

7 helpful questions when deciding on a daycare program



Choosing a daycare center is a big decision and can sometimes be overwhelming - especially in times of Corona. As a parent, you want to choose the right program with child-related safety and hygiene. But how do you make the best choice? Here are some questions to help you make your choice.

„When you visit day nurseries, make sure that they are tailored to the needs of your family. This includes opening times, proximity to your home or work, available means of transport, options outside of business hours, childcare costs, group size and the child-teacher ratio during your on-site visit, „says Galla Stambuk, Head of Family Service at globegarden. „Be sure to ask about the admission and registration process and the schedule. Start your research early so that you have enough time to make this important decision.“

What is the institution’s educational philosophy?

Silke Bührmann, Chief Education Officer at globegarden, always encourages parents to be interested in the early childhood education plan (curriculum) that a daycare center offers. „It’s important to look for a child-centered, inquiry-based program. While structure is important, parents should also ask whether children are given the opportunity to make their own decisions about their learning,“ she says. When choosing the preschool program, parents should also consider the openness between school and family. „A good day nursery

encourages the family to stop by at any time and gives the family feedback on the development and daily routine of the child. It is important that there is open communication through discussions with parents and development, as well as feedback on the daily routines and the development of your child.“ says Silke Bührmann. „Look for a center that wants to maintain personal communication even in times of Corona - be it by zoom or phone.“

What is the training and experience of the caregivers like?

Of course, you want to be sure that your child’s caregivers are experienced and qualified. „Specialists should at least be trained as Fachfrauen or -männer Betreuung. The quality of the care benefits when in teams also specialist training such as child educator HF or domestic and foreign bachelor’s and master’s degrees in education and training areas, NVQ 3+ level, childhood pedagogues or social pedagogues are represented.“ Ask about the training of the team and the experience in working with small children and with a child-friendly education plan „,“ says Silke Bührmann. Kirsten Heigl, educational director of Globegartens Giacometti and trained quality manager, believes that it is just as important to get a feel for the team and the mood of the daycare center. „I believe that every day nursery has its own personality. Ultimately, it is about the employees and how much they are committed to the educational program and the children,“ says Heigl.

What is the culture of the day nursery like?

Behavioral patterns, values as well as prejudices and role models are shaped, as many studies show, in childcare and kindergarten age. „I encourage parents to look for a culture whose essential principle is the appreciation and recognition of diversity and in which children can see, perceive and experience diversity.“ says Kirsten Heigl, educational director. Open and inclusive educational programs embrace different skin colors, genders,

ages, cultures, religions, disabilities, sexual orientation and generally «being different»; even more, they consciously incorporate such topics into education and upbringing in the day nursery. "In times when xenophobia and bullying are on everyone's lips and being different is simply seldom accepted in society, it is all the more important in bringing up children to instill values such as tolerance, friendship and acceptance."

Can planned and situational learning take place in child-friendly rooms?

Day care centers should offer plenty of opportunities for active play, both indoors and outdoors. Physical activity is critical to developing a child's gross motor skills and promoting development, health, and wellbeing. The rooms should be organized as a "third educator" and could therefore have book corners, activity stations with puzzles or games, role play areas, art and handicraft areas, black and white corners for babies and cozy areas from which children can choose as needed. "It is also important for a child's development to be exposed to fine motor activities such as stringing pearls, cutting strips of paper, and writing exercises such as doodling in the sand. Regular fine motor exercises consolidate the manual skills that children need in kindergarten. "

Are meals and snacks available?

If the daycare offers meals and snacks, inquire about the selection. Are nutritious, balanced meals served? Are the snacks healthy? Is the food prepared or delivered on site? Is there a pre-meal ritual, such as going to the bathroom and washing hands and brushing your teeth later? Can your child choose their own food or does they have to eat everything on their plate? Can the children interact while eating?

How is discipline handled?

First and foremost, the social and group rules should be clear so that your child knows what to

expect. Ask the caregiver how she encourages positive behavior in children on a daily basis. For example, is there a reward table in the group room or, if they behave well, are children allowed to choose and carry out popular pastimes? What are the rules for social interaction?

„Parents should look for a positive behavioral philosophy in a daycare center that helps children understand what they can do as opposed to what they cannot do.“ says Silke Bührmann.

It is also important to know what approach the caregiver takes when conflicts arise. Ideally, a positive redirect is the first course of action. Strategies such as a cool down zone must be followed if the diversion is unsuccessful. „The general tone between children and carers and between children should always be respectful.“

How is the quality of the day nursery?

High quality means complying with legal requirements and professional standards. However, high quality also means knowing the wishes and requirements of the target groups that an organization addresses with its services. For day-care centers, these are above all the children and their parents. As a result, high quality daycare is also created in dialogue with the target groups.

Open communication is the be-all and end-all of a trusting parenting partnership. „Wherever people work with people, mistakes can sometimes happen, everyone who has children knows that.“ says Galla Stambuk, Head of Family Service "I always recommend parents to look for a day nursery that has the courage to communicate openly – at all times. Globegarden publishes, for example, statistics on the child-teacher ratios, accidents, working conditions and wages, because we are proud of our quality. "

Communication about regular external controls is also a quality feature for parents: from quality and nutrition labels to studies or participation in external projects as well as of course announced and unannounced supervisory visits. „I would recommend parents to seek open discussions about internal and external quality standards with



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the pedagogic head of the center." Today there are numerous methods of how daycare teams can further develop the quality in their centers - the opinions and perspectives of the children are only included in the rarest of cases. „At globegarden we see it as our task to be attentive to the various forms of expression children use and to systematically involve children and their parents in the development of quality of life and daycare.“ says Galla Stambuk.