

Child Care

What Parents Should Expect from Providers

- Ongoing communication, open access to the home or center, and frequent updates on your child's progress.
- Loving care, responsiveness, stimulation, and attention to building your child's self-esteem.
- A safe and healthy environment.
- Honesty. Caregivers should share information about problems or accidents. They should pay income taxes and meet all legal requirements.
- Acceptance of your wishes on matters such as discipline, seat belt/car seat usage, TV watching, food, toilet training, smoking, etc.
- Advance notice of changes, such as in hours or costs. You should have between a month and six weeks notice if a caregiver can no longer care for your child.
- Support for your family. Caregivers should not be critical of your family's lifestyle or values and should not be involved in family disputes. They should respect your religious beliefs and cultural background.
- Acceptance of you as the most important person in your child's life. Advice should be offered in a non-critical way.
- Assurance that everyone in contact with your child is trustworthy, properly trained and continuously supervised. This includes caregivers' friends and relatives, custodial help, transportation workers and visitors.

What Providers Should Expect from Parents

- Open communication. You should clearly explain your wishes and provide information on problems, on changes at home, and about your child's routine, activities and preferences.
- Agreement on terms and arrangements (fees, hours, etc.) in writing.
- Honesty and trust. Show your trust by asking questions and not jumping to conclusions when you have a concern.
- Advance notice. Provide a month to six weeks notice of changes in your child care plans.
- Consistency. Pick up your child on time and follow through on agreements. If you are to supply diapers or other items, bring them before they are needed.
- Healthy children. Agree in advance about when you can and cannot bring a sick child.
- Payment on time. Your caregiver provides for his/her family with this income.
- Respect your caregiver as a professional. Taking care of children is his/her profession and a demanding job. Value your caregiver because he or she is an important person in your child's life.
- Understanding and support for your child's feelings toward his/her caregiver. A child who spends hours with a caregiver should love that person, but this should not diminish how your child feels about you.
- No surprises. Caregivers don't like surprises any more than parents do. Caregivers should know ahead of time about changes in your child-care needs and about your concerns.