

What is my role as a parent when I place my child in a centre?

When your child is in a child care centre, he/she will experience activities and play in group settings. As a parent, you can complement and supplement this by giving your child individual attention at home through play, reading, comfort and love.

It would be helpful to find out from your child's teacher what was taught during the day. You can then reinforce the learning at home. The teacher can offer you suggestions on how to do so.

There are also many ways in which you can be involved in the centre's activities. For example:

- i) Join the parent-teacher support group;
- ii) Offer your help during special occasions;
- iii) Share your expertise with the centre and conduct activities for the children and staff.

By forging a strong partnership with the centre, you can ensure that your child has a rewarding experience both at the centre and at home.



A service provided by
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More than Just Babysitting

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As a parent, you often have many questions in mind when deciding to place your child in a child care centre. This brochure helps to answer some of these questions and addresses areas of concern on meals, staffing, programmes, emergency procedures, safety and child management in child care centres.

Will my child be given adequate and nutritious food?

Child care centres must follow the nutritional guidelines set by the Ministry of Health. This ensures that your child has sufficient nutritional intake and a balanced diet. Centres will post the menu on their notice board for your information.

Your child will have meals in a group. Watching other children feed themselves will encourage your child to do the same. Children who need special or personal attention will be assisted by the centre's staff. Your child may request for extra servings at mealtimes.



Is the staff trained?

Staff members of child care centres are required to be trained in early childhood care and education. The extent of training they undergo will depend on their level of responsibility.

To ensure that each child is given the adequate supervision, centres must comply with the staff-child ratios set by the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports. These are:

Age Group	Staff-Child Ratio
From 2 to 18 mos	1 teacher to 5 children
Above 18 to 30 mos	1 teacher to 8 children
Above 30 mos to 3 yrs	1 teacher to 12 children
From 3 to 4 yrs	1 teacher to 15 children
Above 4 to below 7 yrs	1 teacher to 25 children

How can the centre help my child to learn?

All children naturally love to learn. The child care centre provides ample opportunities for your child to learn at his/her own pace.

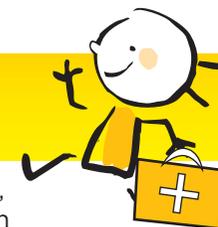
A good child care centre should have a variety of age-appropriate toys, art and educational materials to foster exploration and discovery. Young children learn through play, which enhances their physical, cognitive, language, social, emotional and aesthetic development.

Books are also a good source of fun and information. Reading programmes that are conducted at the centre will help to stimulate your child's interest so that he/she will eventually begin reading on his/her own.

Does the child care centre prepare my child for school the way kindergarten and nursery do?

Child care centres are required to provide age-appropriate activities for the total development of your child. To prepare your child for entry into primary school, both kindergarten and nursery programmes are incorporated into his/her daily activities. Most child care centres also offer bilingual programmes.

What happens in case of an emergency?



When you register your child, the child care centre will obtain specific instructions from you, on whom they should contact in case of an emergency or if your child falls ill. The centre is required to have at least one staff member, who is trained in first-aid and is present all the time, to deal with emergencies.

If your child is sick and does not require immediate medical attention, the centre will contact you to bring him/her home. If urgent medical attention is required, it is a practice for centres to send your child to the nearest medical facility and to inform you immediately.

Is the environment safe for my child?

Child care centres are required to comply with the safety guidelines issued by the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports. The Ministry's officials make regular checks to ensure that the centre is safe for your child. You are also encouraged to share your observations and feedback with the centre's supervisor.

How do teachers manage my child's misbehaviour?

Centres vary in their discipline approach. Before admission, discuss the centre's children management approach with the centre's supervisor. Centres should use positive reinforcement (e.g. praise, recognition, rewards) to encourage good behaviour. It also enhances the child's self-concept and gives the child a feeling of independence and accomplishment.

Discuss with the teacher if you have a specific concern about the discipline of your child. Disciplining your child is more effective if you and your child's teacher work hand in hand.