

## **Things to Consider When Choosing a Pre-K Program**

### **Characteristics of the Program:**

- Does the program address ALL areas of children's development, including social, emotional, intellectual, and physical development?
- Are the learning activities AGE-APPROPRIATE?
- Does it offer a balance of spontaneous play and teacher-guided activities?
- Are children provided regular opportunities for outdoor play?
- Do the activities provided encourage self-expression; allow for the development of various fine and large motor skills; and expose the children to literature, language experiences, music, art, science, and nature?
- Does the program encourage and respond to children's spontaneous interests in the beginnings of reading, writing, and counting?
- Does the staff solicit and follow up children's interests in the world around them?
- Do the content and materials of the program reflect cultural and gender diversity?
- Is there a balance among small group activities, rest and quiet periods, and vigorous outdoor activities?

### **Characteristics of the Staff:**

- Are the teachers trained in early childhood education?
- Does the director have experience as a teacher?
- Does the ratio of adults to children comply with state requirements?
- Has the staff been stable over the past few years?
- Does the staff welcome parents as visitors and participants and respect parents' preferences and ideas?
- In their interactions with children, do the teachers express warmth, interest, and respect for each child?
- Are the teachers engaged with the children?

### **Characteristics of the Physical Environment:**

- Is there an attractive spacious outdoor area for safe and vigorous outdoor play and activity?
- Is there a sufficient supply for equipment for the size of the group?
- Are the children always supervised when outdoors?