

Press Release for Immediate Release

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Things to think about when choosing childcare

Putting your child into childcare is one of the most challenging aspects of early parenthood. Making the decision to trust your child's care to someone who is often a complete stranger (or group of strangers) can leave a parent feeling nervous. To help with the decision the Polk County Health Department would like to provide some environmental things to think about when looking for care.

- Water
 - Make sure you ask where the water comes from and is it monitored. City water is tested and maintained by the city officials. Well water needs to be tested yearly for bacteria and nitrates. Water test kits are available at the Health Department.
- Space
 - Ask about the structure and any former uses for the building. This will allow you to know if there are any possible safety issues.
- Radon Levels
 - Radon is a naturally-occurring, odorless/tasteless gas. Radon can enter buildings/homes and is common in Wisconsin. Testing is recommended every 2 years. High radon levels can cause sickness. Radon test kits are available at the Health Department.
- Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors
 - Make sure there are both on each floor
 - Make sure they are working and checked regularly
- Cleaning and art supplies
 - Make sure they are safe and have few to no chemicals
- Safe food handling
 - Is food stored correctly
 - Is food prepared correctly
 - Are fruits and vegetables washed before giving them to kids to eat
- Choose a licensed child care
 - "Licensed child care provider" means that the person or group is certified by the State of Wisconsin. Providers must follow state rules to make sure the childcare setting is safe and monitored.
 - You can find a current list of child care providers at the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families website, <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov>

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