

WEST CENTRAL CHILD CARE CONNECTION

WCU Building, Room 610
510 Maine Street
Quincy, IL 62301
217/222-2550
1/800/782-7318
217/222-3133 - fax

Child Care Assistance
217/222-2592
1/800/317-4740
www.wccccc.com

Office Hours
Monday thru Friday
8:30 am – 4:30 pm

Information about...

Family Child Care Provider Self-evaluation.....	8
Sample telephone log.....	18
Family Child Care policies.....	18
Sample provider/parent contract.....	20
Suggested basic materials and equipment.....	27
Sample Schedule.....	28
Child growth and development.....	32
Discipline.....	37
Business liability insurance policy.....	42
Record Keeping/tax tips.....	45
Food programs.....	51
Providing care for children with special needs.....	53
DCFS phone numbers.....	56



WHAT WEST CENTRAL CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL CAN DO FOR YOU!

West Central Child Care Connection Resource & Referral serves the community by working with families and child care providers to help ensure accessible, affordable, high quality child care. We cover the counties of Adams, Brown, Calhoun, Cass, Greene, Hancock, Jersey, Pike, and Schuyler.

To achieve this mission we offer many services to family child care providers, child care center staff and early childhood professionals. Following is a list of these services.

REFERRALS

We provide referrals to parents who are looking for child care in our nine county area. We can offer information on child care options, quality indicators, and costs necessary to make informed child care choices that best meet the needs of their families. In addition, this service also helps providers keep their programs filled, making connections with parents who otherwise would not have known about their child care services. Continued referrals and assistance is offered to help find the best available arrangement for their child(ren).

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The CCR&R can provide technical assistance to individuals inquiring about opening a child care center or family child care home. We can also help existing programs and homes with questions or concerns on a variety of topics related to children and child care. Links to resources, community partners or information related to the topic can be shared with the provider.

RESOURCE LIBRARY

We have many books and resources available on a large variety of topics, i.e. child development, discipline, curriculum, special needs, health and safety, etc. We have many resources relating to activities and themes from infant through school age.

In addition to books and videos, we have in circulation over 120 prop boxes and literacy bags based on themes or books. These prop boxes can be checked out for a month at a time and can be reserved up to three months in advance.

Our main library is housed in Quincy. The lending library is free of charge to those listed on our database. The library has a laminator, an AccuCut machine, and a bookbinder that are available for a nominal fee.

QUALITY COUNTS GRANTS

The Quality Counts Grant Program is offered through the Department of Human Services to child care homes, centers and programs in Illinois. The grant dollars are intended to enhance the quality of care as well as increase the slots available in child care programs. All homes and centers on the West Central Child Care Connection database are eligible to apply.

TRAINING

West Central Child Care Connection (WCCCC) sponsors a variety of training opportunities throughout the year in locations accessible to all providers. We offer a variety of workshops based on topics suggested by provider surveys. We collaborate with community colleges and other community agencies in our service delivery area to co-sponsor workshops and trainings on a wide variety of topics. We also can bring trainings on-site to centers on specific topics. The *Training Calendar* is available on the website. Keeping providers informed of upcoming trainings, workshops and conferences locally and statewide.

SELF-STUDY SERIES

West Central Child Care Connection currently has Self-Study units available for checkout. Each self-study contains a video or DVD, an informational packet and questions to complete. Upon the successful completion of the questions, you will earn one to two hours of continuing educational training credit accepted by D.C.F.S. Upon completion and grading a training certificate will be mailed to you. You have one month to complete the self-study module from the time you receive it. There is a \$10.00 fee (\$20.00 usage fee for non-licensed providers), *paid in advance*, per person for each study.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT FUNDS (PD/PIF)

The Federal Child Care and Development Block Grant Training Plan for Illinois provides special funding for professional development to center staff and home providers. Money is available for the following:

- In-State conference/workshop fees
- Accreditation & credential related costs

These funds are available to providers and centers listed with our referral service. Funds are limited and priority is given to programs that serve publicly funded children.

Great START

Great START (Strategies to Attract and Retain Teachers) provides wage supplements to eligible child care personnel who work in IDCFS licensed centers and homes. The goal is to improve children's developmental and educational outcomes by encouraging increased professional preparation and support the retention of child care personnel. Funded by the IL Dept of Human Services and administered by Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, the wage supplements vary depending on an approved applicant's level of educational attainment over and above minimum licensing standards.

For additional guidelines and requirements, call 1-866-697-8278 or visit <http://www.ilgateways.com/en/>.

Gateways to Opportunity Scholarship Program

Gateways to Opportunity Scholarship Program is an individual-based scholarship opportunity for providers working in the field of Early Child Care and Education offering a percentage of the cost of tuition and fees based on eligibility. The goals of this program are to offer a means of continuing education in the field of Early Childhood, to promote increased earning ability through increased education, and improve the quality and consistency of care by children in licensed child care settings. Administered by Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, you will find out more by visiting <http://www.ilgateways.com/en/> or call 1-866-697-8278.

