

EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE- WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Health and safety

- Is the centre licensed? Is the family day home with a licensed family day home agency?
- The centre/home is clean and in good repair.
- Doors to outside or to unsafe areas (e.g. a garage or parking area) are secure
- Balconies are locked and off limits, there are gates on stairwells and windows are securely fastened
- Early childhood educators and children wash their hands before meals and after toileting or diapering
- Toys are disinfected on a regular basis (daily for infants and toddlers)
- There are clear routines in case of an emergency such as fire, evacuation or accident
- Procedures about children's allergies (such as food) are clearly stated and observed
- There are clear routines for giving children needed medications at child care
- Cleaning products, medications or implements are stored safely
- If meals are provided, menus are posted, and the food is nutritious and appealing
- When children leave the premises (to go to the library or park, for example), they are well supervised
- Outdoor space is clean, well-maintained and available
- Cribs/playpens and other equipment meet current safety standards
- Each child has his/her own crib (infants/toddlers), cot and/or bedding/pillow/blanket for sleeping
- Early childhood educator has up-to-date first aid training (CPR is desirable)
- Parents are aware of the presence and roles of all adults on the child care premises (including family members)
- The number of children in the family day home/group/room (at a minimum) meets the provincial / territorial standard

Medicine Hat & District CHILD CARE ASSOCIATION



Environment, materials and programming

- Parents are regularly provided with information about the daily schedule and programming, as well as about their child's day and activities
- (If the child care setting is multi-age): There are activities, equipment and materials suited to children of different ages
- Children have access to a variety of kinds of age-appropriate equipment and materials
- Activities emphasize play and exploration through group and individual activities
- Children have considerable opportunity for active play, much of it outdoors.
- The child care environment is set up in a safe, accessible and interesting way (for example, children can use materials freely)
- Children are not overly controlled or programmed; at the same time, they are not wandering around aimlessly
- Children are engaged with the materials and environment, they look busy, content and relaxed.
- There are displays of children's work and documentation of activities
- Diversity – racial, ethnic, gender, ability – is well represented in materials, visually and in programming.
- The space is organized to make transitions (from indoors to outdoors, or from active play to lunchtime) smooth
- There is a welcoming, warm atmosphere for parents
- There is at most limited use of TV or other passive technology