

Some Things To Consider for Before and After School Care:

- Make sure the caregiver has training and experience with school-age children.
- See if the children are involved in planning the activities on the daily schedule.
- Find out if there are materials for creative activities and books to read.
- Are there places for both indoor and outdoor active play?
- Do the children have choices of activities to do?
- Check the schedule to see if there is time for the children to unwind after a long day at school. They need a chance for active play before starting on homework or doing quiet activities.
- See if breakfast is offered if your child will need to eat before school in the morning.
- Find out if nutritious after-school snacks are served each day.
- Is there a place to keep backpacks, books, or other school items near the door?

The Penn State Cooperative Extension Better Kid Care Program has information on children's issues for early childhood educators, child care providers, and parents on the Better Kid Care Web site at: www.betterkidcare.psu.edu.



Penn State Cooperative Extension, Clinton County

<http://clinton.extension.psu.edu/>

Clinton County Early Care and Education Initiative

www.clintoncountychildcare.org



For further information call Laurie Welch, Children, Youth & Family Educator, at (570) 726-0022 or e-mail her at law27@psu.edu.

Family & Consumer Extension Educator

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Are You Looking For Quality Childcare?



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Things to Consider:

1. Type of Childcare:

Family Home Programs – These are programs in the home of a family home provider. Caregivers who care for more than three children, other than their own, are required to be registered with the state. Family home providers can care for up to six children, not including their own children. They have planned activities on their daily schedule and need to meet the state health and safety requirements.

Family Group Homes – These programs can be in homes or in another facility. There are at least two caregivers and no more than twelve children. They are required to be licensed and meet state regulations.

Child Care Centers – Programs with more than twelve children are considered center programs. They must be licensed and meet state guidelines for staff, health, and safety requirements.

Relative/neighbor caregivers – These caregivers are someone you know, perhaps a relative or a friend, who is willing to care for your child in her home. You and your child may feel good about this arrangement because you know the caregiver and are familiar with her home.

*Some children thrive in larger programs, while others do better in a smaller setting. You know your child best. Choose the type of child care that will be right for your child. Check several programs before deciding.

2. Cost:

Day care costs vary widely, depending on the type of care you use, the day and hours you need care and the individual arrangements between you and the caregiver.



Other things to consider:

- What types of activities would my child take part in?
- What are the operating hours?
- Are they closed for any holidays or vacation?
- Do they care for sick children, if yes how do they care for sick children?
- How do they handle discipline?
- What is included in the cost (meals, snacks, diapers, formula)?
- What is the cost and when is payment due?
- Is there a contract to sign?
- Is their required notice of leaving arrangement?
- What is their security or emergency plan?
- To prevent misunderstandings, it is important to find out about activities, schedules, and payment requirements ahead of time and to have it in writing, even with someone you know.

Danger Signs:

- The caregiver does not want you to visit the program or ask specific questions about what your child will do during the day.
- The caregiver does not respond to the children.
- The caregivers voice often sounds angry or cross
- The house/center is dirty and/or unsafe
- Your child appears unhappy and doesn't have much enthusiasm for playing with you, other children or their toys.



Before and After School

School will be starting soon and it's time to make plans for child care for your school-age child. Find a program that is right for older children. They need activities and schedules that differ from preschoolers' activities and schedules.