INFANT/TODDLER SPECIALIST

West Central Child Care Connection and the Department of Human Services have teamed up to promote quality care for children 0-30 months. The Infant/Toddler Child Care Specialist works toward creating quality child care environments by providing information, training, and technical assistance to any Early Childhood Program within our nine counties.

The Infant/Toddler Specialist provides training and technical assistance on infant and toddler related issues to providers, parents and children. Whether you are a provider who has been a caregiver for twenty years or more or are new to the field, the Infant Toddler Specialist can help you on issues relating to our youngest population.

MENTAL HEALTH CONSULTANT

The Mental Health Consultant is a unique support program aimed at helping child care providers recognize, understand and respond to the social emotional needs of the children, birth through age five, in their care. The Mental Health Consultant has a background in early childhood and mental health, and is able to support child care providers in their work with children.

CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

West Central Child Care Connection manages the Department of Human Services (DHS) Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) for families who are working or are in an approved school or training program. Child care assistance is available to families whose income is below 50% of the state median income level. To find out if a family is eligible, an application should be submitted to West Central Child Care Connection. These applications can be obtained either through a DHS caseworker or West Central Child Care Connection.

Research Shows Family Child Care Has Unique Qualities

The unique qualities of family child care have made it the preferred arrangement for many parents, especially for infants and toddlers. These special qualities include:

- A familiar, informal home environment
- A small number of children in care
- Flexible hours
- Consistency of a single caregiver
- Opportunity for a close relationship with the caregiver
- Close proximity to home, school, or work
- Availability of care for all children of the family from infant through school age
- Reasonable prices
- A greater likelihood of accepting mildly ill children than other options
- A greater likelihood of being able to meet the needs of families and children with special needs

Characteristics of Successful Providers

Successful child care providers are ones who:

- Have good health and lots of energy
- Enjoy being around children and playing with them (might want to specialize in certain age group if you have special preferences)
- Like staying at home and like being your own boss
- Can make the most out of available resources and are creative and resourceful in planning for children and problem solving with adults.
- Organized in planning and record keeping but can tolerate a certain level of noise and disorder
- Can communicate effectively with children and their parents
- Will respect parent's decision to work outside the home and believes that quality child care can be beneficial to children in many ways

FAMILY CHILD CARE: IS IT RIGHT FOR ME?

Every profession has unique benefits and challenges. Family child care is no different. Individuals going into the family child care business bring their own unique set of strengths, values, likes and dislikes to the job.

The Family Child Care Self-Evaluation Exercise is intended to assist you in determining your potential success as a family child care provider. By helping to identify areas of strengths and areas requiring more work, you can gain insight into aspects of family child care which will come easily or which will challenge you or need more consideration.

Consider your personality and situation as you answer these questions. If you find most of your answers agree with the statements, you will probably find family child care in your home a very satisfying profession. If you find statements with which you disagree, you might want to take a closer look.

Maybe you already know that this is RIGHT for you. Or perhaps you are still unsure. You may need the opportunity to talk to other providers, perhaps visit their homes and think through the possibilities. You might wish to assist or substitute in a family child care home to get some hands on experience. It is a good way to try out this kind of work and give you some ideas of how you might want to set up your program.

Take a few minutes to read through the statements on the following page. Jot down your ideas as they come to you.

FAMILY CHILD CARE PROVIDER SELF-EVALUATION

The following evaluation was designed to help you decide if family child care would be a potential career for you. The self-evaluation lists the characteristics of successful providers based on surveys and research of family child care providers and CCR&R program staff. Think about each characteristic listed below and how you would rate yourself. Then circle the number to show how much you agree.

Characteristic	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Strongly Disagree
I enjoy children very much and think I could work well with them for 10 to 12 hours per day.	1	2	3
I am a flexible person and can usually figure a way out of a problem.	1	2	3
I have good common sense and handle emergencies well.	1	2	3
I am generally warm and affectionate.	1	2	3
I am fairly organized and able to keep financial records.	1	2	3
I do not mind my house being messy sometimes. I will be able to put the needs of the children before my housework.	1	2	3
I am willing to rearrange the furniture in some rooms of my house to accommodate toys and play equipment.	1	2	3
I tend to take life lightly and have a good sense of humor.	1	2	3
I usually appreciate my own accomplishments even if others do not.	1	2	3
I have good health and a fair amount of energy.	1	2	3
I have support and acceptance from my family and spouse to provide family child care.	1	2	3

FAMILY CHILD CARE PROVIDER SELF-EVALUATION (con't)

Characteristic	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Strongly Disagree
I would like being my own boss and working at home.	1	2	3
I can tolerate a certain noise level.	1	2	3
I understand basic elements of child development, and know how and where to seek additional training and support.	1	2	3
I feel confident in my ability to communicate comfortably and effectively with parents of children in my care.	1	2	3
I am able to get support from others in the family child care field to keep my skill level high.	1	2	3

Total number of 1's _____ Total number of 2's _____ Total number of 3's _____

After answering these questions and looking over your responses, you can get a sense as to whether providing family child care in your home is the job for you. If you answered mostly 2's or 3's you can see that you might need more training about child care or decide that family child care is not for you. If your answers were mostly 1's or 2's, you could be ready to start your own rewarding family child care business.

