interests and to learn through play? Posted lesson plans should match what is being implemented, but there must also be flexibility to follow the children's lead!
- Inspect the playground and outdoor learning materials. Are materials like the climber and riding toys in good repair? Are there grass and trees that provide shade? Do children get sufficient time to practice their physical skills including running, climbing, riding and playing collaborative games? Children need a healthy balance between active outdoor play and more quiet indoor activities.

Teach

- Ask about the centre or school's educational philosophy. Is it play-oriented or more academic in nature? Is there a balance between learning experiences that are initiated by the children and directed by teachers? Do teachers provide individualized attention and does the philosophy compliment your child's learning style? It is important to know that your child will be exposed to a variety of learning opportunities, while exploring their interests at their own pace.
- Remember, a good classroom, curriculum and educator all have important roles in providing care and teaching to the whole child. If your child is excited by what is available in the classroom, is safe, and most importantly, feels cherished and loved by the teachers, you should feel confident that your child will flourish there and that you have made the right choice!