

4 Things Every Parent Should Know Before Choosing a Preschool



If most preschools seem to have friendly teachers, toys to play with, and an opening for your child, does it really matter which place you decide to enroll at? **Yes!** According to the U.S. Department of Education, preschool plays a large role in later academic success. "Children in high quality preschools display better language, cognitive, and social skills than children who attended low quality programs." What kind of a difference does it really make? The children in a high quality preschool have the advantage well into elementary school with stronger social skills, a longer attention span, and better language and math skills. The benefits don't end there...even as adults they are more likely to graduate from high school, hold high paying jobs, even more likely to own their own home.

There are 4 main things that can make a huge difference in the quality of instruction your child receives and the overall enjoyment and satisfaction of being involved with the preschool. Here are 4 things that every parent should consider before deciding on a preschool experience for their child:

1. What are the Teaching Credentials and Experience Level of the Staff?

In our school we feel that an experienced, degreed teacher is a must! All of our teaching staff have university training in early childhood education and degrees focused on preschool or early elementary age teaching. They bring years of teaching & parenting experience to the classroom, so you can rest assured that your little one will be well cared for during their time with us. Every staff member has also completed a criminal background check before beginning employment at our studio.

2. What is the Size of the Class?

If the preschool class has fewer students in it each child will receive more personalized attention, learn more and have more fun! It's not just the teacher/student ratio, look at the total number of children in the classroom. Smaller class sizes mean that the children get to know one another and build lasting friendships that extend beyond the classroom. Teachers have the time to work with each child individually on the skills that need a little extra help. Small class sizes make sure that each child is getting the focused attention they need, to help them develop a strong foundation that sets the groundwork for academic success in the years to come.

In our school 3's & 4's classes have a maximum of just 10 students per class. With JrK classes there is a maximum of just 12 students per class. The 2's Mommy & Me has only 8 children with their caregivers.

3. Is there an Arts Focus to Encourage Creative Expression?

"Study after study has proven that music education dramatically increases early brain development and improves students' overall academic performance. But music does so much more! It makes your mood more pleasant, your child a happier person, the car ride more fun and enjoyable, and your life more fulfilling." **Lynn Kleiner**, author of "Kids Make Music! Twos and Threes for Parents and Their Children"

Children naturally respond joyfully to music, dance & art. Research studies have shown that by introducing children to the performing arts at an early age we help them to improve their critical thinking skills and develop self confidence. Studies have proven that early education in performing arts & music helps children to excel in other areas such as mathematics, languages, science, fine & gross motor skills, hand-eye coordination, and even playing well with others. There's so much more to a our preschool than just your ABC's & 123's.

4. Does it Feel like a Comfy Fit for Your Child?

Your "Mommy or Daddy Instinct" is your best guide. Visit the preschools in your area and observe classes in action (either live or video taped). Bring your questions to make sure you feel comfortable with the philosophy of the school, the balance of academics and creative expression and the approach to discipline. You'll find the place that feels like "home" to you. There are many good options out there for preschool, but no one school is right for everyone. After you've checked the basics listed above, go with the one your "Mommy Instinct" tells you is the best fit for your child.