



Program Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Visit Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Things to consider and questions you can ask before visiting a program*

**Hours**

- What hours are the program open?
- Are the hours of attendance flexible?
- What dates is the program closed for holidays or staff trainings?
- What happens if I'm running late?

**Cost**

- What is the fee for the program?
- When is the payment due and are there any late fees?
- Are meals and snacks included in the fee?
- Are there field trips or additional costs?
- Is the fee charged when my child is not there?
- What payment options are accepted? (credit card, check, Venmo, etc.)
- Are subsidy payments accepted, if applicable?

**Questions to ask about quality**

- What is your mission or educational philosophy?
- What education, experience and ongoing training does your staff have in working with children?
- Will the same people be taking care of my child each day?
- How will my child spend his/her day? What is a typical day like?
- How will I hear about my child's day and what my child is learning?
- Are there ways for me to volunteer or participate in the program? Are families encouraged to make suggestions about the program, activities and meals?
- How does the program help children and families transition into, within, and out of the program?
- How many children are in each classroom or home? What is the staff to child ratio?
- What is your plan in case of health or safety emergencies?
- Does your program participate in QUALITYstarsNY or are you accredited?

### Location

- Is the program near home or work?
- How will I get my child to the program?

### Considerations for Children with Special Needs

- What are the guidelines and procedures for involving children with special needs?
- Are activities based upon a child's level of functioning and development?

### Additional Considerations

- Is the program licensed or regulated?
- Is there a spot available for my child? If not, is there a waiting list?
- Do I need to bring diapers, extra clothes or other supplies?
- Does the program have access to medical, behavioral and other specialists?
- What is the program's policy on illness?
- How will the child be introduced to the adults and other children?
- Does the program accept children who are not yet walking or toilet-trained?
- What languages are spoken?

**Additional Notes:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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## *Things to look for during your visit*

### **Health & Safety**

- Equipment, toys and furniture are in good condition and regularly cleaned and sanitized
- Electrical outlets are covered
- Emergency route and emergency numbers are posted
- The doors are locked and visitors are required to sign in
- Outdoor space has safe surfaces, secure boundaries, and has both sun and shade

### **Learning Environment**

- The space is warm and inviting
- Children seem happy and engaged with staff and other children
- There are plenty of developmentally-appropriate materials that are easily accessible by the children
- Different cultures and traditions are seen and represented in materials around the learning environment

### **Infants/Toddlers**

- Open and safe spaces are provided for non-mobile infants to explore freely
- Absence or limited use of restrictive devices such as walkers, excersaucers, bouncy seats, and swings that do not allow freedom of movement
- Furniture is the correct size for the age of the children being served

### **Daily Activities**

- Nutritious meals and snacks are served
- There are planned activities as well as opportunities for children to choose their own activities
- TV or screen time is minimal; No TV time for children under age 2
- Activities are varied and include both indoor and outdoor play
- A daily schedule is posted using pictures and visuals so that children can understand what will happen next

### **Teacher/Children Interactions**

- There is shared respect between teachers and children
- Teachers are at children's eye level when talking with them
- Staff smile, listen to, talk with and enjoy interacting with children
- Teachers listen closely to each child and use responsive language
- Children are asked open-ended questions and not just given directions
- Staff respond compassionately to children who are upset

## *Materials to request from the program/provider to help you review your options*

- Parent/Family handbook
- Program brochure
- Parent-family/provider agreement
- Contact information of a current parent(s) in the program or request a short meeting with a parent to ask about their experience with the program