Maybe you already know that this is RIGHT for you. Or, perhaps, you are still unsure. Maybe you need more time to talk to other providers, visit their homes, and think a bit more about it. Assisting or substituting in other child care homes is a good way to try out this kind of work. In the process of visiting others, you may find out about your own special preferences for how you want to set up your own child care home.

List 3-4 Reasons why doing family child care appeals to you.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Compare your answers with "Best Aspects" on next page.

BEST ASPECTS OF FAMILY CHILD CARE

A poll of experienced providers included the following responses:

- working with children and watching them grow
- being home with my own children while earning a living
- being my own boss - having control over my hours, fees, schedule, etc.
- giving my own children an opportunity to learn how to take care of children
- the added experiences, toys, trips, craft materials that my own child gets
- the opportunity to learn through classes, studies, etc., which makes you a better parent, too.
- good support systems such as the Child Care Resource Service, Food Programs, and local associations
- not having to battle bad weather to get to work
- doing something worthwhile
- having a positive effect on a child's life
- having the love of many children
- meeting new people
- making friends with many parents
- being able to dress as I want
- the challenge of working with different children and families
- the thanks of parents when they are pleased with their child's care
- staying at home
- no longer involved in the business "rat race"
- savings on taxes associated with a business in the home
- keeping my own home running well
- being home for repairmen, for phone calls, etc.
- not having to worry about finding, or paying for, child care
- helping parents to understand the various stages of their child
- the benefits my children receive from learning, nurturing and sharing with children
- the rewards of running your own business
- you do a lot of different things and wear a lot of hats
- the hugs and kisses. I couldn't get (or didn't want) this kind of attention from my old bosses.

List 3-4 Reasons why doing family child care does NOT appeal to you.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Compare your answers to "Worst Aspects" on next page.

WORST ASPECTS OF FAMILY CHILD CARE

A poll of experienced providers included the following responses.

- lack of benefits (no sick leave, no paid vacation, no paid holidays)
- little contact with adults
- poor pay
- little feedback from other providers or advice on problems
- difficult and inconsiderate parents
- high insurance risks/high cost of insurance
- not being able to "leave work at the office"
- the mess
- never knowing when the day will begin or end
- having to work when I don't feel well
- parents who are chronically late
- having to be home every day
- parents bringing sick children
- the limitations that licensing sets on numbers and ages of children. It makes it difficult to earn enough money to stay in business
- the lack of respect and courtesy from parents
- having to dismiss children from your care because of behavior problems
- my husband's attitude that I don't have a "real" job and that since I am home all day I should do all the housework myself before he gets home from his "real" job
- lack of public recognition for what we do
- providers that give us a bad name by merely babysitting (just watching children and doing nothing with them) or by overcrowding their children
- having to collect from parents who forget to pay
- lack of privacy
- long hours and hard work
- dealing with all the different types of parents and problems. You almost need to be a social worker!
- the disruption on family and home. My children have to share "mommy" and the home isn't our home anymore
- the difficulty in taking a day off
- parents who don't talk to you about a problem until it's too late
- dealing with parents who are too over protective
- the initial difficulty in finding children. It can be discouraging when you're not chosen
- having to keep the house fairly clean all the time

FAMILY CONSIDERATIONS

Legitimate concerns of your spouse and children might include:

- The additional clutter in your home
- The comings and goings of children and their family each day
- Phone calls after hours
- Income tax forms
- The additional drain on you

Convey a positive vision of your decision to offer family child care. Remind your spouse and children of the positive aspects of your family child care business -- ones that benefit them as well.

- It enables you to buy more toys/equipment that your children can use.
- The additional income helps with family expenses.
- You are providing playmates for your children to play with, learn from and care about.
- You are providing a valuable service for other working families, which makes you feel good.

NEIGHBOR CONSIDERATIONS

Let your neighbors know your plans to offer family child care. By letting them know your reasons for doing family child care and what precautions you will take to ensure that they will not be unduly inconvenienced by your family child care business, you can avoid the kinds of problems sometimes experienced by providers such as:

- The neighbor who is rude to parents and asks them not to park in front of their home or turn around in their driveway.
- The neighbor who expects you to be the block babysitter and assumes that keeping an eye on his/her children in addition to the children in your care won't be a problem.
- The neighbor who assumes your family child care is not a "real job."

