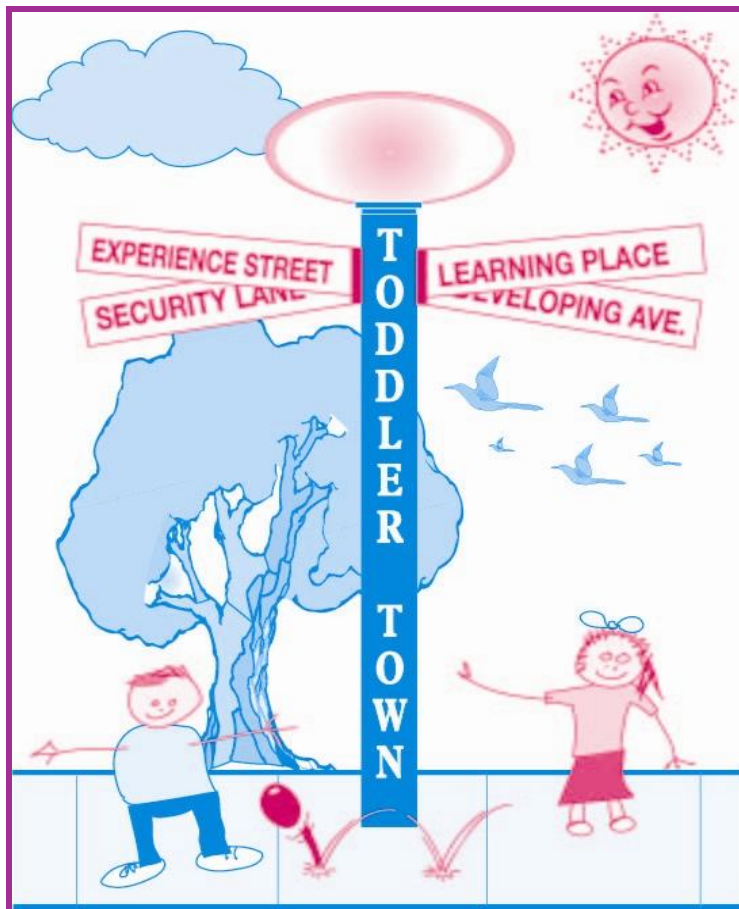


# 18 Factors to Consider When Choosing a Daycare Center

Presented by  
**TODDLER TOWN**



## **Toddler Town Daycare**

*1501 Howard Street Evanston, IL (847) 475-1467*

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## **Toddler Town Daycare Too**

*5934 West Diversey Ave. Chicago, IL (773) 622-9433*



### 1. Hours of Operation

You need to have enough time to drop your child off in the morning and still be able to get to work or appointments on time. A daycare center should be open early enough for you to do that. The center should also be open late enough so that you are not rushing from work.



### 2. Daily Schedule

What does a typical day look like? What types of activities will your child participate in? Is a daily schedule available for parents? Getting an idea of the daily schedule will help you determine whether your child will enjoy his or her day.



### 3. **Communication**

How does the staff communicate with parents about what is going on? How will they report to you any problems they are having? Do they encourage feedback from parents? How would they like to receive feedback? Open communication can help improve your child's overall experience.



### 4. **Discipline Philosophy**

It is important to know how the staff will handle misbehavior. What system is in place to discipline children and teach them right from wrong? Does the staff avoid yelling, or other negative punishments? Negative behavior sets bad examples for children. What positive reinforcement and redirection tools does the center use? Using positive reinforcement techniques and redirection helps to prevent future misbehavior.



**5. Diaper Schedule/Potty Training**

If your child is still in diapers, ask if the staff changes the diaper when it is needed or is diaper changing done on a timetable? Will the daycare help with potty training? Is potty training included in the regular fee, or is it an extra cost? If so, what is the diaper fee?



**6. The Ratio of Individual Staff Members to Children**

Finding out the ratio of staff members to children should not be overlooked. When a staff member is responsible for fewer children, the more individual attention your child will receive.



## 7. Training, Licensing, Credentials, and Accreditation

A well-educated and experienced staff will provide high quality interactions and activities for your child. Make sure to ask the following questions when looking at a daycare center:

- Does the director have experience caring for children?
- Who is on staff? Is there a place to view staff biographies?
- How is the staff screened?
- Does each staff member have the right credentials and experience?
- Does someone have a current CPR and first aid training?
- How does the daycare center conduct its own training on an ongoing basis?
- Does the staff continue to receive training about the changes within the daycare industry?



## 8. Age Divisions

How are students grouped together? Are they kept within the same age range? How big are the groups? Socializing children is an important part of child development. Knowing who and how your child will be socializing will help you understand more about a daycare center.



**9. The Facility**

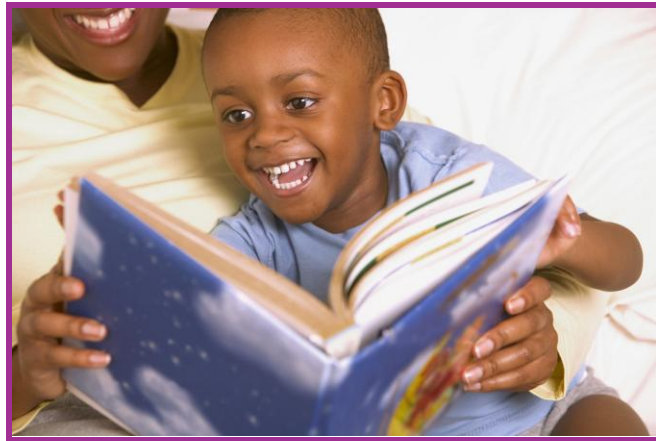
Make sure to inspect the layout of the facility for cleanliness and organization. Is the layout open for children to play and crawl? Also, look for cleanliness and ask about the daily cleaning routine. Does the facility have an outside cleaning crew/company come in nightly to clean the center?

