

# CHOOSING CHILD CARE

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# Foreword

Those of us who have children know how special they are in our lives and how we would not trade them for anything in the world or the world itself. However, sometimes you have certain things you need to do that you cannot take your child with you to do. A perfect example of this would be work or an interview. A simple solution to a problem like that is to enroll your child into some sort of child care program.

In today's society it is important to be extremely cautious when selecting a child care provider for your children. It can be very difficult to trust people we do not know, especially when it comes to taking care of a member of your family. I'm sure you have seen some of the shocking videos online or heard some of the stories on the news about abuse and neglect taking place in some child care locations. This is a truly terrifying thought. However, there are steps you can take to help ensure the safety of your child.

There are many things you need to consider when choosing a child care provider. You may not know where to start with this list of questions because it is quite long. That is okay because that is exactly what this book is for. The following six chapters will go over some of the most important questions to ask when choosing a child care provider. Continue reading and ensure that your child receives the best care possible!

# **Choosing Child Care**

# **Chapter 1:**

## *Child Care Basics*

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### **Synopsis**

Those who have children know exactly how much they mean to them. You would do anything for your child as long as it would make them happy in the end. You are always worried about them and want nothing but the best for them. One of the best places you can start to ensure your child has a bright future is to know the basics of healthy child care and to know what to look for in a child care provider.

It is important that you realize how many hours your child may spend with this child care provider and how much of an impact they may have on them. Let us say that you use the child care provider while you go to work and you work eight hours a day for five days a week. That comes out to forty hours a week that your child will be in someone else's care and that is why it is important that you look for a provider that will provide your child with the best care and example.

The following chapter will go over the basics of what you should look for in a child care provider and what you should stay away from.

## The Basics

As mentioned before, there are some basic things that are essential for your child's well-being as well as their development that are important to look for when searching for a child care provider. The following are some examples of the basic things your child needs from a child care provider.

- **Love and Warmth**

Love and warmth is extremely important in any child's early stages of life. Your child needs to feel like the world is a joyful place and you should keep them away from things such as hostility and anger for as long as possible. When trying to find a child care provider, whether it be in-home care or at a facility, you must make sure that your child will be in a loving environment. When it comes to child care at a day care you should examine the attitudes of the workers as well as the other children there. If other children there are able to act out and are not redirected this may not be a place you want your child to receive care.

- **Your Child's Senses Need to Be Nourished**

In the early years of your, child their brain is like a sponge. Everything around them is absorbed, not only actions, when their senses in environments as well. Their sight, touch, taste, smell and hearing are all essential parts of their development. That is why it is so important to make sure that your child's senses will be nourished. You want to find a child care provider that can offer a clean and quite area for your child. You should also look for a provider that offers

areas with stimulating objects for the child to play with as well as stimulating art and pictures on the walls.

- **Your Child Needs Opportunities to Express Their Artistic Side**

Expressing creativity and exploring their artistic side is extremely important for your child. It is important that you find a child care provider that offers and encourages ways for your child to be artistic and creative. Finger painting is a great way to stimulate a child's creative mind and so is coloring. Basically, you want to avoid child care providers that have the children spend all day watching cartoons or movies.

- **Positive Adult Role Models to Imitate**

Children look upon the adults in their life to learn how they are supposed to behave in society. For example, if you swear around a child enough you will find that they are soon saying the same words. That is because adults are their role models and their guides for life. You should find a child care provider that offers professional adult staff that always behave in an appropriate manner while at work. You should find a place that you can look at the people caring for your and appreciate the example they are setting.

- **Laughter, Happiness and Joy**

It is important to find a child care provider that is not overly serious. They should be able to joke and make your child laugh and encourage happiness and joy in the child. However, at the same time you need to



make sure that the child care provider can be firm at the same time when it is needed and redirect behavior when needed.

- **Imaginative and Educational Play**

It is important to ask your child care provider what type of play time there will be for your child. You want to try and find a provider that offers imaginative and educational play time. It is important that your child play with toys that stimulate imagination as well as motor skills. In other words, you do not want to use a child care provider who will have your child play with video games for play time.

There are many more things that you should consider when trying to find a child care provider. These were just a few examples of some of the basic things you need to consider before making a decision.

# **Chapter 2:**

## *What is Your Budget?*

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### **Synopsis**

I'm sure that as a parent you are well aware of how expensive it can be to care for your child. Well guess what, if you are looking for a child care provider you should prepare yourself for yet another bill, the only difference is that child care is usually paid weekly.

The following chapter will go over the basics on setting a budget for child care, an average on the costs, as well as some ideas on how you can save money to help with your child care budget.

