

# What to ask during a Preschool/Child Care Tour

## Maximum Group Size for the class your child will be in

The National Association of Education of Young Children recommends a maximum group size of 20 preschoolers with 2 teachers. ***Journey sets its own smaller group size is 14 maximum 3 year olds & 16 maximum 4 year olds with 2 teachers.*** The state of Michigan allows 30/36 students in a group. Ask if classes of students are combine during the second half of the day. As students leave for the day, the classes get smaller—to save money, some centers combine classes/groups of students so they can send home a few staff members.

## What is the ratio of Students to Teachers

The National Association of Education of Young Children recommend a maximum ratio of 1:10 (1 Teacher to 10 preschool students) ***Journey offers a ratio of 1:7 for 3 year olds & 1:8 for four year olds– we are overstaffed everyday.*** Having 2 teachers in each classroom with smaller group sizes allows for more one on one time, positive group management & safety. The state of Michigan allows a 1:10 ratio for 3 year olds & 1:12 for four year olds. Ask what happens if someone has a potty accident, injury or a child is crying—who entertains the rest of the class while the teacher attends to the needs of one child.

## Does your center typically have staff turnover during the school year?

Journey rarely has staff turnover during the school year. ***Journey asks staff to commit to staying for at least a year so that relationships between staff & students can develop & grow.*** We've had many staff members stay for 10,15 & even 20+ years.

## Is everyone on staff certified in CPR & First Aid

The state requires 1 staff in each classroom to be certified—other staff can be 'trained' but are not required to be certified. ***Journey provides ALL staff with Certification in CPR & First Aid.***

## How long has the Preschool/Child Care been in business

***Journey's Preschool has been in operation since 1965.*** Formerly known as Holy Cross Preschool = New name, Same license.

## Ask, 'Will my child be ready for kindergarten'?

There's a big difference between Child Care & Preschool programs. Many programs lack the structure, curriculum, supplies/ educational equipment & staff education. Child Care typically offers the bare essentials—they make sure your child is cared for & basically looked after during the day. ***Journey makes a conscious effort to meet & exceed the skills that kindergarten teachers hope for. We are actively working on kindergarten readiness every day.***

## What's the education of the Teachers & Staff members?

If a center tells you that their Teachers are 'State Certified', ask what that means. The State of Michigan Licensing doesn't 'Certify' Early Childhood Teachers. It's possible they mean their teachers meet the minimum requirements for a lead caregiver in Michigan.

***Journey has detailed information about all staff & their education on the website.***

## Look for general housekeeping things like organization & cleanliness.

Do the classrooms seem cluttered or disorganized. The classroom should be broken up into developmental domains—reading area, dress up, blocks... Michigan fire codes limit things hanging on the walls to less than 20% & there shouldn't be anything hanging from the ceiling. Is there a bathroom in the classroom? Or is it down the hall? Students this age cannot leave the classroom alone. This can be very challenging for staff. If there's 1 teacher in the classroom & someone has a potty accident—who changes that students clothes? And who is with the rest of the class while that happens?

## Ask if the Students go outside everyday

***At Journey students go outside everyday*** with the exception of rain or weather below 20 degrees. Students who stay for a full day will go outside at least twice! We also incorporate other indoor large motor activities each day.

## Ask yourself, 'Does this school meet my family/child's needs'?

If it doesn't, that's okay. Not every Preschool/Child Care Center is a good fit for every family.