HINTS FOR WORKING WITH YOUR OWN FAMILY IN YOUR CHILD CARE HOME

For Your Children:

- Your children should each have a private place, such as their bedrooms, off limits to the other children.
- Your children should be able to choose some toys to keep as their own, away from use by the other children.
- Establish a special time (it may be as short as ten minutes) to share with just your own children, such as while the children in your care are napping or after they have left.
- To give your older children a sense of responsibility, let them help care for younger child care children by reading them stories, putting toothpaste on toothbrushes, and so on.
- Give your child a reward for helping--an allowance, a treat, or special time with Mom or Dad.
- Discuss your work with your children; explain it as a business. Tell them how the extra income benefits the family.
- Remind your children that providing family child care enables you to stay at home with them instead of going to work.
- Help your child develop sense of self apart from the child care group. One or two afternoons a week, you might send him/her to a friend or relative's, another child care home, or a nursery school.
- Encourage affectionate behavior among your own children and the child care children.
- Take in new child care children only gradually, preferably one at a time.
- When your older children come home from school, encourage them to talk about their day. Devote at least five minutes to each child.
- If your small child demands holding, put him/her in a back pack and carry him/her around the house.
- Try to understand how your actions appear from your children's point of view.
- Don't hold unreasonably high expectations of your children.
- Use a timeout place or chair when your children need a break.
- Reward your children's good behavior.
- Consider how the ages of the children you care for may affect your children's relationships with them.
- Discourage bossiness by making random assignments, pull names out of a hat, for instance.
- Get stereo earphones for older children who want to listen to music while younger children are napping.



For Your Whole Family:

- Once in a while, take a day off from child care just to be with your family.
- Hold family conferences about any problems related to child care.

For Yourself:

- Patience, patience, patience.
- Find some free time and privacy.
- Find other providers with whom you can share ideas and support, by phone or through get-togethers.
- Know when to get out. Doing family child care may be a better idea at a later stage in your family's life.

What Parents Look For When Choosing a Family Child Care Provider

The following list includes the most common request or questions expressed by parents looking for family child care. Please consider these request/questions to meet the needs of children and families.

- **Group size and ages of children in care.**
How many children are in your care? What is the maximum number of children you will care for? What are the ages of children you serve? How many infants do you care for?
- **Daily schedule.**
What is the schedule for the day? Will there be enough time for my child to receive individual attention?
- **Types of activities.**
What activities do you provide? Indoor/outdoor? How much television do the children watch?
- **Safety and supervision.**
Are you trained in CPR, First Aid and the Heimlich Maneuver? Is the environment smoke free? Is the environment pet free? Is someone able to assist you if there is an emergency?
- **Meals and snacks.**
What meals or snacks are provided? How do you feed the infants? Do parents supply formula and/or baby food?
- **Transportation.**
Is my child ever transported by the provider? Are seat belts and car seats used? Do you have appropriate automobile insurance?
- **Communication.**
Is there a way in which to communicate with parents? (notes, wipe off board, etc...) Can parents drop in any time to visit?

- **Discipline.**
What methods of discipline do you use with the children?
- **Payment.**
Do you accept state subsidy payments from the Department of Human services (DHS) or the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)? Will you accept a personal check? What are your payment policies?
- **Hours of operation.**
All day schedule? (opening times of 7:00 am or earlier and closing times of 5:30 pm or later) Part time hours are offered? Flexible hours? (evening, weekends, overnight, temporary/emergency care or rotating schedule) Before and after school care?



GETTING AND KEEPING FAMILIES INTERESTED

Listing with West Central Child Care Connection helps you connect with families looking for child care. However, you will need to market your program to the community. Marketing means letting others see how good, unique and worthwhile you are. The following ideas are designed to help you market your program to its full potential.

Improve what you have to offer

Parents/guardians are becoming very well informed about quality child care. In addition to a safe environment and an affectionate caregiver, they are also looking for someone who understands how children learn and can help them with the social, emotional, and academic development needed for success in school and throughout life. Keep your child caring skills sharp by attending classes and trainings. Display your credentials where prospective parents/guardians will see them. Frame your DCFS license, CPR/First Aid certificate, professional development training certificates and diplomas. Also remember to list your credentials on flyers advertising your child care program.

Advertise

The goal of effective advertising is to make your program stand out from the crowd. Design an eye-catching flyer, brochure or business card, which emphasizes your strengths. Experience, special training, credentials, negotiable rates and special services should all get top billing.

