

### 1. Interview caregivers.

#### Call and ask...

- Is there an opening for my child?
- How much does care cost? Is financial assistance available?
- How many children are in your care? How old are they?
- Do you provide snacks or meals? What do you serve?
- What are the hours and days of operation?
- When can I visit?

#### Visit and look for...

- Responsive, nurturing interactions between caregivers and children
- Children who are happily involved in activities
- Clean and safe indoor and outdoor settings (areas for naps, meals, and toileting)
- A variety of toys and learning materials
- Children getting individual attention
- A license, accreditation, or other certification.

#### Visit and ask...

- Can I visit my child any time?
- How do you handle discipline?
- What do you do if a child is sick? What about emergencies?
- May I have a list of parents (current and former) who have used your care?
- What kind of training and experience do staff and substitutes have?

### 2. Check references.

#### Ask other parents...

- Was the caregiver reliable on a daily basis?
- Did your child enjoy the child care experience?
- If their child is no longer with this caregiver, reasons why they left.
- Was the caregiver respectful of your values and culture?
- Would you recommend this caregiver or program without reservation?



### 3. Make the decision.

From what you heard and saw, ask yourself...

- Which caregiver or program should I choose so that my child will be happy and secure?
- Can this caregiver or program meet special needs for my child's care?
- Do the caregiver's or program's values seem to fit with my family's?
- Is the child care suitable and affordable?
- Do I feel good about this decision?

For more information and tips on finding a child care center or program in your area, contact Child Care Aware at (800) 424-2246 or visit [www.childcareaware.org/index.htm](http://www.childcareaware.org/index.htm)



### 4. Stay involved.

Once you make the decision, ask yourself... How can I arrange to:

- talk to the caregiver every day, at least briefly,
- talk to my child about how the day went,
- be involved in my child's activities,
- work with my caregiver to resolve issues and concerns that may arise,
- keep informed about my child's growth and development,
- be in contact with other parents?



Adapted from: *Four Steps to Selecting a Child Care Provider*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Child Care Bureau. April, 1999.

### First finger foods for infants:

After 6 mos.- ripe banana, cooked sweet potato or yam; mashed chicken, chopped beef, or stewed meats; toasted whole-wheat bread; grated or scraped peeled apple or pear; grated cooked carrot

### Foods to avoid until 12 months of age:

Eggs, cow's milk, citrus fruits, honey, foods high in fat or added sugar

### Choking hazards under 4 years of age:

Nuts, whole grapes, popcorn, hot dogs, peanut butter on a spoon, raw carrot, celery sticks, seeds, chips, pretzels, round or hard candy



Adapted from: 1) *Breast Feeding Answer Book*, Revised Edition. Schaumburg, IL: La Leche League, International, 1997.  
2) *Tips for Using the Food Guide Pyramid for Young Children 2 to 6 Years Old*. US Department of Agriculture, 1999

Get down to your child's level and look around. What could be dangerous for him to climb on? To play on? To swallow? Then check your home for the items listed below. Contact the National Safe Kids Campaign (800) 441-1888 or check out [www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org) for tipsheets and more information on specific safety topics.

### Prevent Injuries:

- Make sure toys have no sharp edges or points or small removable parts.
- Try not to keep guns in your house. If you do, make sure they are unloaded and locked up.
- Store sharp objects like scissors, letter openers, pens, pencils, pins, razors, and knitting needles in a safe place.
- Watch your child carefully when near lawn mowers, overhead garage doors, driveways, and streets.
- Teach your child to be cautious and gentle with pets and animals.

### Prevent Falls:

- Keep safety gates on stairs and latches on windows.
- Open windows from the top or use window guards.
- Never leave your child alone on a changing table or high place.
- Make sure that playgrounds are safe.

### Promote Electrical and Fire Safety:

- Keep electric outlets covered and electric cords out of reach.
- Test smoke alarms and change batteries regularly.



### Prevent Choking:

- Don't allow your child to play with things that can cover his nose and face, like plastic bags or balloons.
- Keep small objects your child could swallow such as - buttons, coins, and marbles - out of reach.
- Keep telephone cords and cords from blinds or curtains out of reach.

### Prevent Burns:

- Watch your child carefully when near hot stoves, fireplaces, heaters, irons, and hair dryers.
- Keep cigarettes, lighters, ashtrays, and matches out of sight and out of reach.
- Test bath water on your wrist to make sure it's not too warm.
- Make sure your child is in a safe place while you are cooking. Turn pot handles towards the back of the stove.

### Prevent Drowning:

- Always stay with your child when he is in the bathtub, baby pool, or near a swimming pool.
- Check that the swimming pool has self-closing, self-latching gates.
- Don't keep buckets of water around the house or yard.
- Keep the bathroom door and toilet lids closed.

### Prevent Poisoning:

- Keep paints, cleaning products, beauty products, and medicines out of sight and out of reach.
- Be sure medicines have safety caps.
- Keep the number for the Poison Control Center near your phone (see the emergency numbers page in your phone book). Call them when your child eats something poisonous. Have Syrup of Ipecac in your home if you need to make your child throw up.

