

Child Care Quality Checklist for Parents

Child care centers vary greatly in quality. South Carolina rates centers from Levels C, B, BB, A and AA. The following questions will help you assess the quality of the center you are considering for your child.

What do the “Points for this Center” Mean?

- 40 points is an excellent quality center.
- 30 points is a good quality center
- 20 points is a fair quality center
- 10 points is a poor quality center

	Lowest Quality	Low Quality	Higher Quality	Highest Quality
Points	1	2	3	4
Is the center ranked by the South Carolina ABC program? Ask to see the certificate verifying this rating.	C	B	BB	A/AA
What degree does my child’s possible teacher have?	GED	High School Diploma	Associate’s Degree in Early Childhood Education	Bachelor’s Degree or Master’s Degree in Early Childhood Education
Ask to see a menu for the last month and look at breakfast, snacks and lunch being served.	Mostly carbohydrates such as macaroni and cheese or prepackaged foods that are heated up	Freshly prepared meats and carbohydrates such as home made macaroni and cheese.	Freshly prepared meats, some vegetables, some carbohydrates and fruits	Freshly prepared meats, many green, yellow and red vegetables, fresh fruits, whole grain breads

	Lowest Quality	Low Quality	Higher Quality	Highest Quality
Points	1	2	3	4
Ask to see the classroom your child would be placed into if enrolled	Some toys, tables and chairs, cribs, bouncy chairs, walkers	Toys, tables, bouncy chairs, walkers, feeding tables where many children sit.	High quality toys made from a variety of materials, special tables for eating or babies being lap fed, different areas for sleeping, playing, outdoor toys	Many high quality toys and some in storage to be used at various times, special eating places, in preschool you should see materials for block play, house play, puzzles, art work
Are the classrooms large enough? Ask what is the maximum number of children in the classroom or on the playground	35 square feet per child in the classroom, 75 square feet per child outdoors	35 square feet per child in the classroom, 75 square feet per child outdoors	35 square feet per child in the classroom, 75 square feet per child outdoors	35 square feet per child in the classroom, 75 square feet per child outdoors
What are the discipline policies of the center?	The center using spanking and isolation (time out)	The center uses isolation (time out)	The center uses redirection and counseling with parent input	The center uses redirection, counseling, parent input and frequent communication when problems arise.
The outdoor playspace is interesting?	Toys for exercising large muscles	Toys for exercising large muscles, digging and riding	Toys for climbing, digging, riding and imagining and shade	Toys for climbing, digging, riding, imagining, building and shade
Where will my	Stand-alone	Stand-alone	Multiple sturdy	Multiple sturdy

	Lowest Quality	Low Quality	Higher Quality	Highest Quality
Points	1	2	3	4
child be changed or use the restroom?	changing table for babies with warm water and adult sized restroom for children	changing table for babies with warm water and adult sized restroom for children that is very clean and appears sanitized	changing tables for babies with warm water immediately accessible to the table and a child sized restroom	changing tables for babies with warm water immediately accessible to the table and a child sized restroom that is very clean and appears sanitized
Where do the children rest?	On the floor with mats	On the floor with mats and blankets	On the floor with mats with fitted sheets and blankets	On cots with fitted sheets and blankets
How does the center keep track of where your child will be during the day? (Ask to see their tracking sheets)	There is not plan for tracking	The children are accompanied by the adult to each new location	The child is accompanied by the adult to each new location and there is a classroom tracking sheet plan	The child is accompanied by the adult to each new location and there is a classroom tracking sheet up to date for the time of the visit
What schedule will my child follow?	The center only has play time, nap time and meal time.	The center has indoor play, outdoor play, nap time, mealtime and one large or small group time.	The center has indoor play, outdoor play, nap time, mealtime and one large and one small group time.	The center has several indoor play periods, several outdoor play periods, nap time, if needed by the child, mealtime and one large and one small group time.
How will I know about my	No formal plan	A written plan for a weekly	A written plan for a weekly	A written plan for a

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Points	1	2	3	4
child's work and play at the center?		Newsletter	Newsletter and daily communication sheet	Newsletter, daily communication sheet and face to face conversations with my child's teacher.
Total Points				