

# The Early Years Matter

The early years of life are critical to a child's learning and development. Quality early learning programs, including child care and preschool, help children start early and start strong on the path to life-long success.

# **Steps to Finding Quality Child Care**

- Call the referral line for care options:1.877.338.2273
- Search for a quality child care online:ColoradoShines.com
- Find program details and assistance:
  ColoradoOfficeofEarlyChildhood.com
- ▲ Visit programs and bring checklist →
- S Your child is enrolled! What's NEXT?

Visit FamilySPEAK.org for resources!

Video Library includes child development video series!

# **Quality Child Care Checklist**

#### **Health and Safety**

- Equipment is clean and in good repair.
- □ Electrical outlets are covered.
- Emergency route and emergency numbers are posted.
- □ The doors are locked and visitors are required to sign in.
- □ All toys are clean and in good condition.
- □ The playground has safe surfaces, is fenced and has both sun and shade.

#### **Environment Basics**

- □ The room is warm and inviting.
- □ The children are happy and involved with both staff and with other children.
- □ The furniture is child-sized and the materials are at the children's level.
- Materials are age-appropriate and there are enough supplies for children to either play alone or to share.
- Different cultures and traditions are seen in the classroom.

### **Daily Activities**

- □ Nutritious meals and snacks are provided.
- □ Nap and story time are built into the day.
- Puzzles, blocks, music and make-believe stations are provided.
- □ Children have a time to choose their own activities.
- Activities are varied and include both outdoor playtime and indoor quiet time.
- □ A daily schedule is posted.

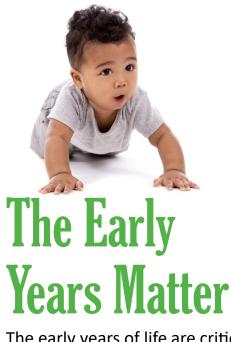
### **Teacher/Child Interactions**

- □ There is shared respect between teachers and children.
- Teachers are at children's eye level when talking with them.
- Teachers listen closely to each child and use positive language when talking with them.
- Children are asked questions and not just given directions.
- □ The teacher attends to children who are upset.
- I am comfortable that my child's culture and traditions will be welcomed.



Alliance for Kids, El Paso County's Early Childhood Council

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COLORADO SHINES START EARLY START STRONG UNALITY LEARNING

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