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**10. Equipment, Toys and Learning Tools and Instruments**

There should be a variety of toys and learning tools and instruments for kids of every age. Make sure to ask about any sports or playground equipment and look at the condition of each to make sure they are safe and age appropriate.



**11. Attitude/Energy**

Is the staff warm and welcoming? Do they pay individual attention to each child? When you walk in the facility, is it total chaos when you walk in? Children will thrive in an environment that is controlled, engaging and supportive.



**12. Recommendations by Others**

One of the best ways to measure the quality of a daycare center is by asking other parents for a referral. Does the center have a good percentage of children enrolled who were referred by other parents? Ask other enrolled parents about the experience their children are having and if they are satisfied with the quality of service, or check for parent testimonials on the center's website to hear what enrolled families are saying. Does the center do an annual parent survey to get parent feedback? If so, can you see the results of these surveys to know what existing parents are feeling?



### 13. **Staff Turnover**

High staff turnover can negatively affect your child. Young children thrive on consistency. The constant turnover of staff members interrupts a child's schedule and routine. Building a trusting relationship with someone and having consistency helps make a child's day go much easier.



### 14. **Cost**

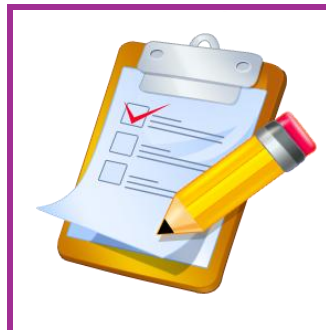
Cost structures of daycare centers vary. Some charge by the week, while others charge a monthly fee. Daycare centers can have a sliding scale that bases fees by income. A daycare center may also offer a discount if you enroll more than one child. Make sure to clarify exactly how a child center will charge you, determine any discounts you may qualify for, and compare tuition rates with similar centers in the area.





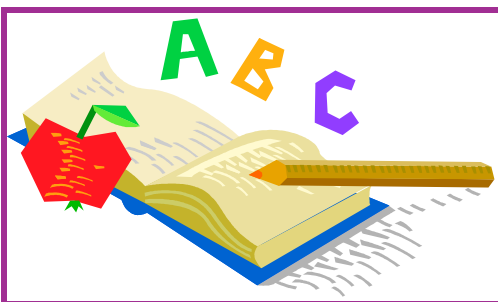
**15. Safety & Security**

Inquire about how medicines, cleaning supplies, and other poisonous materials are stored. Ask if the center has secure doors, strong safety gates, and a plan in case of disasters. Also, ask each daycare center to explain who has access to the facility and how people can leave and enter the building. Does the center have a security keypad at the entrance to discourage strangers from entering? What kind of log in and log out process do they have?



**16. Parent Handbook**

Every daycare center should have policies and procedures in place. Before choosing a center, make sure to ask for a parent handbook and look through it. A parent handbook should have all the daycare center's policies and procedures. Anything a parent needs to know should be in the handbook. If a daycare center does not have a parent handbook, then you may not know what is going on.



**17. Curriculum**

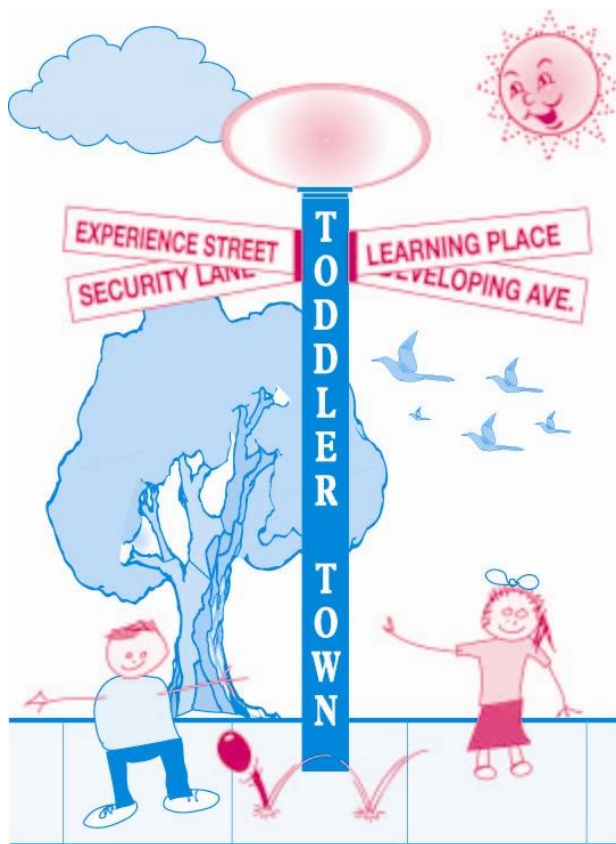
Familiarize yourself with each daycare center's curriculum. Ask each center how it prepares children for school. Are the teachers required to create a lesson plan for their class? Ask about the reasoning behind the chosen curriculum and its advantages. Compare the different curriculums to each other and decide which one would benefit your child the most. The time your child spends each day at the daycare center will help to establish a lifetime foundation and enthusiasm for learning.



**18. Convenient Payment Options**

What kind of payments does the daycare center accept? Does the center accept credit cards including debit cards? Does the center offer automatic charging of your card or bank account for making payments? Does the center have discounts for paying monthly?

*Please contact us for all your day care needs in the Chicago and Evanston area!  
Thank you!*



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