### whole grain products

bread ▲ bagels ▲ low-sugar cereals ▲  
unbuttered popcorn ▲ tortilla chips ▲  
low-salt pretzels ▲ crackers ▲ banana,  
date nut, or carrot bread ▲ biscuits or  
muffins ▲ rice cakes

### cut up vegetables

(try with low-fat dips or salsa)  
broccoli ▲ carrots ▲ cauliflower  
▲ celery ▲ cucumbers



### fruits - fresh, frozen, or dried

orange slices ▲ berries ▲ grapefruit ▲  
melons ▲ pineapples ▲ pears ▲  
tangerines ▲ apple sauce or other fruit  
purees ▲ frozen fruit 100% juice pops ▲  
sherbet ▲ 100% fruit juice

### milk and dairy

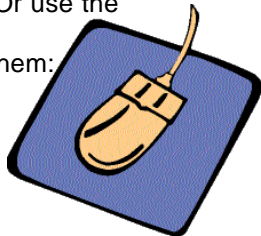
low-fat yogurt ▲ milk smoothie - blend of  
low-fat milk or plain yogurt with fruit or  
juice ▲ pudding made with low-fat milk

### other snack ideas

low-fat granola bars ▲ soft tortilla wedges filled with refried beans or low-fat cheese ▲ graham  
crackers ▲ mini sandwiches ▲ small pizzas ▲ animal crackers ▲ cheese toast triangles  
pumpkin seeds ▲ sunflower seeds ▲ nuts ▲ mozzarella string cheese ▲ trail mix ▲ soups

Adapted from: 1) *Bright Futures in Practice Nutrition*. Arlington, VA: NCEMCH, 2000. 2) Food, Consumer Service of the US Department of Agriculture. 3) *Making Food Healthy and Safe : How to Meet the National Health and Safety Performance Standards - Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care Programs*. Arlington, VA: NCEMCH, 1997.

1. Make online exploration a family activity. Take the time to see what your children are doing online and what their interests are.
2. Place your computer in the family room or another open area of your home. Or use the computer together at a library, school, or community center.
3. Establish clear ground rules for Internet use and consequences for breaking them:
  - What kinds of sites are they welcome to visit?
  - What areas are off limits?
  - How much time can they spend, and when?
  - How much money, if any, can they spend?
4. Discuss safe use of the Internet:
  - Never give out personal information to those they meet online in places like chat rooms and bulletin boards.
  - Never plan a face-to-face meeting alone with online acquaintances.
  - Never respond to offensive or dangerous email, chat, or other communications.
5. Find out about parental control tools that allow you to restrict, monitor, or review your children's online activities. For example, Internet service providers (AOL, Juno, local phone company, etc.) offer tools so you can limit children's access to adult Web sites. In addition, you can get special software online or at computer stores to help control children's use of the computer and the Web.



Adapted from: 1) *Tools and Tips for Parents*. America Links Up <http://www.americalinksup.org>. 2) *Parents Guide to the Internet*. American Academy of Pediatrics. November 1997.

### My child eats a lot of fast food.

#### What can I do?

- Instead of criticizing your child for eating fast foods, teach fast-food survival skills.
- Discuss which fast foods are lower in fat and calories, such as salads, low-calorie dressing, and grilled chicken.
- Instead of avoiding french fries altogether, encourage your teen to share an order with a friend. Suggest ordering a small hamburger in place of a large and ask the server to "Hold the mayo."



### My teen thinks he's too thin/ my teen thinks she's too fat. What can I do?

- Ask your teen to help you plan and prepare meals. At meals, continue to offer a variety of healthy foods.
- Sugary snacks, coffee, and soft drinks are not very nutritious and may keep your teen from being hungry at meal times. If this is a problem, encourage having only healthy foods as snacks between meals.
- If you think there may be a serious problem or an eating disorder, talk to your teen and the health care provider.

Adapted from: *Bright Futures Nutrition*. Arlington, VA: National Center for Education In Maternal and Child Health (NCEMCH), 1999.

## Appendix O

## Keeping teens safe on the road



It takes time and practice to learn good driving skills.

- Encourage your teen to take a driving education class. (This may also save on insurance costs.)
  - Make time to practice driving with your teen. If you're not sure you can be the best instructor, find a friend or relative to help.
  - Ask how driving is going - what's easy, what's more difficult?
  - Talk through any difficulties (parking, changing lanes, etc.) Offer constructive feedback.
  - Talk about what you mean by safe driving:
    - Obey speed limits and other laws and regulations.
    - Stay focused (no loud music or talking on a cell phone)
- All passengers must wear seat belts.
  - Be cautious and courteous on the road.
  - No driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs (discuss the dangers).
  - Set rules about where and when he can use the car and for what purpose.
  - Talk about peer pressure.
  - Set a good example as a driver yourself.
  - Remind your teen she can count on you any time for a ride home. Tell her to call immediately if she or any driver has been drinking or if she feels she's in an unsafe situation.
  - Explain what you will do when he is not driving safely (lose car privileges, etc.).
  - Reward safe driving (extra time to use the car, gas money, etc.)

Adapted from: 1) *The Teen Driver Guidelines for Parents*. Elk Grove Village, IL. American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), 2000. 2) *Contract for Harmony*. Dallas, TX. Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), 1999.