

# 14 Factors to Consider When Choosing a Childcare Center



*Presented by*

Creekside Kids, Inc

*1201 W Cheyenne Rd  
Colorado Springs, CO 80906*

**(719) 635-9111**

*6:30 am - 5:45 pm  
Monday - Friday*



## 1. Hours of Operation

You need to have enough time to drop your child off in the morning and still be able to get to work or appointments on time. A childcare center should be open early enough for you to do that. The center should also be open late enough so that you are not rushing from work.

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## 2. Holidays and Other Closures

When looking for a childcare center, you should ask how often the daycare closes for holidays and other times during the year. You need to know whether you are still responsible for paying for the weeks or days the center is closed, and if you are responsible for finding other childcare.



### 3. Meals and Snacks

Making sure your child has the proper nutrition throughout the day is an important factor in choosing a childcare center. Make sure to ask the following questions regarding nutrition:

- Do you provide all snacks, breakfast and lunch?
- If they do provide snacks, breakfast and lunch, can they give examples of what will be given to my child?
- Does the center serve low-fat or soy milk, and whole or multi-grain products instead of white flour products? Is fresh fruit served?
- How will the food be prepared?
- How are food allergies handled?
- If they do not provide snacks and lunch, what types of food would they recommend to pack for my child? Can they heat up lunches if necessary?

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### 4. Nap Time

Depending on the age of the children, you need to know how often your child will take naps during the day. Ask how long naptime is? How flexible is the napping schedule? Since each child is a little different, napping schedules for each will most likely vary. A disruption in naptime can disrupt a child's overall sleep schedule. (And yours!)



### 5. Diaper Schedule/Potty Training

If your child is still in diapers, ask if the staff changes the diaper when it is needed or is diaper changing done on a timetable? Will the childcare help with potty training? Is potty training included in the regular fee, or is it an extra cost? Is there a diaper fee?

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### 6. Age Divisions

How are students grouped together? Are they kept within the same age range? How big are the groups? Socializing children is an important part of child development. Knowing who and how your child will be socializing will help you understand more about a childcare center.



### 7. The Facility

Make sure to inspect the layout of the facility for cleanliness and organization. Is the layout open for children to play and crawl? Does the facility have an outside cleaning crew/company coming in at night to clean the center?

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### 8. Outdoor Spaces

What spaces does the center offer for outdoor play? What spaces are available for gross motor play when outdoor play is not an option due to the weather or other safety concerns? Does the facility offer opportunities to learn outside? Does the center have a garden space? Gross motor play is very important for the mental wellbeing of your child and the physical development of muscles and bones.



**9. Customized Scheduling Options**

Does the center allow parents to create an individual schedule based on their needs? Does the center offer drop-in care? Is the center open year round? Are parents required to pay for vacations, holidays, or school closures?

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**10. Drop-ins by Parents**

You should always feel welcome to visit your child. There should be limited restrictions regarding when you want to see your child during the day.



## 11. Cost

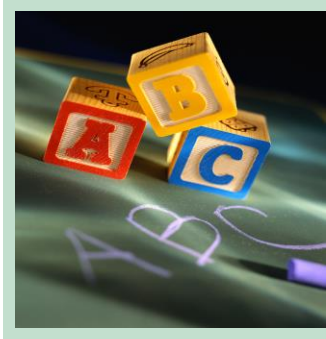
Cost structures of childcare centers vary. Some charge by the week, while others charge a monthly fee. Childcare centers can have a sliding scale that bases fees by income. A childcare center may also offer a discount if you enroll more than one child. Make sure to clarify exactly how a childcare center will charge you, determine any discounts you may qualify for, and compare tuition rates and desirable features with similar centers in the area.

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## 12. Safety & Security

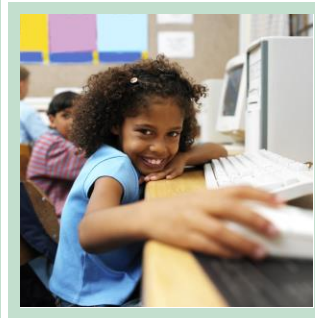
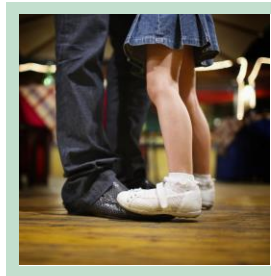
Inquire about how medicines, cleaning supplies, and other poisonous materials are stored. Ask if the center has secure doors, strong safety gates, and a plan in case of disasters. Also, ask each childcare center to explain who has access to the facility and how people can leave and enter the building. Does the center have a security keypad at the entrance to discourage strangers from entering? What kind of log in and log out process do they have?



### 13. Curriculum

Familiarize yourself with each childcare center's curriculum. Ask each center how it prepares children for school. Are the teachers required to create a lesson plan for their class? Ask about the reasoning behind the chosen curriculum and its advantages. Compare the different curriculums to each other and decide which one would benefit your child the most. The time your child spends each day at the childcare center will help to establish a lifetime foundation and enthusiasm for learning.

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### 14. Enrichment Classes

Does the center offer extra classes such as Dance, Gymnastics, Spanish, Music, or Computer? Offering these extra classes allows your child additional educational opportunities and added entertainment.

*Thank you!*

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