

Selecting Quality Child Care

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Cost and convenience are important considerations, but there are other factors such as education, nutrition, training, reputation, beliefs, and attitudes of the provider, as well as the age, personality, abilities, and interests of your children.



The child care settings that you can expect to find within the City of Grand Prairie limits are permitted by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) and the City of Grand Prairie Environmental Quality Division.

Registered Family Homes.

Listed Family Homes: are those who provide regular child care (at least four hours per day, three or more days a week, for more than nine consecutive weeks) in their own homes for 1-3 unrelated children. The listed family home caregiver must be at least 18 years old. However, these homes must comply with minimum standards from the City of Grand Prairie and are subject to semi-annual inspections, but are never inspected by officials from the DFPS.

Registered Child Care: provide care in the caregiver's home for up to six children under age 14; they may also take in up to six more school-age children. The number of children allowed in a home is determined by the ages of the children. No more than 12 children can be in care at any time, including children of the caregiver. The application process starts with the Texas DFPS and during this application process a City of Grand Prairie application must also be submitted. The Texas DFPS inspects these homes every 1-2 years, while the City of Grand Prairie inspects them semi-annually.

Day Care Centers are establishments that have been designed specifically to care for children and must fulfill minimum standards from the Texas DFPS and the City of Grand Prairie. The number of children that these establishments can care for is based on the age of the children, the number of caregivers, and the available space. These centers are inspected annually by the Texas DFPS and bi-annually by the City of Grand Prairie. Day care centers can be found in all types of settings including, but not limited to churches, shopping malls, stand alone facilities, schools, etc.

What to Look for

First you must elaborate a list of the qualities or characteristics you are looking for based on your needs and expectations, and take into consideration the following:

- ◆ Reputation
- ◆ References
- ◆ Cost
- ◆ Distance
- ◆ Hours of operation
- ◆ Discipline policy
- ◆ Type of training in early childhood development
- ◆ Mental and physical enhancement
- ◆ Indoor/outdoor playtime
- ◆ Toilet training
- ◆ Separation anxiety
- ◆ When considering groups settings spend some time observing the center and talking to parents with kids there
- ◆ Is there an open door policy on parents visits?
- ◆ What holidays is the establishment closed?
- ◆ Policy on sick children
- ◆ Type of monitoring while sleep, on the playground, etc.
- ◆ In group settings, how are the kids grouped?
- ◆ Educational background of the care providers

Evaluate the responses to all the questions and carefully consider how the child care provider will fulfill your needs and the vision you have of how your child should be guided and cared for each day.

At the end of your research ask yourself if you can trust this person or program. Will your child be well taken care of and learn and grow in this environment? If you don't find a person or center that meet your expectations, don't give up your search and select the best of the worst. Instead, review your requirements and begin your search again.

For more information on child care visit:

[Guide to Child Care in Texas](#)

[ChildCare.gov](#)