



MODULE III: CHILD CARE

Objectives

Participants will—

1. Determine whether or not they need child care.
2. Address the advantages and disadvantages, with regards to both the needs of the parent and the child, of different types of available child care options.
3. Learn how to cope with the process of sending a child off to child care.

Overview

In developing this curriculum, we found that it appeals and applies most to women or parents with young children (infant to five years). Work-readiness is also important. Women who are work-ready, especially those currently seeking employment, are generally much more eager to attend sessions and field trips regarding child care.

- Section 1:** Questionnaire & Child Care Settings
- Section 2:** The Needs of Children & the Cost of Care
- Section 3:** Licensed Child Care
- Section 4:** Visiting Child Care
- Section 5:** Getting Ready to Go

While each section's curriculum is fairly complete, trainers must adapt the curriculum to reflect the following:

1. The cultural norms, values, beliefs, and experiences of the ethnic group(s) represented by the participants.
2. The specific needs of the participants.
3. The particular community environment.

Towards that end, it is recommended that the following steps be taken to maximize effectiveness in the use of this curriculum:

1. Only individuals who have background and experience in child care should deliver this curriculum. While every attempt has been made to design a complete and thorough curriculum, the trainer(s) should have some experience in this subject matter prior to offering the training.





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2. The first section is critical to the development of future sections in the module. The series of questions posed in these beginning sections are not designed to be just an ice breaker activity, but rather to help the trainer(s) understand the child care practices of the participants and the particular issues they may be facing. Trainers should consider this section as an opportunity for the participants to educate the trainer(s). The answers to these questions should be used to inform future sections of the curriculum. Trainers should expect to make modifications in the curriculum based on the outcomes of this first section, as well as knowledge of community issues prior to commencing the program.
3. Modifications should be made in the curriculum to reflect the specific cultural norms, values, beliefs, and experiences of trainees. While some references are made to cultural norms, values, beliefs, and experiences of parents from Somalia and Sudan, these are offered for illustrative purposes only. Even these references are, by necessity, generalizations and therefore should be used cautiously. Nuances related to the specific cultures of trainees should be incorporated where appropriate. Answers to the questions posed in Section 1 should provide some insight to such cultural norms, values, beliefs, and experiences as they relate to parenting. Community leaders and literature should also be consulted as well.
5. The curriculum is written in a style of English suitable for trainers, but which will need to be simplified for clients for whom English is not their first language. Finding simple ways to communicate some of these concepts is important to gaining participants' understanding.

While it is beyond the scope of this manual to address serving the needs of individual families, trainers should be aware that delivery of this program to groups of families could help to identify specific families who could benefit from more individualized services.





Section 1: Questionnaire & Child Care Settings

Objectives

Participants will—

1. Assess their interest in and knowledge of child care.
2. Learn about the various types of child care settings.
3. Preview some child care settings.

Materials

1. Child Care Assessment Questionnaire
2. Videos
3. Flipchart
4. Markers

Introduction

Child care is a necessary commodity in the United States, as households where both mother and father work are predominant. Mothers of young children are stepping into the working world earlier and earlier. Refugee women in their home countries are, for the most part, accustomed to being the primary caregiver in the home, but financial necessity often requires the woman to work while living in the United States. This transition may be a difficult one for the woman, but additionally for the children who are used to having constant care in their home.

There are two types of child care settings available for parents to choose from: in-home child care and licensed facility child care. Each has their own advantages, and parents may be more comfortable with having a member of the community care for her children in her home. The focus of this orientation is to make the participants knowledgeable regarding the different types of child care, and the advantages and disadvantages of each. Additionally, the needs of children at different age ranges are discussed. This is pertinent to the topic, as some participants may consider their children old enough to take care of themselves at home when they reach a given age.





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Licensed child care facilities are usually something that many refugee women have not previously encountered. Many kinds of child care facilities exist, and many offer different activities. Henceforth, a thorough assessment of several child care facilities should be made before choosing a particular one. This section will give examples of questions that a mother investigating outside facilities should pose. Also techniques for facilitating a smooth transition into child care for both mother and child are discussed.