Get the word out beyond traditional advertising

Distribute information on your program anywhere and everywhere that families congregate such as schools, places of worship, local businesses, community bulletin boards, and Laundromats. If you provide school age child care, take the time to get to know the principal, secretary and PTO chair in your local schools. If local zoning permits, place a sign advertising your business in a front window or other visible spot. It can be tasteful and get your message across. Make sure your phone number is clearly visible so families can contact you.

Appearance makes a difference

When new families come to visit, you want to impress them from the moment they drive up to your program with the cheerful, child centered look of your program. Making physical improvements is money well spent if it helps bring you new families. Remember you may be able to take all or part of such improvements as a tax deduction. Before interviewing potential clients, take a look around your home with a critical eye for clutter, cleanliness and safety.

Ask your current and former families for assistance

Word of mouth advertising from satisfied customers can be a powerful tool. Let both former and current families know when you have openings and ask if you can use them as references for prospective families. Ask clients, relatives, and friends to distribute your flyers and brochures. Encourage them to post your flyer on employee bulletin boards or leave a stack in the personnel office where other employees can find out about your services. Don't be shy about seeking help in finding new families.

Be confident

Above all, believe in yourself. If you are confident that you have the skills, environment and child-centered program to provide creative, loving care for children, that confidence will be communicated to parent callers.

Be flexible

If you have trouble attracting families when you first start your business, you may want to temporarily lower your child care fees or offer sibling discounts. Don't price yourself out of business, but be competitive with neighboring programs.

Be professional

Providing child care is hard work and providers deserve to be treated like professionals they are. Caring for children is only one piece of the success picture. You must also be a businessperson who knows how to keep accurate records, market your program and keep increasing the quality of your services through professional development. Being a professional means operating within a set of beliefs and standards expected of the profession. How you define yourself often affects how others define you. Operate your child care service with respect for yourself, your profession and colleagues. You can only gain respect from others when you respect yourself.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

Initial phone call:

Your first contact with a prospective parent is usually a phone call. During this initial contact you need to be prepared and get some important information to identify if this is a possible match for your child care program.

Providers need to know:

- how many children
- ages of children
- days and hours care is needed
- any special needs of the child or family

Parents need to know:

- brief description of your services
- fees for care
- hours of availability

Remember to answer the phone professionally. Listen carefully to the parent's information and request. You may want to refer parents you can't help to **West Central Child Care Connection** for further assistance in helping them find care.

Some providers choose to record information from the initial phone call on an easy to use telephone log form like the one provided here.

Telephone Log

Answer the phone: "Hello, _____ residence, _____ speaking. Yes, we have a licensed child care program in our home. Are you looking for care for your children?"

Date _____

Name and Address of Parent _____

Names and ages of children _____

Special Considerations _____

Date Care Needed _____ Referred by _____

Additional Information _____

Appointment Date _____ Time _____

FAMILY CHILD CARE POLICIES

Clearly defined written policies are essential to the success of your family child care business. Your policies can help you establish good relationships with the parents and families who use your child care by honestly communicating your expectations.

Your written policies will help you avoid potential misunderstandings, provide an opportunity for discussion, and help define the business relationship. A good agreement spells out responsibilities on both sides and is fair. It is a good idea to sit down and read your contract and rules at least twice a year to make sure that you are still happy with them and that they reflect the way you operate your program now. If you see things have changed, re-write the contract and rules to make them fit the present situation in your program. When you decide to change the policies or parts of the contract, write the changes down, date them, and give addendum copies to all parents. This will assure that the parents know about the changes and it will make them legally binding. You may want to give the parents one month to comply with new policy changes. Your policies should include the following:

NAME, ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER should be clearly visible on your written policies.

FEES: Include full-time and part-time rates, payment due date, fee schedule for sick or vacationing children, fee schedule for vacation or illness of child care provider, any variation of the fees based on age, any discounts for siblings, and late fees.

HOURS OF CARE: Be specific about opening and closing times. Also include information on specific days, evenings, weekends, or special schedules, which your child care program will accommodate

TRIAL PERIODS: Some providers choose to use a trial period to assess whether a new arrangement will work for them, the parents and the children.

MEALS AND SNACKS: Be specific about what meals and snacks you provide. Indicate your participation in the child care food program.

SUPPLIES: Indicate supplies you will provide and those for which the parents will be responsible. (i.e. diapers, extra clothing, etc.)

EMERGENCY INFORMATION: State an emergency policy or plan including information you need to seek emergency treatment of a child, persons to be notified in case of emergency, and permission to transport if necessary.

ILLNESS: Include the steps you follow when children get sick during the day or arrive sick. Also be specific about when you require ill children to stay home.

VACATIONS, ABSENCES, HOLIDAYS: Clearly state the days your family child care will be closed for vacations and holidays. Indicate what procedure will be followed to notify parents in the event of planned or unplanned absences. Also indicate what procedures parents must follow when a child will not be in attendance due to vacations, holidays or personal reasons.

