



The San Antonio Parent's

Preschool Tour Kit

Questions to Ask. Red Flags to Watch. A Side-by-Side Comparison Worksheet.

Choosing childcare is one of the biggest decisions you'll make as a parent. This guide gives you everything you need to evaluate preschools like a pro—not just the easy questions, but the tough ones that reveal what a school is really like.

How to use this guide:

- Print it out and bring it on every tour
- Ask the questions—don't be shy about the hard ones
- Use the comparison worksheet to evaluate schools side-by-side
- Trust your gut—if something feels off, keep looking

20 Questions to Ask on Every Tour

These questions separate great programs from mediocre ones. Don't skip them.

Daily Operations

- What does a typical daily schedule look like?

→ *Look for balance: structured learning, free play, outdoor time, meals, rest.*

- What's the student-to-teacher ratio by age group?

→ *Texas minimums: 1:11 (18mo-2yr), 1:13 (2yr), 1:15 (3yr), 1:18 (4yr). Better programs go lower.*

- How do teachers handle conflict and behavior issues?

→ *Listen for: positive guidance, natural consequences, teaching conflict resolution. Red flag: punitive approaches or vague answers.*

- What kind of training do teachers have?

→ *Ask about: ECE degrees, Montessori training, CPR/First Aid, ongoing professional development.*

Cost & Logistics

- What's included in tuition? What costs extra?

→ *Get the full picture: registration fees, supplies, field trips, activities. No surprises.*

- Do you accept CCS, Military Child Care Aware, or other subsidies?

→ *Important if you qualify—not all programs accept these.*

- What are your hours? Do you offer part-time or flexible schedules?

→ *Make sure it fits your work schedule and commute.*

- What happens to tuition if we need to withdraw mid-year?

→ *Understand cancellation terms and refund policies before you commit.*

Culture & Quality

- How long do teachers typically stay at your school?

→ *High turnover is a major red flag. Look for lead teachers staying 3+ years.*

- What do you do when a child doesn't adjust well?

→ *Strong programs have support systems—not just 'they're not ready' after two weeks.*

- How do you handle transitions (new students, potty training, classroom moves)?

→ *Transitions are stressful. Ask about specific protocols and communication.*

- Can I see a recent state inspection report?

→ *Public information. Any hesitation is a problem. Look for Texas Rising Star ratings.*

Communication & Safety

- How do you keep families informed about their child's day?
→ *Daily reports, app updates, photos, parent-teacher conferences—how accessible are teachers?*
- What's your security setup? Entry access, cameras, visitor policies?
→ *You should feel confident about who can enter the building.*
- What's your contingency plan if a lead teacher suddenly leaves?
→ *Life happens. How do they maintain continuity for children?*

If You're Touring a Montessori or Montessori-Inspired School

These questions help you understand how the program implements Montessori principles:

- How do you incorporate Montessori philosophy into your program?
→ *Look for: child-led learning, prepared environments, hands-on materials, fostering independence.*
- What training do your teachers have in Montessori methods?
→ *AMI and AMS are formal certifying bodies. Some programs use Montessori-inspired approaches with other training.*
- What learning materials do you use?
→ *They should explain materials across areas: Practical Life, Sensorial, Language, Math, Cultural Studies.*
- How do you support different developmental stages within one classroom?
→ *Mixed-age groupings and individualized learning are hallmarks of Montessori-inspired programs.*
- How do you measure progress without traditional grades?
→ *Look for: observation, documentation, developmental milestones, portfolio assessments.*

Finding the Right Fit

- What kind of families tend to thrive in your school?
→ *Every school has a culture. Make sure yours aligns.*
- What do you expect families to support at home?
→ *Understand expectations for partnership and consistency.*
- How do you handle diversity, inclusion, and different family structures?
→ *Look at curriculum, books, how staff talks about families. Do you see your family reflected?*

Red Flags Checklist

Watch for these warning signs during your tour. Any of these should give you serious pause:

- Children look bored, upset, or scared during the tour
- Teachers yelling, using harsh tones, or ignoring children
- Dirty bathrooms, strong odors, or obvious safety hazards
- Defensive or evasive answers to basic questions
- Pressure to 'decide today' or 'limited spots' manipulation
- No clear answer about teacher qualifications or turnover
- Staff on phones or talking amongst themselves instead of engaging with kids
- Children wandering aimlessly rather than engaged in activities
- Materials on high shelves, inaccessible to children
- Can't or won't show you the state inspection report

What to Observe (Beyond What They Tell You)

Teacher demeanor: Are they at child-level, making eye contact, speaking calmly? Or rushed and disengaged?

How children are working: Are kids choosing activities freely? Concentrated and engaged? Happy but focused—not controlled or chaotic?

The environment: Clean and organized, but not sterile? Materials accessible? Evidence of recent learning displayed?

How your questions are answered: Confidently without being defensive? Transparent about challenges?

After the Tour: Ask Yourself

- Did I feel welcomed and respected, or like an inconvenience?
- Could I picture my child happy here every day?
- Did the school's values align with our family's values?
- Was I able to see actual classrooms during learning time?
- Did children seem genuinely engaged and content?
- Would I feel comfortable bringing concerns to this director?
- Did my gut feel good about this place?

Preschool Comparison Worksheet

Use this to compare schools side-by-side after your tours.

	Center 1	Center 2	Center 3
Center Name			
Type (center/home/church)			
LOCATION			
Distance from home/work			
Hours of operation			
Full-time / Part-time / MDO			
Waiting list?			
PROGRAM			
Curriculum type			
Student-teacher ratio			
Teacher qualifications			
Bilingual / language programs			
Special programs (STEM, etc.)			
TUITION			
Weekly cost			
One-time fees			
What's included			
Accepts CCS / CCA / Military			
Sibling / other discounts			

Comparison Worksheet (continued)

	Center 1	Center 2	Center 3
INFRASTRUCTURE			
Cleanliness (1-5)			
Safety & security			
Licensing / accreditation			
Texas Rising Star rating			
Outdoor play space			
COMMUNICATION			
Daily updates method			
Parent-teacher conferences			
Customer service impression			
YOUR IMPRESSION			
Teacher engagement (1-5)			
Child happiness (1-5)			
Gut feeling (1-5)			
NOTES			



Ready to See Montessori-Inspired Learning in Action?

At Edquisitive Montessori, we welcome every question in this guide—even the uncomfortable ones. Ask us about teacher retention. Ask what happens when a child struggles. Ask us how we're different from the school down the street. We'll answer honestly because we have nothing to hide.

Why families choose us:

- Cognia-accredited with Texas Rising Star 4-star ratings
- Montessori-inspired program with experienced teachers who stay for years
- Spanish immersion and dedicated STEM labs
- Inquiry-based learning that develops the whole child
- Accepts CCS and Military Child Care Aware subsidies

Schedule a Tour at Any of Our Four Locations:

Stone Oak	210-390-1470	Stone Oak, Sonterra, and surrounding areas
Medical Center	210-691-1050	Medical Center, Northwest, USAA areas
Fair Oaks / Boerne	210-418-3288	Fair Oaks Ranch, Boerne, Leon Springs
NW Military	210-446-1312	Castle Hills, Shavano Park, Alamo Heights

www.edquisitivemontessori.com/request-information

Come with your questions. Come with your concerns.
Come ready to see what Montessori-inspired education looks like when it's done right.