Differences to Consider

Participants may react differently when discussing/weighing the advantages and disadvantages of different types of child care. In a previous seminar, many Somali women felt that the advantage of a caregiver from their own community outweighed education and license factors. A Sudanese woman in the group, however, was adamant that licensing was a more important advantage than a caregiver from her own community.

Such differing opinions have a direct influence on the kinds of child care settings different women are interested in visiting. In the previous example, the Sudanese participant was very eager to tour child care centers, while many of the Somalis expressed interest in in-home or family care tours.

Assessment

The following questionnaire can be completed either individually or as a group. It is designed to be an icebreaker to allow for cultural exchange and to provide general information about the participants needs and concerns regarding child care.

Use the participants' answers to guide you as you use the curriculum. The material may be adapted or added to as your participants' needs indicate.





Child Care Assessment Questionnaire

1. Why should we learn about child care? Why are you interested in child care?

2. Do you need child care?

3. Have you tried to find child care? What was your experience? What obstacles, if any, did you encounter?

4. Have you used child care in the United States? What was your experience?

5. Did you or families you know use child care in your home country? What was that child care like?





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Outline/Lesson Plan

Child Care Settings

- *In-Home Child Care*
- *Family Child Care*
- *Center Child Care*

Activity

- *Video*

Child Care Settings

Explain to the participants that there are different types of child care settings. Ask the participants to think of some advantages and disadvantages of each type of child care and discuss them together. Suggest other pros and cons that have not been brought up by the group.

Note to Facilitators:

The following tables may be adapted into translated handouts.





In-Home Child Care:

One type of child care setting is the parent's own home. The child care provider takes care of the children in the environment of their own home.

Advantages	Disadvantages
The child does not need to travel.	The caregiver may not be licensed.
The child maintains his/her own schedule.	The child may be isolated from other children.
Children of different ages may be taken care of by the same caregiver.	The caregiver may not have knowledge of child development.
There will be coverage for school vacations and holidays.	If your child is not speaking, you may not know how the time is spent.
The caregiver may accommodate a parent's unusual work schedule.	The care may be very expensive.
When the child is sick, the caregiver may still provide care.	
The caregiver may speak the child's first language.	
It may be possible for parents to find a caregiver from their community.	





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Family Child Care:

Another type of child care setting is the caregiver's home. In this instance, the child would go to the provider's home for care.

Advantages	Disadvantages
Parents may prefer a home setting to a center.	If the caregiver is sick, they may not provide care.
The child will probably have playmates.	If a child is sick, the caregiver may not provide care.
The caregiver may provide more flexible hours.	The caregiver may change hours.
The caregiver may be licensed.	The caregiver may not be licensed.
The caregiver may be able to pick up older children after school.	The child may not get enough attention if the caregiver accepts too many children.
The care may be inexpensive.	The caregiver may not offer age-appropriate activities.
The caregiver may accept a mildly ill child.	If the caregiver does not have a yard, the children may not be able to go outside.
It may be possible for parents to find a caregiver from their community.	
The caregiver may speak the child's first language.	





Center Child Care:

A center is another type of child care setting. It is a facility that exists to provide child care and is similar to a small school.

Advantages	Disadvantages
A center is almost always regulated and inspected for minimum standards.	A center will have specific hours that may not suit everyone.
A center usually has some staff who have studied child development.	Children must conform to the center's schedule (i.e. napping, eating).
The child will be with other children.	When sick, the child would not be allowed to go to the center.
A center will provide care even when the teacher is absent.	The child-to-staff ratio may be high (i.e. too many kids for staff to handle).
Many materials and activities are available.	The center may close for holidays and vacations.
Most centers provide outdoor play.	The care may be expensive, especially for infants and toddlers
A center probably will not close without advance notice.	The staff probably will not speak the child's first language.
There would be a chain of command through which to address complaints.	
Many centers provide a record of the children's activities.	
A center will provide exposure to English.	





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Activity

Video:

Show the participants some video examples of the different types of child care settings. It is not necessary to show an entire video, as the purpose is simply to provide a visual aid so that they can better envision the different types of settings. Participants will be able to see what may go on in the different settings, and will be able to make some initial comparisons. Have the participants talk about the situations and settings they respond to during the video.