SUBSTITUTE CAREGIVERS: Indicate who your substitute caregiver(s) will be and on what occasions they will be used.

DISCIPLINE: Outline your philosophy and approach to guidance and discipline.

PROGRAM INFORMATION: You may wish to include your schedule for daily routines, activities and any special programs.



SAMPLE: PROVIDER-PARENT AGREEMENT/CONTRACT

I agree to enroll my child, _____, in the _____ Family Child Care Home, beginning on _____, 20____. I have received and read the attached Family Child Care Rules and agree to comply with all rules and responsibilities stated in them.

1. Care will normally begin at _____ o'clock and end at _____ o'clock on the following days of the week: _____
2. Care will include the following meals and snacks: _____
_____. The parent will provide food for the following: _____
3. The charge for care of the child is \$____ per _____. Overtime charges are \$____ per _____. There will be a charge of \$____ if the child is picked up after _____ o'clock.
4. Payment for child care will be made in the following manner: cash: _____, check: _____ by _____ on _____.
(Name of the person to pay) (Day of week or month.)

(Optional) Payment obligation is based on the hours you agree to use the child care, not the actual hours of attendance. Payment is due if you have agreed to use certain blocks of time whether or not the child actually attends during those hours.

5. Children may be taken from the child care provider's care only by the person signed below or on an Authorization to Leave Care Form.
6. (Optional: This section can be included in either contract or rules). Either party can terminate this contract by giving the other party _____ weeks' notice.

(Parent's Signature)

(Provider's Signature)

(Date signed)

(Date signed)

WRITING CONTRACTS WITH PARENTS - SAMPLE

Day Care Agreement for 20____

I. Hours of Care

1. Child care will be open Monday through Friday, 7:30 am to 5:30 pm on a year round basis.
2. I am licensed for 5 children, ages 6 wks to 6 yrs.
3. Care for other than normal hours can be made by special arrangement; hourly rates apply.

II. Fees

1. Full-time child care, \$_____ per week, per child, age 1-6 yrs. Full-time child care, \$_____ per week, per child, age 6 wks - 1 yr. Hourly, \$_____ per hour or portion thereof, per child, as openings are available.
2. We participate in the City Parks and Recreation swim lesson program each summer. Fee is \$15 per child for eight weeks, payable to the City each summer. I will transport the children and stay with them during lessons.
3. Late fees are charged when parents pick up children after 5:30 pm for any reason. A \$2 fee is charged for each 15 minutes after 5:30 pm.
4. Fees are due on Monday of each week of service, and may be made by cash or check payable to me.
5. Fee increases will be announced in November for the next year.

III. Vacations, Absences, Holidays

1. The child care will be closed for the following holidays: New Year Day, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving (2 days), Christmas (2 days). Fees are not charged during days we are closed.
2. To hold the child's slot in child care program, fees remain the same when a child is absent.
3. I will close for two weeks' vacation each year, giving you at least one month's notice.
4. Parents may take two complete weeks' vacation each year during which fees will not be charged. Parents will notify me at least two weeks in advance.

**(FOR REFERENCE USE ONLY - NOT A LEGAL DOCUMENT)
SAMPLE ONLY**

IV. Meals and Snacks

1. Breakfast, lunch and a nutritious snack will be served to each child daily. A weekly menu is posted on the bulletin board in the kitchen. All meals and snacks meet Child Care Food Program guidelines.
2. Special foods to meet allergy requirements must be supplied by parents. Parents may bring special treats for birthdays if they wish.

V. Health/Illness/Emergencies

1. Every child must have a current physical on file and all immunizations up to date.
2. Children may not come to the child care if they have the following: fever over 100 F., vomiting, diarrhea, sore throat, undiagnosed rash. I will check children upon arrival and determine whether they may stay.
2. If a child shows signs of illness during the day, I will call parents at work to report. Sick children must be picked up immediately. A child must be free of fever for 24 hours before returning to the group.
3. Prescription medication will be given per parents' written request. Other medicine may be given with doctor's orders, and the dosage marked on the bottle. Only oral medication will be given.
5. An emergency medical release must be signed before admission. In case of emergency, I will take action as needed while trying to reach parents by phone.
6. Parents must notify the child care if child contracts a communicable illness and keep child home for length of time as prescribed by County Health Department.

