

**Basic Information**

- Licensed:* The Child Care Center is licensed.
- Schedule:* The center can accommodate your working/school schedule.
- Fees:* The center's fees are affordable.
- Subsidy:* If cost is a concern: the center accepts state subsidy payments or offers/accepts scholarships.
- Ratios:* The number and ages of the children do not exceed state licensing ratios.
- Interaction:* The children and caregiver(s) seem happy and involved.
- Television:* If the children watch television, time spent in front of the television is minimal and the programming/video tapes are appropriate.
- Smoking:* Smoking is not permitted in the home while the children are present according to state law.
- Policies:* The center has established (written) policies regarding schedule, illness, vacation and discipline.

**The Staff/Provider**

- Commitment:* Will commit to providing care for your child for at least one year (specifically for in-home centers).
- Experience/Training:* Have been in the program at least one year and have appropriate training and experience.
- Daily communication:* Seems interested in talking with parents about children during arrival and departure times.
- Discipline:* Can state clearly the rules that the children must follow and those rules seem reasonable.
- Program communication:* Seems open and comfortable with you when you ask questions about the program.
- Diversity:* Seems to respect cultural differences among children and families.
- Interaction:* Seems cheerful, energetic, and patient in their interactions with the children. Knows children's names, their personalities and interests.

**Health and Safety**

- Safety precautions:* Safety precautions are established and posted.
- Safety equipment:* Fire extinguisher and smoke alarms are readily accessible.
- Hazards:* Poisons, medicines, etc., are safely locked away.
- Hazards:* Electrical outlets are covered and potentially dangerous items are kept out of the reach of children.
- Nutrition:* Meals and snacks are nutritious and varied.  
*Important phone numbers:* Current medical and emergency information is posted near the telephones.
- Cleanliness:* The place is clean and reasonably orderly, with designated space for "messy" activities.
- Sanitation:* Caregivers wash hands after diapering and before food preparation.
- First Aid:* One or more caregivers have been trained in CPR and First Aid. First Aid materials are available.
- Pets:* If pets are in the home, they are either separated from the children or are supervised when with the children.

**The Learning Environment**

- Play equipment:* There are enough age-appropriate toys, books, puzzles, blocks, etc.
- Settings:* There is enough space for all activities.
- Setting variety:* Different kinds of spaces are available for quiet/active play, dramatic/outdoor play.
- Choices:* Children get to make choices in their play.
- Interaction:* The providers hold, cuddle, and talk to children appropriately.
- Activities:* There is time for "free play" as well as activities that the caregiver(s) direct.
- Discipline:* Disciplinary methods are consistent with your own. Licensing regulations prohibit "hitting, spanking, shaking, biting, pinching or inflicting other forms of corporal punishment."

**\*\*\*\*\*WARNING SIGNS\*\*\*\*\***

- The center discourages parents from observing or visiting unexpectedly. (*Note: This does not apply to the first time you set up a visit. Teachers/Caregivers will usually ask you to set up an appointment so they can spend adequate time with you.*)
- The teacher/caregiver seems harsh, rude, physically rough or indifferent with children. He/she calls children bad names or scolds them frequently.
- When you express concerns, the caregiver becomes very upset or defensive.
- Your child seems afraid or dislikes the caregiver or seems excessively quiet or fearful in his/her presence.
- The caregiver ignores the children. Children wander aimlessly-for long periods, or are left to play unattended.

For a copy of the child care center-licensing rules, visit:  
[www.cis.state.mi.us/opla/childcar.htm](http://www.cis.state.mi.us/opla/childcar.htm)

For a copy of the child care home-licensing rules, visit:  
[www.cis.state.mi.us/brs/cdc/famrules.htm](http://www.cis.state.mi.us/brs/cdc/famrules.htm)

If you have any questions concerning this information or choosing child care, please call

**The Work/Life Resource Center**  
**(734) 936-8677**  
**[www.umich.edu/~hrra/worklife](http://www.umich.edu/~hrra/worklife)**