

# CHOOSING QUALITY

Ready for School. Ready for Life.



As a parent, no decision you make will be more important, or more difficult, than choosing a child care situation that best meets your family's needs. We are committed to helping parents find answers to their questions regarding how to locate quality childcare and other early care and education concerns.

A quality child care program will help your child learn new skills, develop socially and be prepared for school. The early years are crucial first steps to your child's reading success in school. This checklist will help you select the best program for your family. Depending on your particular needs, you probably will have some questions of your own.

## Consider Your Options

There are many: child care centers, family child care homes, Head Start programs, Pre-Kindergarten Early Intervention and summer camps. In Seminole, call Resource and Referral at 4C (407-532-4414) to get more information about these choices.

## Visit and Compare

Make appointments with at least three prospective programs. Each program is different and one that would be a good fit for one child may not be for another. If possible, take your child with you to the interview. Choose a program that reflects your ideas about parenting and provides enriching learning opportunities for your child.

Before making a final decision on a child care program, call the licensing unit of the Florida Department of Children and Families (407-245-0470) or go to [www.myflorida.com/childcare/provider](http://www.myflorida.com/childcare/provider) to find out if a site has had any violations and if so, the nature of the violations.

Do you need help paying for child care? Federal, state, and local funding is available to help eligible families. In Seminole, call 4C (407-532-4414) for more information and eligibility requirements.

[www.seminoleearlylearning.org](http://www.seminoleearlylearning.org)

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	Program One	Program Two	Program Three
<b>Look</b>			
Is the license displayed?			
Do caregivers appear to enjoy what they do?			
Do they talk with each child at the child's eye level?			
Is there a daily schedule posted and do they seem to follow it?			
Are there enough water fountains and restrooms?			
<b>Listen</b>			
Do the children sound happy and involved?			
Do teacher's voices seem cheerful and patient?			
Is it too quiet? ( <i>may mean not enough activity</i> )			
Is it too loud? ( <i>may mean a lack of control</i> )			
<b>Count</b>			
Are there enough toys, paints, books, etc. for all children?			
How many teachers to children?			
Is equipment (chairs, tables, sinks, toilets) all child size and in good condition?			
Is there enough outdoor equipment and is it in good condition?			
<b>Ask</b>			
What is their philosophy about educating young children?			
Is the site accredited?			
What is the curriculum in the classroom?			
Are written policies available? ( <i>Emergency, discipline, attendance, etc.</i> )			
Are parents allowed to visit at any time? ( <i>an open door policy?</i> )			
What are the teacher's credentials? ( <i>CDA, degreed, etc.</i> )			
How long has the teacher worked there?			
Do staff members have training in CPR/First Aid?			
<b>Be Informed</b>			
How often are parent/teacher conferences?			
Does the site participate in quality initiatives in the community?			
<b>Choose</b>			
Is care offered during the hours needed?			
Is this location convenient for daily drop off / pick up?			