Suggested videos:

1. *The Creative Curriculum for Early Childhood*, Diane Trister Dodge, 1988.
2. *Caring and Learning: The Creative Curriculum Family Child Care*, Laura J. Colker, Diane Trister Dodge, 1991.
3. *Keys to Quality in School-Age Child Care*, Montgomery County Public Schools Television Foundation, Inc., 1993.





Section 2: The Needs of Children & the Cost of Care

Objectives

Participants will—

1. Learn about various needs of children at different ages.
2. Discuss child care costs and tuition assistance options.

Materials

1. Flipchart
2. Markers

Introduction

Explain that the purpose of this session is to talk about the different needs of children. Emphasize the importance of being aware of those needs when searching for child care, as various child care settings and care takers will address these needs in different ways and with variable success.

Explain that child care not only differs by setting, but also with the age of the child in question. While many caregivers will accept children of different ages, there is almost always a cost difference, as well as a difference in children's needs at different developmental stages.

Note to Facilitators:

Acknowledge to the participants that you know they possess a lot of knowledge about the needs of children at different ages. Try to develop this session as a discussion, not a lecture.

Differences to Consider

Often centers with a religious affiliation are able to offer tuition assistance to families; however, it is important to provide options for different religious groups. For example, if there is a mosque-affiliated (as opposed to church) or Muslim child care center in the area, consider a tour.

In the seminar example used in the previous section, the Sudanese Christian participant in the group was very interested in touring a church-affiliated child





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care facility. The Somali Muslim participants, however, were not as interested in the visit, even though the Methodist facility had Muslim caregivers and welcomed children of various religious backgrounds.

Outline/Lesson Plan

Needs of Different Age Groups

- *Infant Needs*
- *Toddler Needs*
- *Early Childhood Needs*
- *School-Age Children's Needs*

Cost

- *Tuition Assistance*
- *Free Programs*

Needs of Different Age Groups

As parents, the participants already know that children of different ages have different needs. In the world of child care, children are usually categorized as infant, toddler, early childhood, or school-aged.

Infants: children 0-12 months old.

Toddlers: children 12-36 months old.

Early childhood: children 3-4 years old.

School-aged: children 5 years old and older.

Ask participants to think of the different needs of children at these four given stages of development. Encourage them to be specific. Keep a list on a flipchart and add any needs the participants have not considered. They may consider many that are not included below.

Note to Facilitators:

The following tables may be translated and used as handouts.





Infant Needs:

Consistency	Infants need to know their caregivers will respond. The responses a caregiver gives should be consistent.	<i>Example:</i> When an infant is upset, a caregiver he/she knows should respond.
Physical Care	Infants need caregivers that handle babies' bodies with ease, and understand feeding and the importance of cleanliness.	<i>Example:</i> A caregiver should easily change diapers, wash a baby's body, and know how to serve the appropriate food.
Emotional Support	Infant caregivers should learn an infant's moods and signals. Caregivers should comfort, play with, and talk to infants.	<i>Example:</i> If an infant rubs his/her face when he/she is tired, a caregiver should learn that signal. If an infant is usually cranky in the morning, a caregiver should know this habit and provide comfort.
Mobility	Infant caregivers need to help babies use different positions throughout the day, and to encourage physical play. Time out-of-doors is also good for infants.	<i>Example:</i> An infant should not spend all day seated in a swing. The caregiver should help the baby to play lying down, sitting up, and standing or crawling as is appropriate. A caregiver should help an infant learn motions like waving and clapping. A walk outside is a good way for babies to explore their world.





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Toddler Needs:

