

Finding the right kindergarten for your child and family

Priorities	When you consider options for your child's education, it is critical to look at many factors, including finding a good match for your child's needs and temperament, as well as considering affordability, hours of operation, quality of education and facilities, and so forth. We hope this checklist will help you to make good choices for you and your child.			
Number items most important to you		School Name	School Name	School Name
	Location			
	Is it close/convenient to your home or work?			
	Transportation			
	Will you take/pick up your child or will a bus be provided?			
	If your child needs to ride a bus, how long is the route?			
	What bus safety policies are in place?			
	School hours (Will the hours meet your work schedule needs?)			
	What time does the school open/close?			
	Before and after school			
	If the school day ends early or starts late, what surround care options are available?			
	Is there on-site programming for children who are 4 or 5 years of age?			
	If not, will your child need to take a bus from school to another location? How close or far away is the location?			
	School Year Calendar			
	Does the program go year round or are there vacation and summer breaks?			
	If there are breaks, do you have a plan for coverage during these times? (Some camps do not have a license to serve four year olds.)			
	Class size (many accreditation programs suggest one adult per ten students)			
	How many children in the classroom?			
	What is the student/teacher ratio?			
	School size			
	How many grades are in the school (infants through K or K-8, etc.)?			
	How many children in the school (is it a big school or small school)?			
	Curriculum, enrichment and the school day			
	What is the curriculum? How will your child learn?			
	Is lunch provided? If so, is there a cost associated? Is there a snack time? Are there rules about what your child can or cannot bring for lunch or snack?			
	Is there art, music and physical education offered?			
	Do children have access to computers?			
	Is there a library and does your child's class have access?			
	Is there time for outdoor play?			
	Is there free choice time to play?			
	Will there be homework?			

A check list created by Countdown to Kindergarten and Child Care Choices of Boston



www.countdowntokindergarten.org



www.childcarechoicesofboston.org

Finding the right kindergarten for your child and family (side 2)

Number items most important to you		School Name	School Name	School Name
	Facilities			
	Are the building and grounds in good condition?			
	Is the environment set up to meet the needs of young children?			
	Are the bathrooms conveniently located or sized for small children?			
	Is the outdoor play area inviting and safe?			
	Costs			
	If there is tuition, how much does it cost?			
	If the school day program is free, what are the expenses for out-of-school time (before or after school or vacation coverage)?			
	Teacher qualifications			
	What degree or licensing does the teacher hold?			
	Is the degree in early childhood education?			
	Is there frequent staff turnover?			
	Uniform policy			
	Is there a uniform policy?			
	Atmosphere			
	Do you get a good feeling when you are in the building?			
	Is the atmosphere warm, nurturing and accepting?			
	How do the administrators, teachers and staff interact with the children and with each other?			
	Are the administrators, teachers and staff nice to you when you visit or call?			
	Diversity and Inclusion			
	Will your child be part of a diverse school setting?			
	Does the school provide support for children with special needs, including adaptive equipment, if required for your child?			
	Does the school share your values? Is there respect for cultural diversity and cultural differences?			
	Are there language learning supports, such as "Dual Language" or "Two-Way Bilingual" which usually means all children learn two languages or "Sheltered English" or "Immersion," which support English language learners.			
	Opportunities for parent involvement			
	Is parent involvement welcomed and encouraged?			
	School day (in classroom, on field trips, etc.)			
	At home projects			
	Parent council or advisory board			

*A check list created by Countdown to Kindergarten and Child Care Choices of Boston.
 For more information, visit: www.countdowntokindergarten.org
www.childcarechoicesofboston.org*