

daycare VS preschool

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

	childcare center	home daycare	preschool
AGES	Infants and young toddlers. Often will offer preschool for children 3-5 and some offer after school care.	Varied, but often 0-5, with after school care for up to age 12.	Typically ages 3-5, though some may accept younger children.
HOURS	Typically full workday coverage.	Typically full workday coverage.	Often part-day programs. Some may offer full day.
SCHEDULES	Typically year-round, with limited holiday closures. Part-day and part-week programs are common for toddlers.	Typically year-round, with limited closures for holidays. Part-week or part-day care is not usually offered.	Often closed for summer. Some offer part-week options.
CURRICULUM	Usually provides some type of formal curriculum.	Varies. Sometimes a formal curriculum is used, but always.	Formal curriculum is used. Educational philosophy varies.
RATIO	State law sets ratio by age. Group size is limited, but doesn't impact ratio.	State laws determine ratio by group size and ages of children.	State laws set ratio by age. Some programs, like co-ops, may have different ratios laws.
TOILETING	Often requires a child to be potty trained to enter preschool because of facility limitations.	May require potty training by a certain age for convenience. Sometime supplies are provided and a fee is charged.	Often requires all children to be potty trained because of facility limitations.
COST	Often costs are highest for infants and decrease as the child gets older.	Often care costs the same for all children. Usually less expensive than centers.	Care costs the same for all children. Less expensive than daycare centers.