Atmosphere	Toddlers need an atmosphere that encourages exploration while providing safety.	<i>Example:</i> A caregiver should provide plenty of opportunities for a toddler to explore, perhaps with manipulatives like blocks or creative dough. A caregiver must also set limits since toddlers are just learning about their world. For instance, a caregiver would stop a child from throwing blocks.
Mobility	Toddlers need to explore their physical capabilities. They also need quiet play time.	<i>Example:</i> A caregiver should help a toddler to crawl, walk, slide, and run. A caregiver should also help a toddler concentrate during quieter times.
Language Development	Toddlers are ready to learn a lot of language!	<i>Example:</i> A caregiver should talk and sing with a child. They should also read books and name objects for a toddler.
Emotional Support	Toddlers require patience, routines, and encouragement to try to do things themselves.	<i>Examples:</i> A caregiver needs to be patient with a toddler's desire for repetition, such as singing the same song multiple times. They should follow a daily routine that the child can grow to understand (i.e. time to eat, time to nap). A caregiver should encourage a child to try things like putting on his/her own clothes, offering assistance only as necessary.
New Skills Mastery	Toddlers can learn new skills, from working with their hands to getting along with others.	<i>Example:</i> A caregiver should provide opportunities for a toddler to color, mold, and create things. Toddlers should also learn to interact appropriately with other children.
Physical Care	Caregivers need to keep dangerous things out of the reach of toddlers. Caregivers also need to pay attention to a toddler's toilet and nursing needs.	<i>Example:</i> A caregiver should store cleaning agents out of the reach of children. They should discuss weaning and toilet training with parents.





Early Childhood Needs:

Three-, four-, and five-year-old children have many of the same needs as babies and toddlers. Caregivers still need to provide a safe environment where dangerous materials are out of reach. They also often need to assist children in using the bathroom and in keeping clean. Children continue to need consistent, caring response from caregivers.

Other needs include:

More Structured Materials	Caregivers need to provide more complex materials for children to work with. This helps children prepare for future school skills, like math and writing.	<i>Example:</i> Early childhood students should have access to items like puzzles, paper, crayons, and scissors to allow them to make and create.
Assistance with Peer Relationships	At this stage, children are learning how to make and maintain friendships. Caregivers need to help them in this process.	<i>Example:</i> A caregiver needs to help children learn to take turns and not to try to solve difficulties with friends through hitting.
Consolation and Comfort	Early childhood learners still need their caregivers to comfort them in disagreements and disappointments. Children this age are still learning about the world and are not too big to cry.	<i>Example:</i> A caregiver needs to hold and comfort a child who skins his knee, not respond that the scratch is too small to cry over.





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School-Age Children's Needs:

After-school caregivers need to provide a good end to the school day, incorporating choices for the children.

Time to Relax	An after-school program should provide a quiet space in which a tired child can relax and be quiet.
A Snack	Children need a nutritious snack to satisfy their hunger after school.
Time to Play	Children need opportunities for active play (such as a game of basketball) and quiet play (such as putting together a puzzle).
Assistance with Friendships	An after-school caregiver should help a child learn how to make and maintain friendships; encouraging children to solve their disagreements peacefully and mutually.
Help with Homework	An after-school program may provide homework help. This is a big help to refugee children whose first language is not English.





Cost

List "Infant," "Toddler," "Early Childhood," and "School-Aged" on a flip chart. Ask the participants to identify which type of care would be most expensive, least expensive, etc. Almost always, infant care is the most expensive and the cost of care drops as a child's age increases.

Infant care (0-12 months)	\$\$\$\$
Toddler care (12-36 months)	\$\$\$
Early Childhood (3-4 years)	\$\$
School-Aged Children (5 years and up)	\$

Compile a listing of local child care options that represents the full price spectrum. The following are for the southwest side of Houston, Texas.

Note: Prices are for full-time, five days-per-week care.

	Child Care Facility #1:	Child Care Facility #2:
Infant	\$110	\$126
Toddler	\$110	\$108
3 years and up	\$90	\$95

Tuition Assistance:

Inform participants that some child care facilities are able to offer a sliding scale or other tuition assistance. A sliding scale means that parents pay according to their income: parents who earn a low salary pay less than parents who earn more.

Some facilities, usually with a church or other religious affiliation, offer tuition assistance to certain families. Ask the director of a center how to apply.

Free Programs:

If a family receives Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), they should ask their human services caseworker for a child care referral (see *Module VI: Public Benefits & Community Service*). In some cases, child care will be free for a prescribed length of time.





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If a child is 3-4 years old, he/she may be enrolled in Headstart, a federal early childhood program. Families qualify for this program by income, but space is limited.

Note to Facilitators:

Have information on Headstart locations in your area and consider taking the class on a tour.