VI. Additional Responsibilities

1. Two weeks' notice will be given by either side to terminate this agreement, except in an emergency.
2. Parents will provide diapers as needed, bottles, an extra set of clothes and any special equipment needed. I will provide supplies for meals, activities and naptime. Child may bring a special toy to sleep with.
3. I will provide receipts for payments and a total of payments at the end of the year for your tax returns.
4. _____

Parent signature _____ Date _____
 Parent signature _____ Date _____
 Provider _____ Date _____

**(FOR REFERENCE USE ONLY - NOT A LEGAL DOCUMENT)
 SAMPLE ONLY**

THE 5 C'S OF PARENT RELATIONSHIPS

COMMON SENSE

Think through what is right for you and feel confident in your decisions. You cannot please all the parents all the time so set realistic expectations for yourself and for your parents. Providers are often eager to meet all the needs of the parents and children and often wind up over committing themselves. Trust your decision-making and stick to it!

CONSISTENCY

Decide how to handle all the special needs of each family. Although flexibility is good, inconsistency can lead to misunderstanding. Carefully thought out rules and expectations can be explained to parents firmly and calmly. Do be open to suggestions on how to improve your program and learn to recognize good ideas when you hear them. Parents need consistency and certainty in their child care. Plan to have one or two reliable substitutes who know the children and can fill in when you are absent.

COMMUNICATION

To avoid confusion, communicate your expectations and preferences to parents in writing. Contracts, newsletters, daily logs or notes about their child's day, and even a bulletin board keeps parents informed and involved in their child's life. This is very important to a parent who might be feeling very separated from his/her children.

CARING

Not only will you become the caregiver of the child, but your relationship with the whole family will develop. As your caring for the child develops, it will also be important to cultivate respect and appreciation for the parents. While you will be very important in the child's life, you cannot be a substitute for his/her parents. It may help to view yourself as the support system for families. It is very important that you respect the choices the parent has made.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your role in the lives of families often makes you close enough to hear all the ups, downs, joys, issues and problems they experience. It is your professional responsibility to keep what you know confidential. This is critical to building trust in your relationships with parents. Keep in mind, however, that issues of abuse and neglect must be reported in the best interest of the child.

DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS OF CHILDREN

As you plan your daily schedule of routines and activities for children in your family child care, keep in mind children's developmental needs. Even though the children in your family child care are unique individuals, they all have the same basic needs that must be met. These include the following:

- The need to trust and feel safe in the world
- The need to feel loved and cared for
- The need to express feelings and to feel understood
- The need to feel independent
- The need to feel successful
- The need to feel good about themselves
- The need to get along with others
- The need to have physical needs met
- The need to learn about the world around them



PLEASING TO THE EYE AND EAR: **A GUIDE FOR ASSESSING THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

Have you ever walked into a room that made you feel at home, relaxed, calm? Or have you been in a room that made you feel uneasy, confused, or on the edge? The appearance of one room can make you feel cramped, while other rooms can give a feeling of freedom. The way you organize the space used for child care will give similar messages to children.

Watching children's behavior is one way to get information about how different spaces or rooms make children feel. In this exercise, we want you to try to experience space as a child might. In an area where you provide child care, get yourself to the child's level. If you care for infants, this might mean stretching out on the floor or on the ground on your stomach, or on a child-size chair.

While at the child's level, look around and ask yourself these questions:

1. How does the space make you feel?
2. What do you see from there? Are there interesting things, like pictures or toys, to see at this level? Or do you see lots of legs? Do you have to strain your neck and back muscles to see interesting objects?
3. Is there at least some child-size furniture? Or must children adjust to larger furniture?
4. Are there places where children can snuggle into, places that look soft, and yet are safe?
5. Are the playthings stored in low places, which are within reach?
6. Can you see each toy, or is the toy area a jumble?
7. Are the spaces arranged so that areas, which are off limits, clearly say, "don't touch?" Are areas where children are welcome clearly defined and give the message "stay and play?"
8. Is there a sense of order or organization about space? Can children "see" places where things are to be put away?
9. Is there a "path" for people to move through the space without stepping on or interrupting each other?

Now close your eyes and listen to the sounds around you. After a minute, open your eyes. Try to concentrate on some task while still listening.

1. Are the sounds soothing, relaxing, stimulating, or grating?
2. Do the sounds make you feel like relaxing? Marching? Singing?
3. Are the sounds interfering with your tasks?
4. Are there sounds that can be turned off or turned down?
5. Are there places where disturbing sounds can't be easily heard? Places that are relaxing and quiet?

List two things that you found to be very pleasing in your physical environment?

Indoor

- 1.
- 2.

Outdoor

- 1.
- 2.

List two things that were not pleasing or were in conflict with what you wanted children to do in that space. Consider how you could change things to make it more pleasing or more suited to the children's activities.

Indoor Problems

Possible Changes

- 1.
- 2.

Outdoor Problems

Possible Changes

- 1.
- 2.

