

- Is there a program displayed that shows the experiences that are planned for the children for that week or fortnight? Ask the staff how they plan for individual children. Is the outdoors planned for as well as the indoor program?
- Do the staff seem to enjoy being with the children and do they interact with the children in a caring and sensitive manner?
- Do they smile, look at and talk with individual children, addressing them by name?
- Are the staff affectionate towards the children? Do they respond to children's needs promptly? Do they seem to have a sense of humour?
- Do the staff seem to be following hygiene practices such as hand washing (before and after nappy changing, after wiping noses, before handling food)?
- Are the individual needs of children catered for during nappy changing, toileting, rest times and meal times?
- Is the menu displayed and are the snacks and meals nutritious and suitable for young children? If your child should not eat certain foods for health, cultural or religious reasons, are alternatives or substitutes available?
- Is there room for noisy, active play as well as quiet places where children can play away from others if they wish? Are there places to listen to stories and music?

- Is there individual storage space for children's bags/coats, spare clothing?
- Is there plenty of fresh air and natural light as well as suitable heating/cooling?
- Does the outdoor play area include different surfaces such as grass, tanbark or other soft-fall surfaces and paths? Is there an opportunity for the children to play with sand? Is there a range of equipment that can be used to encourage physical activity? Are there trees, shrubs and flowering plants? Is there sufficient shade (natural or artificial)?



Protecting Your Privacy

Council is committed to ensuring full compliance with the privacy principles under the Information Privacy Act 2000 and Health Records Act 2001 and seeks to responsibly manage any personal information or health information we hold in carrying out our functions and activities.

You may view Council's privacy policies and statement on our website www.yarracity.vic.gov.au or obtain a copy from the Richmond and Collingwood Town Halls. For further information regarding privacy, contact Council's Privacy Officer on 9205 5128.



Choosing a Children's Service

There are a variety of children's services available within the City of Yarra. Including:

- Centre-based long day care
- Family Day Care
- Preschool
- Occasional childcare

To find out what is available contact the **Children's Services Resource Unit**.

A comprehensive list of services can be sent and the experienced CSRU team can provide information about all the children's services located in the municipality and discuss options. Phone 9205 5441.



What type of children's service do you need?

Some initial questions to consider when choosing a children's service for your child:

- What age is your child?
- What kind of setting would best suit the personality of your child?
 - A home setting?
 - Group care/Centre based setting?
- Does your child have any additional needs that must be considered?
- What is your family's work or other commitments?
- What hours do you require the service to be open?
- How many weeks a year?
- What mode of transport will you use?
- Would you prefer the service to be near home or near your workplace/s?
- How will the choice of service affect any other family members?
- How much involvement do you want to contribute to the service?

Planning Ahead

In order for you to make an informed choice regarding whether the service will suit your family, it is best to visit a range of services and spend time in each. This will help you to learn how the service operates and what usually happens during the day.

There is a higher level of demand for baby and toddler places in long day care centres so you may need to put your child's name on a waiting list. You will have a better chance of getting your first choice if you book your child's place well ahead of when you actually need it.



General features to look for in children's services

The physical environment of children's services can vary from purpose-built buildings to church halls, converted houses and private homes. It is important to keep an open mind about the service until you have investigated thoroughly, as it is not the physical surroundings that are most important but rather what goes on within the program.

Some issues to consider:

- Are the staff welcoming when you ring to ask for information and to visit the service? Is there a warm and friendly atmosphere when you arrive?
- Is written information about the service available to you?
- Does the service have an orientation process to familiarise new parents with how the service operates and to help children to settle in?
- Are you welcome to visit at any time?
- Is parental involvement welcomed and actively encouraged?
- Are cultural differences recognised and valued?
- Do the surroundings appear well looked after; is the children's play area clean and attractive?
- Are you aware of the behaviour guidance policy and procedures in the service? Do you agree with this approach?
- Do the children seem happy? Do they seem to have sufficient play materials to provide choice? Do the play materials seem to be appropriate to the age of the children? Are they given opportunities to play quietly on their own?