



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Carl L. Marcellino

## Understanding Day Care

CARL L MARCELLINO

It can be a tough balancing act to work full-time and raise a family in New York. That's why finding quality day care is more important than ever.

It is also important to know that your Day Care Center has the correct certifications, such as licensing, which can also be retrieved on the site. You can also find out what their maximum child caring capacity is, and the age group that they are best equipped to serve.

The New York State Office of Children and Family Services has web site that makes it easier than ever to find day care in your neighborhood. On this site, you can search for a facility by name, type of facility, county, or zip code.

Click [here](#) to visit the New York State Office of Children and Family Services site to begin your search. In addition the [New York State Child Care Coordinating Council](#) is a wealth of information

### **General Tips**

Talk to other parents.

Visit the facility.

Make sure the program is licensed or registered and reputable.

Learn about staff hiring policies and practices.

Make sure the program meets the needs of the growing child.

Confirm that state guidelines are followed for examining staff references and checking the Child Abuse Register

### **Check It Out!**

The following points are good ways to measure the quality of a child care home or center.

Do the caregivers/teachers seem to really like children?

Do the caregivers/teachers get down on each child's level to speak to the child?

Are children greeted when they arrive?

Are children's needs quickly met even when things are busy?

Are the caregivers/teachers trained in CPR, first aid and early childhood education?

Are the caregivers/teachers involved in continuing education programs?

Does the program keep up with children's changing interests?

Will the caregivers/teachers be ready to answer your questions?

Will the caregivers/teachers tell you what your child is doing every day?

Are parents' ideas welcomed?

Are there ways for you to get involved?

Do the caregivers/teachers and the children enjoy being together?

Is there enough staff to serve the children?

Have caregivers/teachers participated in early childhood development classes?

Are caregivers/teachers trained and experienced?

### **What to Do If You Have a Complaint . . .**

If you find there are any changes in your child's behavior, including reluctance to go to the day care center, modifications in toilet training habits or unusual questions about sexuality: stop bringing your child to the center immediately; seek medical attention for your child; notify Child Protective Services and your local police immediately; and alert other parents to the problem.

If you have a complaint about a day care center or provider, call the Child Day Care Complaint Line at 1-800-732-5207. Anyone can file a complaint of a possible regulatory violation in a day care program by calling this number or the nearest regional Office of Children and Family Services. In New York City, complaints also can be made to the Department of Health at 212-676-2444