Section 3: Licensed Child Care

Objectives

Participants will—

1. Address the concept of licensed child care.
2. Identify some of the benefits of licensed child care.

Materials

1. Flipchart
2. Markers

Introduction

Explain to the participants that this session will cover licensed child care.

Ask them if anyone knows or has a good idea of what licensed child care means. After discussing their answers, explain that licensed child care means that the care facility or home is visited and inspected by a state agency—probably the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services. The agency checks to ensure that the care facility meets the state's minimum child care standards. Minimum standards are just that—minimum; any facility not able to meet these standards is not providing the minimum deemed necessary for acceptable child care.

Explain that many child care facilities meet minimum standards and then exceed them. For example, a facility may provide more staff than is deemed necessary or the staff may have more education than is required.

Outline/Lesson Plan

Minimum Standards

1. *Governing Body Responsibilities & Notifications*
2. *Administration & Communication*
3. *Personnel*
4. *Facility Operation & Physical Environment*
5. *Activities at the Facility & Child/Staff Ratios*
6. *Activities Away from the Facility & Child/Staff Ratios*





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7. *Safety, Sanitation, & Fire*
8. *Physical Health & Well-Being*
9. *Nutrition*

Benefits of Licensed Care

Minimum Standards

Note to Facilitators:

The following information is garnered from "Day-Care Center Minimum Standards and Guidelines" from the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services. Please request minimum standards information from your state and revise the following as appropriate.

Inform the participants that the following information is only partially complete—there being many more specific requirements for licensed child care. This information, however, will give them a basic understanding of licensed care.

1. *Governing Body Responsibilities & Notifications:*

This provision makes the governing body of the child care facility responsible for things such as:

- ❖ Complying with minimum standards.
- ❖ Not discriminating against children for reasons of race, color, national origin, sex, or religion.
- ❖ Maintaining insurance in case of the injury of a child in care.
- ❖ Notifying the state regarding changes at the facility.
- ❖ Notifying the state of certain illnesses in children or staff, of injury to a child, and any official complaints of crime made against staff members.

2. *Administration & Communication:*

This provision makes the facility responsible for things such as:

- ❖ Posting its license, its emergency evacuation plan, and notice of any field trips.
- ❖ Posting near its phone appropriate emergency phone numbers like the police and the poison control center.
- ❖ Keeping enrollment records with information like parents' work phone numbers and designated emergency contacts.





- ❖ Keeping health and immunization records for the children in care.
- ❖ Reporting the outbreak of illnesses or other risks to parents.
- ❖ Allowing parents to visit the facility at any time.

3. *Personnel:*

This provision makes the facility responsible for having responsible and qualified staff. Some requirements include:

- ❖ Having as director a person who is at least 21-years-old with the required level and type of education.
- ❖ Providing training for new employees prior to assigning them to work with children.
- ❖ Maintaining records about staff members, including such things as any convictions and documented information about their orientation and training.
- ❖ Requiring all staff to attend certain training hours yearly.

4. *Facility Operation & Physical Environment:*

This provision regulates space, furniture, and equipment in a child care facility. Some requirements include:

- ❖ Providing enough indoor and outdoor space for the number of children in a facility.
- ❖ Providing enough play equipment for children.
- ❖ Having a working telephone number.
- ❖ Providing comfortable seating for children.
- ❖ Providing individual beds, mats, or cots to sleep on as is age-appropriate.
- ❖ Providing a specified number of toilets in the restrooms.

5. *Activities at the Facility & Child/Staff Ratios:*

This provision regulates things such as discipline, activities, and child/staff ratios. Some requirements include:

- ❖ Using positive discipline methods that nurture self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction.





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- ❖ Not using corporal punishment and not subjecting children to yelling or profane language.
- ❖ Providing age-appropriate activities.
- ❖ Providing opportunities to play out-of-doors.
- ❖ Complying with child/staff ratios. For example, one caregiver may not be responsible for more than four infants or for more than seventeen three-year-olds.
- ❖ Keeping staff members awake at all times if night care is being provided.
- ❖ Allowing small children to leave their cribs to play and explore with staff.
- ❖ Making sure feeding bottles are clearly marked with each child's name.

