

Parents should seek a caregiver who is warm, caring, self-confident, attentive, and responsive to the children. The caregiver should be able to encourage social skills and positive behavior, and set limits on negative ones. Parents should be sensitive to the caregiver's capacity to relate to children of different ages. Some individuals can work well only with children at a specific stage of development.

Day Care



It's almost certain that every parent trying to find a good day care situation has thought of the sexual abuse that has been reported in the media. How do you know that you are leaving your child in a safe place and what are the different options?

Breastfeeding can be a problem of convenience, though for some working women who are adaptable and willing to experiment, it is possible to have the best of both worlds—working and nursing. Your success will depend on your working conditions, your day care arrangements, your milk supply, and other factors. The tiniest of babies can be incredibly flexible, and you may be able to nurse the baby in the evenings and on the weekends when you are at home and have your caregiver feed the baby bottles of formula or your expressed breast milk. Your breast milk can be safely stored by refrigerating it for up to twenty-four hours or freezing it for two weeks. An occasional woman is lucky enough to find as a caregiver a nursing mother who will feed her infant charge as well as her own baby.

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First, consider your child's needs. Some centers may expect your child to play quietly all day, others may provide a pre-school atmosphere with structured activities. Consider how many children will be there during the day, large groups may not work well for a shy, easily "lost" child. The point here is that the "ideal" daycare situation will be different for each child. One one-year old may be ready for a structured pre-school

BABY GIFTS & GIFT BASKETS

If the child seems afraid to go to day care, parents should introduce the new environment gradually: at first, the mother or father can go along, staying nearby while the child plays. The parent and child can stay for a longer period each day until the child wants to become part of the group.

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type day care center, while another may be much happier staying with a neighbor.

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Consider your needs. What hours will you need care, and what location will be the most convenient? And don't forget to consider how much you can afford.

The most difficult problem is leaving a baby only a few weeks old is that of finding adequate care for him or her while you are gone. Most new mothers who return to work leave their babies with trusted and competent relatives. If you do not have family members who can provide this care, you may have trouble finding a sitter or day care center that will accept responsibility for such a young baby, and charges will probably be higher than they would for an older baby.