

FINDING A CHILD CARE/ PRESCHOOL SERVICE

If you are unsure of where to start, consider doing an internet search for services in your local area. You can try council websites, Starting Blocks website www.startingblocks.gov.au.

Once you have found a service that you are interested in, contact the centre to ask for a tour.

If you like the service you can put your child's name on the Waiting List. Many services have long waiting lists.



When you go to visit the service, here are some things that you can ask about:

Questions to ASK during your visit

- What are the educator to child ratios in each room?
*Birth to 24 months: 1 educator to 4 children,
Between 24-36 months: 1 educator to 5 children
36 months and over: 1 educator to 10 children (NSW)*
- Are group sizes appropriate?
How many children in each room?
- What qualifications and training do each of the educators have?
- How long have the educators been working at the service?
- Are there daily or weekly activity plans?
Ask to see the program.
- How does the program work with parents?
- What inclusive practices are used in the centre?
eg do you use visuals, key word sign, how do you support children with diverse needs?
- How do educators guide children's behaviour?

Things to LOOK for during your visit

- Are educators approachable, warm and welcoming?
- Do educators pay individual attention to each child?
- Are there age appropriate toys in an organised play space?
- Do the educators regularly engage children in conversation and read to them?
- Is the outdoor play area safe?
Age appropriate equipment in good condition with soft surface underneath.
- Do you feel comfortable in this environment?
If you feel comfortable and confident then your child is more likely to.
- Is the physical environment (lighting, soft furnishings, layout) suitable for your child?

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Raising Children Network: Australian parenting website, providing comprehensive, practical and expert child health and parenting information and activities covering children from birth to 15 years. <https://raisingchildren.net.au>

National Quality Standards (NQS): The NQS set a national benchmark for the quality of early childhood education and care services in Australia. Services under the National Quality Framework are assessed and rated against the National Quality Standard. <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-quality-standard>

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