## **Figure Out the Expenses**

As a parent I am sure that you have already had many headaches in the past that resulted from trying to balance budgets and trying to figure out how to take money from one budget and put it into another. Well the cold hard truth is that child care is not cheap, especially if you want your child to be cared for by a reputable provider. One of the smartest things you can do before you even begin looking for a child care provider is to sit down and figure out exactly what you have to spend each month on child care, or in other words create a budget. If you create a budget before you begin looking for a child care provider you can avoid being crushed by finding the provider of your dreams and then finding out you cannot afford their services.

The following is a brief guide on how to calculate your child care budget and also some ideas on how to save some money.

- **Calculate Income**

The first thing you need to do is find out what everyone's monthly income is that will be contributing to the child care. Add all of these monthly incomes together and you will get the number of the total household income. You want to make sure to include all forms of income and not just primary employment, every dollar counts as budgets are very precise.

- **Calculate Expenses**

After you have calculated what the monthly income of your household is it is time to make a list of all of your expenses for the household and how much each of them is. This list needs to include everything from groceries, to the electric bill, to your morning cup of coffee from Starbucks.

- **Figure Out What's Left Over**

After you have calculated the monthly income of your household as well as the monthly expenses of your household you need to subtract the expenses from the income. The remaining money will be the money that you will be able to apply to child care without breaking your budget.

In some cases you may find that there is nothing left over for child care and in fact you are in the hole with your current expenses. If this is the case here are a few examples of things you may need to cut out of your life for a while until you are in a better financial situation.

- **Save Whenever You Can**

It is smart as a parent to shop whenever you can when items go on sale. Every little dollar adds up and you will be surprised by how much you can save by buying backpacks or sweaters out of season because they go on sale. Sometimes you can even find them for up to 60% off.

- **Adjust Your Spending Habits**

If you are trying to make a budget for child care it is probably not a good idea to be spending money on things that are not necessary. You have to understand that there is a difference between need and want. For example, child care is a need where as a Starbucks mocha latte is a want.

- **Buy Used**

You can find some really nice clothes and other things at some second hand stores. Your child grows quite quickly in their early stages and there is really no need to be constantly buying them brand new outfits at expensive retail stores when they will outgrow them in a few months. There is nothing wrong with shopping at second hand stores and some of them have some very nice things.

You will probably have to make many changes in your life if you want to be able to afford services from a reputable child care provider. Did you know that the average cost of in-home child care is about \$650 a month and for day care services it will run you right around \$1,000 a month? That is quite a bit of money isn't it? Do not worry, with proper budgeting and with enough searching you will surely find the child care provider that offers everything your child needs at a price you can afford.

# Chapter 3:

## *Do the Leg Work and Get Recommendation*

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### **Synopsis**

As a parent who is looking for child care you cannot expect that a reputable and trustworthy child care provider is just going to fall into your lap. You have to think of the process of finding a child care provider kind of like the process of finding a new job. You can't just sit around and hope that one will show up. You have to get out on the grind and find what you are looking for. This process will be made much easier if you get recommendations from reliable sources. This will save you from going from care provider to care provider to only be disappointed.

The following chapter will go over the importance of doing the leg work to find a care provider and will also give you some ideas of where to look for recommendations for reputable child care providers.

## **Get Out There!**

Once again, you cannot just sit around and expect the child care provider of your dreams to appear on your doorstep. You will have to do research and acquire recommendations and to be honest with you this process will probably be quite time consuming. The time and effort will be well worth it though because you surely want the best care possible when it comes to your child.

Recommendations are a great place to start but there are certain things you need to look for before listening to a recommendation. For example, you need to find out if the person who made the recommendation reliable. You also want to find out if other people have made the same recommendation. After that you should check to see if the person who made the recommendation had a child that received care from that provider.

It is sad but a true fact that some companies pay people to write review and make recommendations for them. That is why you need to check the credibility of the source of the recommendation.

A great place to look for recommendations is from your friends because they will be likely to provide you with honest recommendations. Another great place to look for recommendations is from your co-workers.

Chances are more than a few of your co-workers have at least one child and they surely have someone that looks after them while they are at work. They will surely know a reputable child care provider because just like you, they want nothing but the best for their child. As well, chances are that if you

work together, your pay will be similar, which means the chances of you being able to afford the same child care provider are fair.

There are also staffing agencies and other government services which offer reviews on child care providers. The reviews on government websites are much more likely to be reliable than those found randomly on Google.



