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Happy in day care, crèche, and co.

In the first years of life and during kindergarten age, children can learn a lot. It is a great gift for the start of their lives if children receive a good upbringing, education, and care during this time. All children in Germany have the right to attend a day-care centre (Kita) or child day care from their first birthday until they start school. Almost all families make use of this.



There are care places for the whole day as well as for mornings or afternoons. Parents decide for themselves whether, when, and how their child is cared for.

In day-care centres, trained specialists, such as educators, look after children and support them. When a group is particularly suitable for children up to the age of three, it is called a “crèche”. Facilities that primarily care for children over the age of three are also often referred to as “kindergartens”.

Child day care is another form of care. Qualified people work here. They look after the children mostly in smaller groups. They do this in their own house, in a parents' house or other suitable places. Child day care is often used by families for children under the age of three.

What are the children learning?

The children learn through play in everyday life: whether by eating, reading, climbing, or by going on excursions - children learn out of their interest and ideally together with other children. That's what we call “education”. The following examples of the children Edis, Freya, and Giulia show: Children who feel comfortable can learn a lot in the day-care centre or child day care.



Edis relaxes in the crèche:



Edis is two years old. His mother describes him as rather shy. It was good for Edis that she initially stayed with him in the crèche. This first time to get a taste of things is called “settling in”. He is now looking forward to the crèche because his friends are already waiting for him there.

- Edis has become brave. He doesn't mind that his mother will say goodbye soon. He knows he's going to have a good time. Edis likes to go on trips and helps pack his backpack at home. He can also rely on his reference educator. She takes care of him and helps him when he needs it.

Freya is happy in day care:

Freya is four years old and full of energy. Since her parents often have appointments, every day at home is different. She enjoys the morning circle at the day care most of all. The children sing a song with an educator or tell each other something. The circle always takes place at the same time. This gives Freya security in her daily routine.



- In the morning circle and during the reading lesson, Freya learned to concentrate on one thing for a longer period of time. This will help her in school in the future. Her parents are proud that Freya tells them in German in the evenings what she experienced and discovered in day care during the day.

Giulia enjoys children's day care:

Giulia is two years old and has seven siblings. The small group was unusual for her at first. But she quickly realized it's good for her when things are quieter. She discovered the game's corner for herself.



- Giulia has noticed that she can keep herself busy on her own. Playing with her friends, she has learned not to be easily disturbed. That's why she gets along better with her siblings now. Giulia's parents are happy about that.



It is good for the whole family

Edis, Freya, and Giulia show us: What children learn and experience in different forms of day care depends on what they need, what they can do, and what they want.



The family always remains the most important place for children's development.

When picking up the children, parents talk to the caregivers. It is discussed what the child has experienced and learned. The parents are regularly involved and informed in the planning of the goals for the child's development. Parents can also get involved in the planning of festivals or a parents' council.

Parents get to know each other and exchange ideas when dropping off and picking up their children or when celebrating festivals. While their children are being cared for, parents have the opportunity to take care of the household, learn something themselves or simply relax. Some parents are also able to find work or extend their working hours.

General rules and rights

There are certain rules to ensure the quality of different types of day care for children. Some of them are presented here as examples.

There are 41 children's rights. The rights were decided jointly by many countries.

For example, your child has

- ✓ the right to an education and
- ✓ the right to protection from poverty.

In federal states with day-care fees, parents can therefore apply for financial exemption from the fees for their child if they do not have enough money.

A code of law describes the purpose of child care at different day-care centres.



Goals for the child are:

- ✓ The child can live independently and act independently.
- ✓ The child can live well in the community with other people.

The goals for the families are:

- ✓ Upbringing and education in the family are supported and supplemented.
- ✓ It is possible to reconcile work, bringing up children, and caring for the family.

Each federal state has additional agreements. They describe how to achieve these goals.

If the child needs special support, this is provided. For example, some children who grow up in multilingual households practice understanding and speaking the German language together with a specialist and other children. Others receive support in the area of mobility due to a health situation.

The transition to school life

In different types of day-care centres or arrangements, children gain important experiences that prepare them for school. For example, you can learn with joy. They get to know the German language better and better so that they can follow lessons. They discover numbers and patterns and ask questions about what they want to know.

In the last year of day care, the children are specially prepared for starting school.

Sometimes they even attend a lesson together with an educator. An important examination of the children by a doctor is also due before they start school. The day-care centre always informs the parents about such things.

How do I register my child?

Have you realized how valuable day care is for your child? You can find a suitable facility near your home. It is best to ask them directly about the registration process.

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