

## Child Care Cues

### *What Every Parent Should Know*

#### **School Age Children**

Your school age child is ready for a steady pace of growth and learning. You will notice your child replacing pretend and fantasy play for real life tasks and activities.

School aged children now have a longer attention span and can work on problem solving, resolve arguments and can focus more on projects.

Friendships and accomplishments are very important to children this age. This group of children tends to use secret codes and made-up language to strengthen their friendships.

Your child needs opportunities for active play, such as running, jumping and tumbling. Encourage your child to read and write by making up plays and scripts. Provide opportunities for your child to cook and sew. When checking out the child-care center, you should take your school-age child with you to get their opinion about the place.

The following lists will help you make sure your school age child's care environment reflects the quality standards you maintain at home.

#### Physical Environment

- ✓ Are there board games, art supplies and other age related activities for your child to do?
- ✓ Are there books for your child's age group to read? For example, Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day; or The Kid Next Door; Nothing's Fair In Fifth Grade; Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing; Ramona's book series and many others.
- ✓ Do they have equipment for sports for your child to play with outside? Do they have bikes, skateboards and helmets for your child to use?
- ✓ Are there quiet places for your child to go to relax, do homework or read?
- ✓ Are there places the older children can be away from the younger children if they want and vice versa?
- ✓ Is there a place for your child to put their things that is safe, like a cubby?

#### Program

- ✓ What are the hours of business?
- ✓ What is the cost and what is included in that price? What is the late policy?
- ✓ Will your child receive a healthy snack after school?
- ✓ What is the policy on sick children? What will happen to the children if the provider is sick?
- ✓ How will your child get from school to the center? If the children walk, does the provider or another adult accompany them? Are there seat belts for each child being transported in vehicles?
- ✓ Will your child be supervised, yet at the same time have their independence?
- ✓ Are there other children close to your child's age?
- ✓ Will your child have a relaxed day with games and fun after a structured day at school?
- ✓ What is the discipline policy? Is it fair, age appropriate, consistent, but flexible when needed? Does the discipline promote self-esteem and self-control?
- ✓ Is your child allowed to play outside?
- ✓ What is the policy on completing homework? Will your child receive help with their homework when needed?
- ✓ Does the care provider communicate with your child's school? Do they work together?

#### Observation

- ✓ Do the caregivers like working with school age children? Do they work well with your child?
- ✓ Does the program meet your child's needs?