

Choosing a Pre-School

Written by Arizona Foothills Magazine

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It's back to school time, even for the little ones. Here on 10 Tips on choosing a pre-school or nursery school from Tracey Frost Rensky, CEO & Co-Founder of Citibabes & CitiSchool, Mother and Parenting Expert.



1. Explore Local Neighborhood Schools – Be realistic about travel time and schedules. Preschool is a real commitment, so make sure the commute works for the whole family.

2. Decide If Teaching Style Matters - Montessori vs. Unstructured? Traditional or Progressive? Understand your child's strengths and weaknesses and find a program that addresses both.

3. Curriculum Types – Figure out what additional class offerings are important to you and look into what kind of the extracurricular activities, like cooking or movement classes, the school offers.

4. Overall School Philosophy – Find out if it is synch with your own philosophies. How do you feel about holidays- is it important that they are celebrated? Are you okay with inclusionary programs catering to special needs children?

5. How Do The Teachers Behave/How Do You Feel In The Space – Look for teachers that are warm, energetic and passionate about teaching and children. Also, look for a great space that is bright, clean, cheerful and welcoming. If you feel comfortable in a space, there is a strong chance your child will too.

6. Does The School Promote Open Communication – Find out how much communication the school encourages you to have with the teachers. A good thing to investigate is how often the parent/teacher conferences occur.

7. Ex-missions – What is the school's policy? Does the school have their own contacts? Does the school assist with on-going programs? Will teachers write recommendations?

8. Community Strength – Look for a school that provides a strong school community, and organizes family activities and opportunities to get involved.

9. Enrichment Programs – Look into the offerings beyond the preschool. Is there a summer camp and any other weekly classes or weekend activities?

10. Does Education Extend Beyond The Children – Find out if there are seminars, workshops or groups for parent education, as well as an educational/developmental specialist available to observe children and identify red flags, delays or other social/emotional issues.

For more info on Rensky's New York City schools, visit www.citibabes.com.