



## FROM THE GROWING KIDS' PARENTING RESOURCE LIBRARY

### What Are the Benefits of Putting a Child in Daycare?

There are many reasons why parents might consider enrolling their child in a day care center. The need for both parents to [work](#) in order to sustain the [family](#) is a compelling reason, but there are other reasons this may be a good choice for your family. While it is undoubtedly important that children establish a bond with their parents, [child care centers](#) can offer numerous benefits for your child that are difficult to match at home.

#### 1. ACADEMIC READINESS

According to MissouriFamilies.org, children in quality child care centers demonstrate better grasp of academics. While you can prepare your child for their entrance into kindergarten, studies have shown children who attend child care centers are better prepared for [school](#). According to MissouriFamilies.org, "better classroom materials and practices in the day care setting were associated with more advanced development of children's language and academic skills." This may simply be because the child is less resistant to learning when he sees other children his age learning their numbers and letters. Quality day care center classrooms are also filled with toys and [games](#) that promote learning and may offer variety from the toys you have at home.

#### 2. ROUTINE

Children learn expected school behavior in the day care setting. Children also benefit from the rules and structure that they learn in day care. When it is just you and your child at home, it is easy to have lunch a little early, skip the morning lesson time in favor of a favorite cartoon or decide to run errands instead. At the day care, though, your child soon learns the daily routine of morning lessons, lunch, naptime and afternoon snack. Child care and preschool points out the importance of this early learning in helping your child adapt to expectations at elementary school and throughout life. An added bonus to this structure is that your child gains [confidence](#) in knowing what to do when the kindergarten or first grade teacher tells them to line up or raise their hand ~ things they are not normally required to do at home.

#### 3. SOCIALIZATION

Your child learns to associate with their own age group within the day care setting. There is a lot of debate about whether children benefit from the socialization aspect of the day care setting. Michael Meyerhoff with Pediatrics for Parents explains that children learn their socialization skills by modeling their examples and by being rewarded for their behavior. When their examples are other unruly young children, your child may gain negative behaviors. However, child care and preschool experts, such as Kathryn Patricelli of MentalHelp.net, rate socialization high on their list of benefits for children. This is because children need the opportunity to be around other children their age in order to learn how to interact with their age group and to be able to confidently separate from their parents for the duration of the school day.