# **Chapter 4:**

## *Interview Potential Candidates*

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### **Synopsis**

Once you have done the leg work and have gone through all of the recommendations you will have surely met some potential candidates. You need to interview these candidates and make sure that they fulfill every one of your standards when it comes to the care of your child. Remember you are the parent and you do not have to flex to meet other people's standards. You are the parent so that makes you in control of this interview process.

It is important to remember through this process that some people can be quite deceitful and no matter how sad the truth is, you have to keep an eye out for people who are good at hiding their true self.

The following chapter will go over the importance of interviewing your potential candidates as well as the questions you should ask them.

## **What Should You Ask?**

I cannot express how important it is to conduct an interview with a child care provider before you enroll your child in their services. There are some very important questions you should ask during the interview or during the tour of the daycare. These questions will not only ensure the safety of your child but they will also help you feel more relaxed about the whole situation as well.

The following are seven examples of the types of questions you need to ask the child care provider during your interview.

- **What is the Provider's Qualifications?**

You need to ask the child care provider what their qualifications are. You need to ask them how long they have been in business for. As well, you need to get professional references from them. Ask them if they have any reviews they can submit. Find out if they are CPR certified because you never know when an emergency may happen and you want to make sure that the person caring for your child is qualified enough to handle the situation. Another important thing to ask is if the child care provider is licensed and if they are not I would start looking elsewhere. Another important thing to ask if your child will be going to a daycare center is if the center is accredited.

- **How Safe is the Center?**

When conducting your interview with your child care provider you need to ask them how safe their facility is. You need to ask them if electrical sockets are blocked with child protectors and if corners on

tables are rounded or covered by child protectant material. Another important question to ask is if cleaning supplies are locked up. A huge and very important question to ask about safety is what the policy is on people picking up children. You want to make sure that the child care provider has a strict policy on only approved people picking up the children and also requiring identification. It is advised that you take a tour of the facility to see the safety measures they have taken for yourself. One good idea is while on the tour to look for a certification of safety from inspectors because most places will place these on the wall in a visible area.

- **What happens if Your Child is Sick?**

It is important that you ask the child care provider if there is a clear plan in place in the case of a child becoming ill. You need to ask if there are policies on when and if a child will be sent home. It is also important to ask this question because you do not necessarily want your child to spend hours in a place where children can be sick and not sent home. The last thing you want is for your child to be perfectly healthy and then come home sick. Another important question to ask is if you will be charged for the days that you have to keep your child at home because they are too ill to go to the daycare.

- **What is the Ratio When it Comes to Children and Staff**

If you are choosing to enroll your child in a daycare facility rather than home care it is important that you ask the provider what the staff to child ratio is. You do not want your child to be in a place where they will be lost in the crowd. You typically want to try and find

a child care provider that can offer smaller room sizes and less children per staff. This will ensure that your child is still receiving attention and that all of their needs are being met. Keep in mind, a child needs a lot of attention and needs to feel like they matter.

- **What is the Parenting Style and What Curriculum is used?**

It is important that you ask the child care provider what type of curriculum will be taught and what form of parenting will be used. You need to find out if there will be structure and what type of methods will be used to redirect your child negative behavior.

- **Do They Offer Transportation?**

Some child care providers offer transportation if it is needed and this can be a great convenience for some people. Make sure you ask if transportation is available.

- **What is the Visitation Policy?**

Plain and simple, stay away from child care providers who require prior notice to you coming to see your child. It is your child after all and you should be able to visit them whenever you please. Child care providers who require prior notice to visitation usually have something to hide and that is why they want to know when you are going to come. You want to try and find a place that has an open door policy for parent. Better yet, you want to try and find a child care provider that not only allows you to drop by unexpectedly but

encourages it. Parent participation in child care services and crucial so the parents should be there visiting as much as possible.

The process of trying to find child care services that fulfill your every desire can be quite time consuming and seem hopeless at times. As long as you keep searching and keep questions like the ones listed above in your mind you will surely be successful with your efforts. Just remember, no matter how hard it may be, it is important that you find the best care possible for your child as you will trust this person with your child.

You will probably have some of your own questions that you would like to ask as well and that is good. There is nothing wrong with asking the child care provider every question that comes to your mind. If they are a good child care provider they will understand all of your questions and will appreciate the fact that you care about your child. The child care providers that seem annoyed with your questions are the ones that you want to avoid.

# Chapter 5:

## *Do a Background Check*

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### **Synopsis**

In today's society you cannot put your trust into a stranger. No matter how much a person may seem as if you can trust them or seem as if they are a good person, you have to be cautious with the amount of trust you put into them.

