



Observe

FINDING QUALITY CARE

OBSERVE

Observation is the single most important guide when choosing an early learning program for your child.

Narrow your list to 3-5 providers. Visit each facility or home. Meet with the providers or center directors, and tour the facilities.

Here is a checklist for you to use when touring each center or home.

Health and Safety ✓

<input type="checkbox"/>	Equipment is in good repair
<input type="checkbox"/>	Electrical outlets are covered
<input type="checkbox"/>	Facility is clean and free of litter
<input type="checkbox"/>	The program's emergency route(s) is(are) posted
<input type="checkbox"/>	Emergency phone numbers are posted near every phone and in every room
<input type="checkbox"/>	The doors are locked and visitors are required to sign in
<input type="checkbox"/>	All toys are clean and in good condition
<input type="checkbox"/>	The playground has safe surfaces and is fenced in. There are both sunny and shaded areas

Environment Basics ✓

<input type="checkbox"/>	The room is warm and inviting
<input type="checkbox"/>	The children are happy and involved
<input type="checkbox"/>	The furniture is child-sized and the materials are at the children's level
<input type="checkbox"/>	All materials in the room are age appropriate for the children
<input type="checkbox"/>	There are enough equipment and supplies in the room so children can either play alone or share
<input type="checkbox"/>	Providers are with the children and within eyesight of them at all times instead of always at their desk
<input type="checkbox"/>	The community's diversity and culture is reflected in the room and group of children

Daily Activities ✓

<input type="checkbox"/>	Nutritious meals and snacks are provided to children
<input type="checkbox"/>	Nap & story time are built into the day
<input type="checkbox"/>	Both structured and unstructured art, science, and language activities are available
<input type="checkbox"/>	Children are exposed to music
<input type="checkbox"/>	Puzzles, blocks, and a make-believe station are provided
<input type="checkbox"/>	Children have a time during the day to choose their own activities
<input type="checkbox"/>	Activities are varied and include both outdoor playtime and an indoor quiet time
<input type="checkbox"/>	A schedule of activities is posted and available for you to review



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Adult-to-Child Ratios ✓

Please note:

Qualistar Early Learning recommends a higher ratio of adults to children than the state of Colorado requires for Child Care Centers. For Family Home Provider ratios please refer to the licensing information on page 4.

Child Care Center Ratios →

Ages of Children	Colorado Requirement	Qualistar Quality
6 weeks to 18 months (infants)	1 staff member to 5 infants	1:3
12 months to 36 months	1 staff member to 5 toddlers	1:3 (18-24 months)
24 months to 36 months	1 staff member to 7 toddlers	1:5
2 1/2 years to 3 years	1 staff member to 8 children	1:6
3 years to 4 years	1 staff member to 10 children	1:8
4 years to 5 years	1 staff member to 12 children	1:8
5 years and older	1 staff member to 15 children	1:8
Mixed age group 2 1/2 to 6 years	1 staff member to 10 children	1:8

Note: In other age combinations, the staff ratio for the youngest child must be utilized if more than 20% of the group is composed of younger children

Provider/Child Interactions ✓

<input type="checkbox"/>	Look for signs of mutual respect and appreciation between providers and children
<input type="checkbox"/>	Providers need to be at the eye level of the children when talking to them
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provider should be listening closely to each child and using encouraging language when talking to them
<input type="checkbox"/>	Children should be asked questions and not just given directions
<input type="checkbox"/>	The provider must attend to children who are upset