6. *Activities Away from Facility & Child/Staff Ratios:*

This provision governs field trips, water activities, and the transportation of children. It includes such things as:

- ❖ Informing parents of field trips.
- ❖ Carrying first-aid supplies on field trips.
- ❖ Providing constant supervision of wading and swimming pools.
- ❖ Providing a certified lifeguard if the children are swimming, not wading.
- ❖ Using age-appropriate infant/child seats or seatbelts when children are being transported.
- ❖ Loading and unloading children at the curbside.
- ❖ Not allowing children to cross a street unsupervised.

7. *Safety, Sanitation, & Fire:*

This provision makes requirements such as the following:

- ❖ Covering electrical outlets with covers.
- ❖ Providing railings for stairways.
- ❖ Barring firearms from non-residential facilities.
- ❖ Installing correctly heavy equipment to prevent tipping.





- ❖ Providing toys for children two-years and younger that cannot be swallowed.
- ❖ Providing a guide to first-aid that is easily accessible to staff.
- ❖ Controlling the temperature of water available to children.
- ❖ Having an annual sanitation inspection performed by a local or state official.
- ❖ Providing proper light and ventilation.
- ❖ Washing linens before use and after soiling.
- ❖ Managing garbage inside and outside the facility.
- ❖ Keeping the facility insect- and rodent-free.
- ❖ Washing of staffs' hands with soap and hot water.
- ❖ Sanitizing of children's beds and small children's toys.
- ❖ Washing and sanitizing food service equipment.
- ❖ Having an annual fire inspection performed by a local or state fire marshal.
- ❖ Moving children to a designated, supervised safe area in the case of emergency.
- ❖ Evacuating all staff and children in three minutes in case of an emergency.
- ❖ Equipping the facility with smoke detectors.

8. *Physical Health & Well-Being:*

This provision governs illness, injury, medication, animals, and smoking.

- ❖ Attending appropriately to sick children until a parent arrives for pick-up.
- ❖ Not admitting sick children for care.
- ❖ Calling a child's physician in the case of serious illness.
- ❖ Providing first-aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) as necessary.
- ❖ Keeping records documenting medications given to children.
- ❖ Accepting medications from parents only in their original bottles.





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- ❖ Ensuring that any animals at the facility are properly vaccinated.
- ❖ Advising parents of any animals at the facility.
- ❖ Keeping stray animals away from the facility and the children.
- ❖ Refraining from smoking at the facility.

9. Nutrition:

This provision governs nutrition. Some requirements include:

- ❖ Serving nutritious food to children according to state food guidelines.
- ❖ Serving regular meals and morning and afternoon snacks.
- ❖ Not forcing children to eat.
- ❖ Discussing a child's eating problems with the parents.

Benefits of Licensed Care

Ask the participants to consider what they have learned and to think of some of the benefits of using a licensed child care facility. Keep a list of their responses on a flip chart.

The following is a list of benefits if the discussion needs help:

- ❖ Complaints can be made to the state licensing agency, which will be listed on the posted license.
- ❖ The child care facility knows how to respond in an emergency.
- ❖ The director and staff have some education and/or training regarding working with children.
- ❖ The staff may not use corporal punishment.
- ❖ There is enough play equipment for children.
- ❖ The staff will not be responsible for more children than is manageable.
- ❖ Parents are informed of field trips.
- ❖ Wading and swimming pools are supervised at all times.
- ❖ The facility has been inspected for fire safety and sanitation.
- ❖ The staff can provide first aid.





- ❖ Sick children will not be admitted for care.
- ❖ Meals and snacks will be provided according to nutrition guidelines.





Section 4: Visiting Child Care

Objectives

Participants will—

1. Develop a list of questions to ask staff on visits to child care centers and homes.
2. Compile a list of questions to ask themselves regarding sites they have visited.

Materials

1. Lists of Suggested Questions
2. Flipchart
3. Markers

Introduction

Inform the participants that this session is to prepare for visits to child care facilities. The more information parents have about a facility and/or caregiver, the better the choice they will make; therefore, it is important to emphasize that parents should not only observe during the visits, but should also ask questions. Asking questions up front is a good way to avoid concerns and problems. By gaining a lot of information now, there will not be so many surprises or letdowns when their children start care.

