

## Looking for child care?

### Additional Resources

To download a **checklist** comparing child care choices and asking key questions, visit

[http://www.alavoices.org/files/child\\_care\\_checklist.pdf](http://www.alavoices.org/files/child_care_checklist.pdf)

Other agencies with valuable information:

[www.familyguidancecenter.org](http://www.familyguidancecenter.org)

[www.naccrra.org](http://www.naccrra.org)

[www.childcareaware.org](http://www.childcareaware.org)

[www.brightfutures.org](http://www.brightfutures.org)



Alabama supports two systems of child care: child care that is licensed, inspected, and monitored by the Department of Human Resources (DHR) and child care that is not licensed, inspected and monitored by DHR. If a child care facility is unlicensed it is not necessarily “bad”, but as a parent you should determine that it voluntarily meets the MINIMUM standards for child care facilities required by DHR for the protection of children.

Many parents assume that if a child care facility is operating in Alabama, it is regulated by a state agency to meet basic standards to keep children healthy, safe and thriving. This is not so. Many child care facilities operate without minimum standards and without oversight. It is your responsibility as a parent to ask the child care provider if the facility is licensed. One Alabama child care provider recently said that “in more than 30 years, I have never had a parent ask if we were licensed.” Ask the right questions to make sure that your child has the best care you can provide.

# Child Care in Alabama

*Did you know?*



**VOICES**  
FOR ALABAMA'S CHILDREN

Funding for brochure provided by the Robert R. Meyer Foundation and the Susan Mott Webb Charitable Trust.

## If you have child care

### DO YOU KNOW...

- If your child care facility is licensed?
- If it is not licensed, whether it meets state MINIMUM standards for child care? Who is responsible for monitoring?



- If staff undergo criminal background checks?
- If staff are trained in First Aid and CPR?
- If staff are trained in early childhood development?
- The number of children your child's age for which the caregiver is responsible?

## If you are considering child care...

### CHOOSING THE RIGHT CHILD CARE FACILITY

Choosing a child care facility for your children can be a difficult and confusing process, but it is one of the most important decisions you will make for your child.

When looking at facilities, families need to ask key questions to determine if their child's needs will be best met at a particular facility.



*Does your child care facility have age appropriate toys?*

### USE YOUR SENSES

**Sight**—look for cleanliness; warm, nurturing care; toys appropriate for age

**Sound**—Listen for music, caregivers reading and playing with the children, laughter



*Is the outdoor area fenced, does it have sturdy equipment?*

**Smell**—sniff for fresh and clean odors

**Intuition**—sense inviting and warm feelings when you visit

Did you know that not all child care in Alabama is licensed and inspected??