When it comes to your child and the care that they receive I am positive that you want to ensure that they are in safe hands. There are many people in this world that are very deceitful and may seem like good people but in reality are not. There are also many people out there who do some very bad things and that is why it is crucial that you ensure that the person taking care of your child is a good person.

If you are not sure of how to check to see if a person has been truthful about who they are the following chapter is perfect for you. In this chapter we will go over background checks and how you can have one done on someone or a facility.

## **Check the Facts**

There are many people out there who have mastered the art of deception. They can easily fool other people and manipulate them into believing whatever they want them to. This is true even for those who offer child care. It is important that you check the facts on your child care provider and do a background check on them.

There are many different ways you can do a background check on a person. One way is the countless companies that advertise background checks on the internet. These companies will give you all the information they can find about someone for a monthly or yearly fee. It will show all of their criminal history which can be a vital tool when trying to select a child care provider. Some of these online background checks can be quite costly however and even if you are just trying to look up the facts on person they will still charge you the entire subscription price. It is important to get your background check done by a company with a good reputation. You need to be sure that they will dig deep and offer you accurate and detailed information on the person you are doing the check on.

You can also perform a background check on your own. It will require much more time and effort than hiring an agency to do it but it is possible. If you do it on your own you will have to do a lot of research on the internet as well as BBB. It would also be a good idea to go to your local courthouses and ask if there is a public file on the person. Doing the check on your own is possible and will save money but in the long run it is better to use an agency to do the digging for you. They will be much more likely to find something buried if it exists than you will be.

After you have performed this background check as well as all of the previous steps it is time to come up with a decision. You need to weigh out all of your desires with your possible candidates. You will know which one is right for you based on how they meet all of your requirements. All of your hard work will finally pay off and you will have the perfect child care provider for you and your child.



# Chapter 6:

## *Pay Attention to your Childs Actions and Behaviors Following Someone Else Caring For Them*

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### Synopsis

When you are using the services of a child care provider it is extremely important and absolutely necessary for you to monitor the behavior of your child once they are no longer around the provider.

The sad truth is that there are people out there who will not treat your child with the best of intentions. I know we have all seen the TV shows or have seen it on the news when a child has been mistreated by a child care provider. That is why it is so important for you to monitor the behavior of your child at home to make sure they are being treated correctly and that they are happy with their child care provider.

The following chapter will discuss some of the common signs that a child is being mistreated while under the care of a child care provider. Pay close attention and retain this information as it is extremely important.

## What to Watch For

There are some signs that you need to watch for when you are using the services of a child care provider. These signs are important to look for because if they are exhibited, something is wrong, and the better the child is removed from the setting the better.

The following are some signs that you should watch out for when using a daycare or home child care provider.

- **Is Your Child Afraid?**

Does your child seem afraid of the daycare or child care provider? Do they scream or throw a fit every time you take them to the facility? This is a common sign of a child that is being abused or neglected at a daycare and it should raise serious concern.

- **Is Your Child Becoming Dethatched?**

Does it seem as if your child is becoming socially detached from the world? Is your child beginning to isolate themselves? This is also another sign to look out for because children who are being mistreated will begin to shut themselves off from society in an effort to protect themselves.

- **Is Your Child Becoming Less Interested?**

If you notice that your child begins to lose interest in things that once entertained them there may be something going on with your child care provider. A common sign of child abuse or neglect is a child becoming uninterested in things in life and becoming cold in sort of way.

- **Is Your Child Happy?**

The most obvious sign of something going on with your child care provider is if your child begins to show signs of being unhappy. This sign does not even necessarily mean that there is abuse going on, the child might just not like the environment of the daycare or the child care provider. In either case, it is time to find another option for your child because it is important that you do everything you can to ensure that they are happy and content, at all times!

# Wrapping Up

Finding a child care provider that suits all of your needs and desires can be quite difficult and can consume a large amount of time. All of the effort and time is well worth it though when you think about the safety and happiness of your child.

Just remember all of the things that were discussed in this book and all of the valuable information you retained. This information will surely be helpful if you apply it to your search for a perfect child care provider. Keep in mind, you may not find the perfect fit the first time around. It may be a trial and error thing where you have to try several providers before you find the correct fit. Just do not give up hope and keep trying because you will surely find the child care provider of your dreams, sooner or later.

It is understandable if you experience anxiety when you think of trusting your child with a stranger but what are you going to do, take your child to work with you every day? Surely not! You have to let go of that anxiety and relax a little. All you need to do is follow the steps that were listed in this book and your child will be just fine.

I hope this book has been helpful for you and has made it a little bit easier for you to make a selection on your child care provider. I wish you the best of luck and I thank you for your time!