

Wondering About ...

# Finding Quality Schools & Childcare

Choosing the best child care or school for your child is an important decision. Using established measures of quality such as licensing standards, accreditation status, or the Quality Rating and Improvement Systems may guide your decision. However, in most cases it becomes a goodness-of-fit process as you try to match the unique needs of your family to the school setting.

## Heartland Equity and Inclusion Project (HEIP)

[www.heartland.edu/heip](http://www.heartland.edu/heip)

The Heartland Equity and Inclusion Project is designed to ensure early childhood professionals have the knowledge and skills required to support the diverse development and learning needs of young children and their families in high-quality, inclusive classroom communities. These resource pages provide a tool for teachers to use to support families faced with questions about early childhood.

**Child Care Aware.** National Association of the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies,

<http://www.naccrra.org/parents>

Child Care Aware helps parents understand how to assess the quality of child care and how to find the best fit for their family. In addition to informational resources, this site also helps actually locate child care services by zip code. Special resources for military families are also provided.

**Illinois Report Card.** Illinois State Board of Education. (2014).

<http://iirc.niu.edu>

The Illinois Report Card web site provides test results and other school improvement information for Illinois schools. The site can be searched for individual schools and districts.

**Find Child Care and Preschool.**

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

<http://families.naeyc.org/find-quality-child-care>

NAEYC provides many resources to find and evaluate quality child care. Programs that are NAEYC-accredited can be searched by location.

**Illinois early childhood asset map (IECAM).** University of Illinois College of Education.

<http://iecam.crc.uiuc.edu/>

This website provides comprehensive data on early care and education services in Illinois. Both map and tabular searches can be done for up-to-date demographic information about early childhood programs, state agencies, Head Start, and private sector child care. One link provides snapshots of Illinois counties and provides information about unique characteristics of that area.

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