

How do I find Quality After-School Care for my Child

Evaluating After-School Child Care Programs Continued

	Yes	No
Are children of both sexes given equal opportunity to try the same activities?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Does it appear that the staff does not use physical or other punishment that hurts, frightens, or humiliates children?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Are children encouraged to solve problems without being forced to do so?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Are children relaxed and happy while they play?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Are there fun and exciting activities to choose from each day?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Are there enough equipment and materials to make the play areas interesting?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is there enough space for children to play in groups or individually?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is there an area set aside for quiet activities?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is there evidence that parents receive reports on their children?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Are there opportunities for parents to participate from time to time?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Can parents visit at any time?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Are questions and comments from parents encouraged?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The better the program, the more checkmarks () you'll have in the "yes" column. If you're not able to answer all the questions by observing the program, you'll want to talk to the program director or another staff member during your visit.

Most importantly, you must decide if the program will be something your child will enjoy each day after school. Remember that it's up to you to find the best possible after-school care for your child.

The cost of child care is a problem for many parents. If you've found one or more programs you like but can't afford the fees, financial help may be available. Ask the director of the programs if they have sliding fee scales for parents with limited incomes. If not, ask them to suggest places you can call to find out about sources of financial help. Some places that may know where help is available are:

Department of Human Services.

Child-care referral services.

The mayor's, city manager's or county executive's office.

Your district's state senator or representative.

If you can't find a good after-school program in your community and are thinking about having your child stay home alone, read article, "*Preparing Your Child for Self-Care.*"

The after-school hours can be a time for your child to learn things other than reading, writing, and math. A high quality after-school program will take into account children's different interests and moods, and will provide a wide range of activities for your child to sample. At a good after-school program, your child can learn how to get along with other children and how to use free time happily, creatively, productively, and safely.

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