Selecting & Evaluating Quality Child Care

Emory WorkLife Resource Center

Presented By

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Objectives

1. Discuss various child care settings and assist guests decide which options work best for their family.

2. Educate attendees to what constitutes quality care.

3. Offer suggestions on what to do when first choice is not available.

4. Review resources and programs available to help Emory employees with issues pertaining to child care.
Steps in Choosing Quality Childcare

- Start early
- Do your homework
- Make your decision
- Stay involved
- Back-up plan
The Child Care Trilemma

Emory Employee Parents Face These Child Care Challenges in Atlanta
Identifying child care solutions for Emory employees and students first requires an understanding of the issues parents face when finding and affording quality child care that matches the needs of their families, work, and/or academic requirements.

Quality Care is Expensive
- Entails more labor intensive ratios and smaller group sizes.
- Requires educated, highly trained workforce which drives higher salary requirements.
- Exceeds minimum GA licensing standards of health and safety.

Economics of Care Create Shortages
- Reflects high-cost/low-return business reality.
- Contributes to severe lack of infant and toddler care throughout the Atlanta area and the nation.

Accessibility

Access to Quality Care is Limited
- Only 11% of child care centers in Georgia meet national accreditation standards. Of the ten centers accredited by the National Association for Education of Young Children (NAEYC) within 3 miles of Emory’s campus - 8 offer infant care (although no spaces are available).
- Access is important for a geographically dispersed workforce in a congested city.
Educate Yourself: Types of Child Care

- In-Home Caregivers (Au Pair or Nanny)
- Family Day Care Providers
- Child Care Centers
- Family or Friend
- Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K)
- Parents Morning Out (PMO)
- Before & After-School Care
- Emergency Back-Up / Drop-In Care
- Babysitting
- Camp
- Full-time & Part-time
Average Costs w/in 5 Miles of Emory
Dollars Per Week

- **Infant**: $200 ($219)
- **Toddler I**: $135 ($207)
- **Toddler II**: $135 ($200)
- **Preschool**: $135 ($185)

Legend:
- Family Daycare
- Center-Based

Additional Information:
- Infant: 6 weeks – 12 months
- Toddler 1: 12 - 24 months
- Toddler 2: 24 - 36 months
- Pre-School: 3 - 5 years
Finding In-Home Caregivers

Using an Agency

- Allow time
- State licensed
- Fees
- Employee
- Screening
- Recruiting
- Guarantee
- Taxes

Doing it Yourself

- Allow time
- Advertise
- Phone/email screen
- Interview
- References
- Background check
- Your comp plan
- Clear expectations
- Performance review
- Taxes
Family Day Care Providers

- Registered by the state (often less stringent)
- Smaller groups of children (3-6) in caregiver home
- More flexible than center care
- Policies are set by caregiver
- Usually only one caregiver
- More 1 to 1 time
- Often mixed age groups
- Discuss back-up plan
Child Care Centers

- Licensed by state (minimum)
- Larger number of children (19+)
- Structured environment & curriculum
- Supervision
- Many caregivers
- Variety of daily activities & experiences
- Socialization
- Less 1 to 1 time
- Decreased flexibility
Key Indicators of Quality Center Care

1. Low staff : child ratios
2. Small group size
3. Low turnover
4. Ongoing training of staff
5. Parental involvement
Essentials: Center Director

- **Qualifications**
- Strong working knowledge of employment & compliance laws, child development, developing policies & procedures, & curriculum
- Well organized
- Good management skills
- Excellent leadership abilities & communication skills
- Involves parents & community
- Warm, empathetic, open, honest, flexible & creative
- Loves children with patient and firm demeanor
Essentials: Staff

- GBI fingerprints & background check
- Education levels and background vary, but knows about child development
- Genuine love of children
- Good written & verbal communication skills
- Turnover (national average is 40-60%)
- Respect for children, parents and each other
## Child Care Center Teacher: Child Ratios

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of Children</th>
<th>Staff: Child Ratio</th>
<th>Maximum Group Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infants less than 1 year old</td>
<td>1 to 6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or Children under 18 months not walking</td>
<td>1 to 6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 year and walking</td>
<td>1 to 8</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>1 to 10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>1 to 15</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>1 to 18</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>1 to 20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 years and older</td>
<td>1 to 25</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bright from the Start
State of Georgia Requirements
Essentials: Center Staff Training

- Employee orientation
- Ongoing staff meetings
- Policies & Procedures
- Well defined assigned duties and responsibilities
- Reportable events: abuse, neglect, deprivation, communicable diseases
- Emergency/safety planning & drills
- Childhood injury control
- An additional minimum of 10 hours of training in first year on various child care topics
Essentials: Center Environment

Play Areas
Nap Time
Eating Space
Cleanliness
Toys
Classroom Organization
Learning Experience

- Curriculum
- Learning Centers
- Indoor & Outdoor Play Areas
- Child & Teacher Directed
- Materials & Supplies
- Enrichment
Parent Involvement

- Parent Council or Association
- Parent – Teacher Communication
- Parent Volunteers
- Board of Directors
- Room Parents
- Social Activities
Bright from the Start

- Licensing and monitoring center-based and home-based child care facilities
- Administers Georgia’s lottery funded Pre-K
- Investigates and records deficiencies and reported incidents
- Quality Rating System

Contact 1-877-ALL-GA-KIDS
http://decal.ga.gov/
Accreditation

NAEYC
National Accreditation for the Education of Young Children

NECPA
National Early Childhood Program Accreditation

NAFCC
National Accreditation for Family Child Care

SACS
Southern Accreditation of Colleges & Schools
No Vacancies – Now What?

- Waiting lists
- Go back to the child care referral service
- Consider alternative providers
- Consider alternative work routes
- Networking
- Temporary plan
- Creativity
- Consider alternative work arrangements
- Share care
Your Role as a Parent

- Evaluation should be ongoing
- Build a relationship with your provider
- Communicate positive and negative feedback
- Be respectful of all child care providers
- Suggest solutions to problems and be a part of solutions when possible
- Take action immediately when safety is an issue
- Don’t be afraid to speak up
Financial Resources to Help Pay for Child Care Expenses

- Discounts
- GA Pre-K
- Sliding fees
- Tax credits
- Vs. FSA
- Head Start/Early Head Start
Resources at Emory

- Emory Work-Life Resource Center
  - Child Care Resources Podcast
  - Emory Child Care Network
  - Emory Employee-Student Job Network
  - CDC Parent Network Listserv

- BrownRichards & Associates (dependent care referrals)

- Emory Benefits Department
Outside Resources

- Bright from the Start
- Quality Care for Children
- Accreditation agencies (slide 21)
- Head Start
- Georgia Pre-K
- Operation Military Child Care (OMCC)
- Internal Revenue Service (Tax Credits)
- Easter Seals
- Parent to Parent
Weighing your Decision

- Cost
- Location
- Accreditation
- Curriculum
- Ratios
- Director & Staff
Questions

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