

# SELECTING A CHILD CARE PROVIDER

As a parent or someone in a parenting role it is likely that at some point in your child's life you will need child care for your child. Selecting a child care provider is a big decision. Asking a lot of questions and giving yourself plenty of time to choose will help you feel prepared and build your confidence in selecting the right child care provider for your child. Here are some questions to ask a potential child care provider and some reflection questions to ask yourself when deciding on the best child care provider for your child. For more questions, tips, and guidance visit [ParentingMontana.org](https://ParentingMontana.org).

## Questions About Background and Approach

- *"Are you licensed by the State of Montana?"*
- *"How long have you been taking care of children?"*
- *"Tell me about your approach to caring for children (philosophy)?"*
- *"Would you mind walking me through a typical day for the children?"*
  - As they talk about a typical day, consider things like: Are they describing a routine that includes both structured and unstructured time built into the child's day? How would this day feel for your child?
- *"What is your approach to discipline?"*
  - Ask yourself if this sounds like your parenting approach and beliefs.
- *"What would you do if you were really frustrated with my child?"*



## Questions About the Environment

The following questions are reflection questions to ask yourself during or after an in-person visit with a child care provider. They are intended to help you process what you have observed in the environment during your visit.

- Does the space feel comfortable and inviting?
- Do the children look happy, clean, and well cared for?
- Do the staff act as if they want to be there?

## Questions About Safety

Safety is essential for ensuring that your child is well cared for when you are away. Some questions you could ask the provider include:

- *“Is the staff CPR and First Aid certified?”*
- *“Are the children supervised at all times?”*
- *“Are there other adults (not staff) or older children that may be present?”*
- *“Do you require background checks for all staff? Volunteers?”*
- *“Can you provide references that I could contact?”*

**Learn more about selecting a  
child care provider by visiting  
[ParentingMontana.org](https://ParentingMontana.org)**

