



ChildCareGroup

SELECTING AN EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR YOUR PRESCHOOLER (3 through 5 Years)

Selecting an early care and education program for your preschooler is an important decision that should be made carefully. The arrangement you choose should allow your child to try new skills, express her own ideas and feelings, and develop a sense of control over some parts of her life.

Look for the following when selecting an early care and education program for your preschooler:

- Children are encouraged to play together and solve conflicts themselves.
- Children have time to play alone.
- Caregivers are clear about rules and limits.
- Caregivers recognize and respect children as individuals with different interests, strengths, weaknesses, family values, and cultural backgrounds.
- Activities are provided which allow children to experiment with new materials and try new experiences.
- Time is allocated each day for active outdoor play.
- Toys and materials are set up to allow choices by children.
- Children have opportunities for trips to learn about new people and places.
- Materials, such as music, blocks, paint, dress up, puzzles, etc., are developmentally appropriate, fun and interesting.

Some developmental characteristics of preschoolers:

- Learn new social skills, such as sharing, problem solving, negotiation.
- Use more words than behaviors to express himself.
- Tests and try new skills and learn through play.
- Interested in the world around them and organizing new ideas, asking a lot of “why” questions.
- Learn through active play, masters running, jumping, and climbing
- Enjoy fantasy and make-believe play.
- Initiate conversations, invent and play more organized games, explore new ideas.
- More aware of a wide range of feelings and ways to express them.
- On occasion, can be bossy and critical.
- Develop increased control over small and large muscles.

Call ChildCareGroup’s Resource and Referral service at 214.631.2273 or 1.800.441.7865 for more free tips on choosing child care, other parenting resources or assistance in finding child care. Or visit us at www.ChildCareGroup.org/rr.

We encourage the widespread use of this information. Permission to use any part of this document is granted, provided all written uses give credit to ChildCareGroup. This document is not to be used in whole or part for financial gain.