Outline/Lesson Plan

Activity

- *Questions to Ask the Caregivers/Director*
- *Questions to Ask about the Food*
- *Questions to Ask about Play*
- *Questions to Ask about Rest*
- *Questions to Ask about Cleanliness*
- *Questions to Ask about Cost*
- *Questions to Ask about Hours*
- *Questions to Ask about the License*





- *Questions to Ask about Illness & Injury*
- *Questions to Ask Yourself*

Activity

Help the participants develop questions under the following headings. Keep a list on a flip chart. Let the women start with their ideas and fill in as needed.

The following questions can also be developed as a handout for the participants to use during child care visits.





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Questions to Ask the Caregivers/Director

1. What do you do with the children on a typical day?
2. What do you do when an infant is crying?
3. What do you do when a child is upset?
4. How do you discipline children?
5. What would you do in a medical emergency?
6. How long have you worked in child care?
7. How long have you worked at this facility or as an in-home provider?
8. What is your education and training?
9. How do you feel about talking with parents?





10. What do you like about children?

11. How many infants does one caregiver handle? How many toddlers? How many 3-5 year olds? How many school-aged kids?

12. Do you read books to the children?

13. Do you sing to and with the children?

14. How do you feel about a child whose home language is not English?





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Questions to Ask about the Food

1. When do the infants and/or children eat?

2. How many times do they eat?

3. What do they eat?

4. Is the food prepared here or do I bring it from home?

5. What do you do if a child does not want to eat?





Questions to Ask about Play

1. What kinds of toys do you provide?
2. What do babies play with here?
3. What do toddlers play with here?
4. What do early childhood learners play with here?
5. What do school-aged children play with here?
6. Do all the children go outside during the day?
7. Is there a yard for play?
8. Are there strollers to walk infants and toddlers?





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Questions to Ask about Rest

1. When do the children sleep?
2. How long do they sleep?
3. Where do they sleep?
4. Do I need to bring a mat from home?
5. What do you do if a child has trouble napping?





Questions to Ask about Cleanliness

1. How often are the floors cleaned?
2. How often are the restrooms cleaned?
3. When do the children wash their hands?
4. Do I need to bring diaper wipes for my infant?





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Questions to Ask about Cost

1. How much does one week of care cost for infants?
2. How much does one week of care cost for toddlers?
3. How much does one week of care for early childhood children cost?
4. How much does one week of after-school care cost?
5. Are there any extra costs? For example, if the class goes on a field trip.
6. Is there a sliding scale for tuition?
7. Is there tuition assistance available? How can a family apply?





Questions to Ask about Hours

1. When can I drop my child off?
2. When must I pick up my child?
3. What will happen if I am late?
4. What days is care not available?





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Questions to Ask about the License

1. Are you, or is the facility, licensed by the state?
2. May I see the license?
3. When was your last inspection?
4. Can I visit at any time?





Questions to Ask about Illness & Injury

1. Can my child come if he/she is sick?
2. What happens if my child becomes sick at the center?
3. Will you be able to give my child his/her medications?
4. What will happen if my child is injured at child care?
5. Does the home or center have insurance?





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Questions to Ask Yourself

1. Does the child care facility feel welcoming?
2. Is the facility clean and bright?
3. Are the children helped to stay clean and/or diapered?
4. Do the children seem relaxed and happy?
5. Are the caregivers pleasant? Do they smile?
6. Do you hear the noise of happy children?
7. Can you imagine your child being happy here?





Section 5: Getting Ready to Go

Objectives

Participants will—

1. Assess and discuss how they feel as they get ready to use child care.
2. Learn methods that may ease the transition for them and their children.

Materials

1. Child Care Preparation Questionnaire
2. Child Care Evaluation Questionnaire
3. Flipchart
4. Markers

Introduction

Once a decision has been made regarding a child care provider, the child and family need to start getting prepared for the change in routine. While some children are very excited by the possibility of spending time away from home with other people and activities, others may have some fears about the new situation. Being adequately prepared for the new routine will help both the parents and child make better adjustments.

Assessment

Have the participants complete the Child Care Preparation Questionnaire (can be done individually, in small groups, or as one large group). Once completed, have them share their answers with the rest of the group.





