

How do I start looking for care?

What do I ask when I call?

Phone Screening

An initial phone interview of potential child care providers will give you a general idea about which programs you would like to visit.

Typically the best time to call a program is between the hours of 1:00PM and 3:00PM or in the early evening between 6:30PM and

7:00PM. Don't call during lunchtime or between 4:30PM to 6:00PM, as most providers are very busy during these times.

Begin your phone screening process by introducing yourself:

"My name is _____.
I am looking for child care for my _____month/year-old child(ren).

I received your name from _____ and would like to know if you have any openings beginning _____. (date)"

You may want to ask the provider to describe the program and a what a typical day would be like for your child.

On the next page are sample questions you may want to ask. The information will help you decide if the program is right for you and your child(ren). Choose the questions that are most important to you.

After a successful phone interview you should set up a mutual time to take a tour and get to know the provider.



Sample Questions to Ask During Phone Interview:

- How long have you been a child care provider? Or how long has your (center) program been in operation?
- How many children are in your care?
- What are the ages of the children now in your care?
- What are the ages of your own children (for family child care providers)?
- What has your staff turnover been (for centers)?
- What hours are you open?
- Do you have pets? Indoor? Outdoor?
- How close are you to the bus line?
- What meals and snacks do you serve?
- What are your fees?
- Are you familiar with the child care assistance program where they help pay for child care? Do you accept these types of payments?
- Are meals, field trips and registration costs included in the fee?
- What types of training/education do you have?

These are just a sample of questions. Write down any others that are important to you to remember and ask each provider/program.

