

Maryland EXCELS Video

Tip 3

Transcript and Video Description

[Music]

TIP 3: VISITING CHILD CARE PROGRAMS

MARYLAND EXCELS

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Narrator: Phone interviews offer a great chance to get acquainted with child care providers. But there is no replacement for in-person interactions. So once you've shortened your list of potential child care providers, it's time to visit the programs.

- SCHEDULE YOUR VISIT DURING PROGRAM HOURS
- TO EXPERIENCE THE ENVIRONMENT FIRST HAND

Narrator: Ask the program to schedule your visit during program hours. That will help you see firsthand whether the program could be a fit for you and your child.

PAY ATTENTION TO THE TEACHERS, THE CHILDREN AND THE SPACE

Narrator: When you visit, pay attention to the teachers, the children and the space. Be sure to keep some questions in mind...

CAN YOU TALK EASILY WITH THE PROVIDER?

Narrator: Can you talk easily with the provider and other staff?

DO TEACHERS AND CHILDREN INTERACT POSITIVELY?

Narrator: Are interactions between the teachers and children positive? Do the teachers listen and respond calmly? Do they get on the children's level to interact?

HOW ARE CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS HANDLED?

Narrator: How are challenging behaviors handled?

REQUEST POLICIES AND PROCEDURES, INCLUDING THEIR POSITIVE GUIDANCE POLICY

Narrator: Before you wrap up your visit, request a copy of their policies and procedures, which should include their positive guidance policy.

THE CHILDREN

- DO THEY LOOK HAPPY?
- DO THEY ENJOY THE ACTIVITIES?
- CAN CHILDREN MAKE CHOICES?
- DO THE CHILDREN SEEM TO UNDERSTAND AND FOLLOW RULES AND ROUTINES?

Narrator: Notice the children during your visit. Do they look happy? And do they seem to enjoy the activities? Are the children given opportunities to make choices and explore on their own? Do the children seem to understand and follow the program rules and routines?

PROGRAM SPACE

- IS THE PROGRAM'S LICENSE/ REGISTRATION ON DISPLAY?
- WHAT ABOUT THEIR MARYLAND EXCELS CERTIFICATE?

Narrator: As for the program space... Is the program's license or registration displayed? What about their Maryland EXCELS certificate?

DOES THE PROGRAM LOOK CLEAN AND SAFE?

Narrator: Do the children's areas look clean and safe?

IS THERE APPROPRIATE HANDWASHING?

Narrator: Are the providers and children washing their hands before eating and after using the bathroom? Do the indoor and outdoor spaces provide enough space for all the children?

ARE BOOKS AND MATERIALS ACCESSIBLE TO CHILDREN?

Narrator: Are there a variety of books and toys and can the children easily reach them?

CAN YOU PICTURE YOUR CHILD ENJOYING THE PROGRAM?

Narrator: Can you picture your child enjoying the toys and materials, and interacting with the teachers and children?

OVERALL, DOES THE PROGRAM HAVE A SAFE, HEALTHY AND HAPPY “FEEL” TO IT?

Narrator: Overall, does the program have a safe, healthy and happy “feel” to it? Once you’ve visited programs and learned more about your options, check out the fourth and final video in this series. It will help guide you as you choose the program that best fits your child.

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