

**HERE'S
TO YOUR
HEALTH!**

Choosing Quality Child Care



Health tip:

Visit a home or child care center more than once and stay as long as possible to get a good feel for what the care will be like for your child. Even after you start using the child care, continue to visit from time to time. You should always be welcome.

Observe:

- Do the children sound happy and involved?
- Do the teachers seem cheerful and use positive language when speaking with the children?
- Are books and toys available?

Group Size:

- Are you comfortable with the group size?
- Do the children receive adequate attention?

Staff:

- What is the training and experience of the caregiver or center staff?

Finding and choosing child care is one of the most important decisions you'll make as a parent. All the time you spend finding the right child care situation will be worth it.

There are four types of child care:

In-Home Care

You hire someone to work in your home to take care of your child.

- Convenient and flexible
- Expensive

Family Child Care

Your child is cared for in someone else's home.

- Offers a home environment
- When the provider is sick or on vacation, other arrangements have to be made.

Child Care Centers and Preschools

Child care is provided in a setting similar to a school.

- Usually offers a child development or preschool curriculum
- Some children may not adapt well to large group settings.



School-Age Child Care

Care for school-age children before and after school hours, on non-school days during the school year and during the summer.

- May be located at the school or at a child care center
- Many programs transport children to and from school.



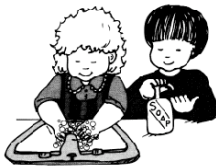
**Tri-County
Health
Department**

Eleven offices along the front range serving the residents of Adams, Arapahoe and Douglas Counties
Administration Office: 7000 East Belleview Avenue, Suite 301 • Greenwood Village, Colorado 80111
Telephone: 303-220-9200 • Fax: 303-220-9208
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Health tip:

Make Handwashing Fun! Bacteria and viruses that make people sick can be passed on our hands. Handwashing is the single best way to reduce the spread of infection. Parents, caregivers and childcare center staff are role models for children. Start the healthy handwashing habit by washing your hands several times a day, especially after the bathroom and before preparing food. Also, make sure your child care provider enforces regular handwashing by staff and children. Staff should wash their hands after diapering and before meal times.



Where to Look:

- For a listing of child care centers, look in the yellow pages of the telephone directory under Child Care or Schools–Academic, then Pre-School & Kindergarten
- To review providers’ licensing files contact the Division of Child Care, Colorado Department of Human Services, 303-866-5958.
- For before/after school care, ask your child’s teacher or the school office.
- A good source of information is other working parents. Find out where their children stay and what they think of the care.



Health tip:

Be sure your child’s health and safety are important to the center. Cleaning supplies should be in locked cabinets and playground equipment should be safe. Smoke alarms should be properly installed and emergency routes should be posted.

Making the Choice

Visit several child care homes or centers.

- Is the location safe and clean?
- Is it a warm welcoming atmosphere?
- Is the recommended adult:child ratio maintained?
- Is the providers’ license current?
- Are there plenty of toys and learning materials?
- Is there a variety of activities for the children?
- Is both indoor and outdoor space available?
- Do the adults treat the children with respect and consideration?
- Is healthy, nutritious food served?
- Are positive discipline methods used?
- Are unannounced visits encouraged?

Remember to spend some special time with your child when you pick them up. A fun activity, reading or book or simply some “cuddle time” will reassure your child of their importance in your life.

Resources

Tri-County Health Department WIC Program

Phone: 303-220-9200

Provides income-eligible pregnant and breastfeeding women with nutrition education and vouchers to purchase foods for themselves and for their children up to age five; provides childhood immunizations.

CORRA (Colorado Office of Resource and Referral Agencies)

Phone: 303-290-9088

Provides resource information to families and childcare centers on training, parenting classes, childcare referrals and more.