



PARENTS: This checklist will help you compare childcare, preschools or other learning/enrichment facilities so you and your family can **make an informed decision**. Be sure to inquire about health and safety standards and check with your local governmental agencies regarding licensing.

Questions to ask:	Step by Step	Center #2	Center #3	Center #4
Are parents welcome to drop in without making an appointment?				
Do children appear happy and engaged?				
Do the teachers have face-to-face or phone contact with parent(s) or provide regular email or written reports?				
Are teachers hands on teaching children how to self-soothe, engage, sustain and exit play with peers with support –or- are children encouraged to learn at their own pace from other students?				
Does the center/school employ modalities such as visual scheduling, simple sign language (ASL), pictures and gestures?				
What is the teacher: student ratio?				
Is facility an enrichment-program or licensed child-care program? (Licensed child-care must adhere to state mandated rules and regulations while enrichment facilities are able to customize program according to child and family needs)				
Does school or classroom offer services and consultations such as Speech, Occupational Therapy, and Physical Therapists as needed?				
Are there Child Development Specialists on the team?				
Is there a transitioning process in place for new students or students moving from class to class?				

Is transitioning process structured and the same for each child or is it customized with respect to each family and child(s) needs?				
Is the school/center geared towards typically developing children and can they accommodate any sort of special needs that might arise? (Needs can range from and include speech, articulation, difficulty with fine motor such as writing skills, self help skills such as dressing, toileting or social skills, assertion, conversation with teachers and peers)				
Does the school/center adhere to one specific teaching philosophy or do they employ a variety of philosophies (Emilio Reggio, Montessori, Brazelton, Lindor) in their approach to education?				
Are school hours/days of operation convenient for child/family?				
Does each lead teacher supply a written curriculum for the class?				
Does curriculum address the whole child with regards to specific activities to develop and refine fine and gross motor skills, cognitive and expressive language acquisition?				
Is facility clean, organized and stocked with developmentally appropriate toys and play equipment?				
Does child have to be toilet trained? If not, does the school/center aid, assist and support child and family in toilet training?				
What is the educational background of Director? Does he or she have extensive experience/education in Early Education and Development? What is highest level of education /degree acquired? (This is very important as the Director sets the tone, standards, guidance and input on curriculum, teaching styles, discipline etc.)				
Does school have opportunities for parents to observe children in classroom setting? Are there modes of facilitating parental viewing such viewing rooms, two-way mirror etc. in place?				