

Traveling Parents: what to look for in toddler daycare

Hopefully, if you are a traveler with an infant/toddler, you have a spouse or caregiver that travels with you. However, if you do find yourself on the road with a little one for various reasons, you want to be cautious when looking for daycare. In this article, I will share a few suggestions to finding the “ideal” daycare setting for your little one.

Limited Group Size

An infants and toddlers are in their formative years and benefit from more individualized attention. A daycare provider that limits their daycare to 4 to 6 kids is focusing more on quality rather than quantity. The larger daycares are often focused more on the numbers i.e. money.

Positive Discipline

Children mostly hear the main words in a sentence. Is the daycare filled with “don’t,” “you shouldn’t do that,” and “you are going in time out.” Or is the daycare filled with gestures such as “Tommy is playing with that right now, but you can play over here,” “good job,” and “leave it please.” For example, a person can say “don’t go into the street or they can say the same thing by saying: “stay out of the street please.” The later example instructs the child on what is wanted in a more positive way. When you visit the daycare, listen to how they talk to the children. This is when your child starts to form his or her self-esteem.

A Flexible Schedule

A flexible schedule refers to a daycare that focuses on the child’s daily rhythm rather than trying to make them adhere to a set schedule. For example, does the system allow for your child to sleep more on the days they are worn out and need more sleep or do they have to follow the group activities for the day? This can be miserable for the child and decrease their immune system. Home daycare usually allows a much more flexible schedule than commercial daycares. Home daycare also provides one consistent caregiver for your young vulnerable child to bond to and feel safe with.

Ask Questions

How is their environment stimulating for your child? What kind of foods are on the meal plan? Many experts believe this is the age your child forms his or her eating habits and preferences. What kind of reports do they provide at the end of the day? Do they run errands during the day with the kids or leave the house? What backup do they have in case of an emergency? Do they pick up or drop off any kids at school. Your toddler needs to be able to get to daycare and settle in for the daily routine.

Check References

Do they have good references? Make sure their references are people who currently have their kids in their daycare so you can be sure they are legitimate.

This type of care does exist, but it is hard to find especially when you have a limited amount of time to find it while traveling. If possible, try to travel to places you know people who can look at places for you before you arrive. Give yourself as much time as you can to find quality care. It's worth it when you can go to work.