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Child Care Preparation Questionnaire

1. How do you think you will feel about your child's first day at child care?

2. How do you think your child will feel about his/her first day at child care?

3. What might you be excited about? What might your child be excited about?

4. What might you feel uneasy about? What might your child feel uneasy about?





Outline/Lesson Plan

Getting Ready

Field Trips

Speakers

Evaluation

Getting Ready

Note to Facilitators:

The following list may be translated and used as a handout for participants to keep.

The following are ideas for the participants to consider as they and their children prepare for child care.

- ❖ Try not to make other major changes in your child's life. For example, don't start toilet training at this time. Going to child care will be a big change for your child. Let him/her feel settled and happy at child care before asking them to take on another challenge.
- ❖ If your child is old enough to understand, even partially, explain ahead of time that there will be a change in your family's routine because you will be going to work and he/she will be attending child care.
- ❖ Keep a positive attitude about child care! Your child will be guided, in large part, by the way you respond to the new situation. If you are sad, your child may feel sad, too. If you are excited, your child may feel some excitement as well. For example, don't say, "I'm sorry I have to go back to work and you to Betty's house for child care." Say instead, "All of the kids at Betty's have a lot of fun. She has a sandbox in her back yard to play in. And I like Betty very much!"
- ❖ If your child is an older toddler or of early childhood age, you may want to visit the child care place before your child officially starts. Let your child see what goes on at child care. Don't stand back! Talk with the other children or help the teacher pass out the snack. If you seem genuinely excited, your child will notice.
- ❖ Celebrate the transition to child care in a special way. Perhaps you can bake a special cake the night before your child's first day. Let your child and your family know it is to celebrate the first day of child care!
- ❖ Pack a favorite toy of your child's for his/her first day. Your child will probably be happy to have something familiar with them in a new place.
- ❖ Plan to stay a little while at child care on the first day. Don't spend the time only with your own child, but help the caregivers and be involved





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with other children. When your child appears settled in, tell him/her that you are going and that you will be back at pick-up time. Leave without making a fuss.

- ❖ If it is possible, come for pick-up a little early on the first day. Encourage your child to play longer and ask the caretaker how the first day went.
- ❖ Ask your child casual questions about child care, like, "What did you eat for lunch today? Did you play in the beautiful playhouse? Did you read a special book?" Also tell your child a little about your day at work. Avoid asking your child questions like, "Did you like child care? Did you miss me while I was at work?"
- ❖ Most children take between two to three weeks to settle into child care. Each child, however, is different. A very outgoing child may be excited about the new situation and adjust more quickly than you expect, while another child may have a harder time.
- ❖ Infants and small children sometimes need to be held by or kept near the provider constantly for the first few days.
- ❖ For older children having difficulties adjusting, find out from the provider which children he/she enjoys playing with. Try to meet the parents of your child's playmates. Invite a playmate to your home for a few hours on a weekend. Your child will feel more comfortable at child care as he/she gets to know others.

Field Trips

1. Young Men's Christian Association/Young Women's Christian Association (YMCA/YWCA) child care and after-school care facilities.
2. Private child care centers such as Kindercare.
3. Religious-affiliated child care centers.
4. Family child care provided by a caregiver outside the participants' community.
5. Family child care provided by a caregiver within the participants' community.
6. An after-school program at an elementary school.

Speakers

1. An employee of the school district's early childhood division.
2. A nanny or in-home caregiver.
3. A refugee woman who is currently using a child care provider.





Evaluation

Explain to the participants that you would appreciate their feedback on the classes. Pass out the following evaluations and have the participants complete them.





Child Care Evaluation Questionnaire

1. How helpful to you was the information about child care?
Very helpful Somewhat helpful Not very helpful Not at all helpful
2. Will what you learned help you find and choose child care?
Yes No
3. How did you like the activities that we did?
Very much Somewhat Not much Not at all
4. Did you like the field trips that we took?
Excellent Good Fair Poor
5. Were the field trips helpful to you?
Yes No
6. What do you think about the facilitator's knowledge of the material?
Excellent Good Fair Poor
7. How do you feel about the way the material was presented to you?
Excellent Good Fair Poor
8. Would you be interested in learning more about child care?
Yes No
9. Would you recommend this program to a friend?
Yes No

