

Need child care information?

INFORMATION RESOURCES:

South Dakota State Department of Social Services Division of Child Care Services

The Division of Child Care Services provides assistance to low income families who need help with child care costs while parents work or attend school. They also provide oversight, technical assistance and support in promoting safe, healthy and caring environments for children through licensing, registration and quality improvement activities.

To locate child care anywhere in South Dakota go to <http://dss.sd.gov/childcare/> Click on "Search for Child Care" in the right hand column.

CHILD CARE HELP!LINE

The Child Care HELP!Line is a child care resource and referral program serving Sioux Falls and surrounding communities. To locate child care in Sioux Falls or the surrounding communities, dial 211 or (605) 339-4357.

To search the HELP!Line online database go to <http://helplinecenter.org/child-care-resources/parents>

For more information call Sanford Parenting Services at (605) 328-7155 or email mutchwomenscenter@sanfordhealth.org

MUTCH WOMEN'S CENTER
FOR HEALTH ENRICHMENT
5019 S. Western Ave., Suite 200
Sioux Falls, SD 57108
(605) 328-7155

SANFORD
HEALTH

Parenting services

Sanford Children's Parenting Services offers a variety of services and resources to get answers to your everyday parenting questions.

KOHL'S KIDS RIDE SAFE

Is your child riding safe in the car? Get individual car seat education and inspections to keep kids riding safe in the car. Located at CHILD Services, 1115 W. 41st St., Sioux Falls.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS CPR

You hope you never have to use it; but knowing CPR is one of the most important things you can learn for your family. This class is not designed for participants who must obtain a credential for CPR course attendance.

SANFORD CHILDREN'S SAFETY CENTER

Keep your home safe. Stop by our Safety Center; a convenient one stop shop for safety items and education. Located at CHILD Services, 1115 W. 41st St., Sioux Falls.

PARENTING COACHING

Whining, not listening, biting—sound familiar to you? Individual sessions to help you deal with everyday parenting challenges. Parenting Coaching is conveniently available by phone or office visit.

PARENTING ESOURCE

A parenting email club to receive eClasses, eNews and eNotices such as safety recalls to help you balance life and raise your family. Go to sanfordhealth.org, keyword: Parenting eSource to sign up.

EVERYDAY PARENTING CLASSES

Get answers to common parenting questions.

CHOOSING CHILD CARE

The Right Questions To Ask



SANFORD
& Parenting
YOUR PARTNER THROUGHOUT PARENTHOOD

SANFORD
HEALTH

Choosing Child Care

Deciding who will watch your child while you are away can be a challenging decision. Sometimes one has more questions than answers regarding your choice for your child's child care experience. Educating yourself on the right questions to ask and what things to look for is the first step in finding the right child care for your child and your family.

Ask yourself questions to find answers

WHAT IS THE BEST FIT FOR YOUR CHILD?

- Does your child need a calm atmosphere or a more active atmosphere?
- How does your child handle being in groups with other children?
- How does your child react when you are not around?
- Does your child need a lot of individual attention to be comfortable when away from home?
- What activities does your child enjoy?

WHAT DO YOU WANT IN A CHILD CARE PROVIDER?

- Does the provider's level of education matter to you? Do you prefer an individual with a degree in early childhood? Do you prefer an individual with a Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential?
- Is it important that the provider has years of experience in providing care for young children?
- What discipline philosophy do you prefer a provider has?
- How much flexibility do you need your provider to have in relationship to your work hours?

WHAT ABOUT LOCATION AND COST OF CHILD CARE?

Your child care choice needs to fit with your family schedule and budget. Cost needs to be a consideration in choosing child care for your child. However, cost is not as important as assuring your child is cared for in a safe, nurturing environment while you are away. Some questions to ask include:

- Does the child care location work for your day/work routine?
- Does it work better if your child care is closer to your work or your home?
- What is your budget? How much are you able to pay? Is it worth it to you to pay for a provider with education and experience?
- What kind of activities do you do with the children?

Conduct a telephone interview

BASIC INFORMATION CAN BE GATHERED BY PHONE WHEN SEARCHING FOR CHILD CARE.

Questions to ask:

- How many children do you care for?
- What days and hours are you open?
- What are the ages of children in your care?
- What's your daily schedule for the children?
- Are you registered or licensed by the state?
- What is your education level?
- How many years have you worked with children?
- Can you provide other parent references?
- Do you have pets?
- What are your fees?
- Can I schedule a visit?

Visit the child care

YOU MAY NOT WANT TO BRING YOUR CHILD TO THE FIRST VISIT.

Observe

- Is the child care facility clean and safe?
- Are the outlets covered, cabinets locked?
- Is there a nap area?
- Is the bathroom clean and available?
- Is there a fenced outside area with a large play area?
- If there are stairs, are they gated?
- How many children do you count per child care provider?

Listen

- How do the children interact with each other?
- How does the provider communicate to the children?
- Does the provider get down to eye level with the children when he/she speaks to them?

Ask

- What types of meals or snacks are served?
- What is your discipline policy?
- How do you handle biting?
- Do you have an open-door policy on visits?
- What is your physical activity policy?
- What is your food and nutrition policy?
- Do you have a safe sleep policy?
- Do you have any toilet training policies?
- What is your sick child policy?
- What kind of activities do you do with the children?

AFTER YOU FEEL COMFORTABLE WITH YOUR CHOICE, GO BACK FOR A SECOND VISIT WITH YOUR CHILD. OBSERVE HOW YOUR CHILD REACTS DURING YOUR VISIT TO DETERMINE IF THIS CHILD CARE PROVIDER WILL BE SUITABLE FOR YOUR CHILD.