



**START EARLY
START STRONG
QUALITY EARLY LEARNING**

A GUIDE TO FINDING LICENSED, QUALITY CHILD CARE

GIVE YOUR CHILD A STRONG START WITH COLORADO SHINES!

During the early years, a child's brain is developing fast. That makes early childhood (birth – age 8) an essential time for learning and development. That's why choosing quality child care is so important.

Children who attend licensed quality child care programs are more likely to do well in school, get along with others, and are less likely to drop out of school later on.

LICENSED, QUALITY CHILD CARE PREPARES CHILDREN FOR SUCCESS IN SCHOOL AND BEYOND.

A SIGNAL OF QUALITY

Colorado Shines offers a reliable, consistent program quality rating that you can trust.

Colorado Shines rates the quality of the state's early childhood programs. We also have a free, online search tool to help you find high-quality early learning programs near you. Visit [ColoradoShines.com](https://coloradoshines.com).

All rated programs – Level 1 through Level 5 – are licensed, in good standing with the state, meet health and safety standards, and are regularly monitored.

Programs with higher ratings (Levels 3-5) have completed a process to show quality all areas that Colorado Shines reviews.



COLORADO SHINES



PROGRAM QUALITY RATING

THE COLORADO SHINES RATING IS BASED ON HOW WELL A PROGRAM:

- ◆ Supports children's health and safety
- ◆ Ensures the staff are well-trained and effective
- ◆ Provides a supportive learning environment that teaches children new skills
- ◆ Helps parents become partners in their child's learning
- ◆ Demonstrates good leadership and business practices

WHAT QUALITY LOOKS LIKE

- You and your child are welcomed in to the classroom every day
- Staff listen to your child and help him/her express feelings and needs
- Your child has long periods of play with different toys and materials
- You get information about your child's development and local resources
- You are invited to into the classroom and encouraged to participate
- Program has a low teacher-to-child ratio

FIND LICENSED, QUALITY CARE NEAR YOU

- Decide what kind of care you need (a center, family child care home, Head Start)
- Search for quality, licensed child care programs at ColoradoShines.com
- See if you qualify for financial support.
- Visit a few programs, observe and ask questions

TOP 5 QUESTIONS TO ASK

1. Is your program licensed by the State of Colorado and rated by Colorado Shines?
2. How will my child spend his/her day? What is a typical day like for children here?
3. What training have you and your staff had?
4. What kind of daily communication will I receive?

YOU ARE YOUR CHILD'S FIRST AND MOST IMPORTANT TEACHER

- Play, read, sing and talk with your child every day

Get tips at EarlyLearningCO.org

- Make sure your child is in licensed quality care when you're away

Search programs ColoradoShines.com

- Learn more about your child care options.

Call [1.877.338.2273](tel:1.877.338.2273)