SUGGESTED BASIC MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

- Child sized table and chairs, booster seats, high chairs, infant seats
- Individual cribs, beds or cots, sheets and blankets
- Variety of art materials
- Books for children of all ages
- Games, puzzles, vehicles, dolls
- Props for pretend play
- Building materials such as wooden blocks, Legos, etc.
- Musical instruments, record player, CD or tape player, radio
- Water and sand for scooping and pouring
- Outdoor play equipment such as sand, riding toys, swings, climber, large balls and hoops
- Space indoors and out for quiet and active play
- Storage space for the above
- Storage space for children's personal belongings



The following schedule is an example of how the daily program might be organized in a family child care home to meet the needs of children of many ages.

SAMPLE SCHEDULE

Early Morning

6:30-8:30 a.m. Children arrive. Your own children may be getting ready for school or to begin the day with you. Some children need breakfast. Following breakfast, infants are changed and put down to nap **(1)**. (Children should be allowed to nap on their own schedules, so be prepared to add putting someone down for a nap within the following schedule.) Older children help with clean-up and play with table toys, read books, or listen to story tapes until everyone finishes breakfast and cleans up.

Morning Activities

8:30-9:45 a.m. Toddlers and preschool children select an activity of their choice or join in a noisy group activity such as finger painting, water play, cooking, or puppet making. As babies wake up, they are brought in to join the group activity. Children help clean up after the playtime.

9:45-10:15 a.m. Snack

10:15-11:00 a.m. Get ready to go outside: use toilet, wash hands, change diapers, and so on. Outdoor play and/or walks. Perhaps a science project such as gardening.

11:00-11:30 a.m. Free play again--perhaps a special planned activity such as making and using play dough at the kitchen table.

11:30-11:45 a.m. Clean up and story time; get ready for lunch.

Lunch and Rest

11:45-12:45 p.m. Family-style lunch and conversation. After lunch, older children help put food away and clean up. Hands are washed, diapers changed, and teeth brushed.

12:45-2:45 p.m. Everyone (except, perhaps, for a baby who has just woken up) has a rest period. Preschool children who can't sleep rest quietly on their cots or beds, looking at a book. It is reasonable to expect children to rest or play in bed quietly for 30 to 40 minutes before they are allowed to get up and begin a quiet activity. As children wake up, diapers are changed, hands are washed, and hair is combed. Cots are put away.

Afternoon Activities

- 2:45-3:15 p.m.** Children have a snack together. School-age children arrive and help themselves to a snack of their choice. This does not mean they can eat anything that they want but rather that they should choose from a provider-approved selection. Children discuss choices for afternoon activities. Clean up follows.
- 3:15-4:00 p.m.** Activity indoor or outdoor play for all children. School-age children are invited to join in. A special project may be planned.

Late Afternoon Activities

- 4:00-4:45 p.m.** Free play: children play with table toys, blocks, crayons, read books, or build with blocks.
- 4:45-5:00 p.m.** Group story time or singing (non-disruptive play for those who do not wish to participate in the group); quiet group activity.
- 5:00-6:00 p.m.** Children go home at staggered times. Projects are assembled, diapers changed, and parents information made ready. Children color, look at books, play with table toys until their parents arrive. Events of the day and plans for the next day are discussed with children and parents as they leave.

(1) Infants will nap two and sometimes three times a day on their own schedules, which will change as they grow. Toddlers may take one or two naps each day, often around 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Like infants, their sleep demands will change over time and may even increase and decrease at different times. It's helpful to learn the sleep schedule for each infant and then plan active and messy activities that most need your supervision when the infants are sleeping.

Allowing For Flexibility

Although your daily schedule can help organize the day, you don't want it to limit your ability to be spontaneous and flexible. For example, if it is a particularly beautiful day, you may want to spend most of the day outdoors. Or if a child starts dancing to a record you have put on during free play, you might lead a group movement activity.

Throughout the day, unplanned events often occur that offer "teachable moments," unexpected learning opportunities. A sudden thunderstorm, or the discovery of a cocoon, or a new litter of puppies in the neighborhood may arouse the children's curiosity. When the mail or a delivery arrives, you can talk about different jobs people have in the community or discuss the idea that letters go in and out of the mailbox. Watch the children's activities and listen to their conversation and questions. You'll discover many such teachable moments.

Routines

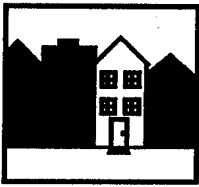
Daily routines such as diapering, mealtimes, and rest times are as much a part of your program as the activities you plan for children. Giving some thought to how you want to handle routines will help make these daily activities more enjoyable for you and the children, as well as opportunities for learning.

PLAN SOME THINGS TO DO WITH CHILDREN

- Books--use your local library.
- Play Records--record your own books on cassette tapes.
- Learn and sing songs.
- Finger Plays.
- Flannel Board Stories.
- Puzzles--make some out of cereal boxes.
- String Beads--large wooden ones or smaller ones. (Watch very closely if very young children are present.)
- String rigatoni or mostaccioli noodles.
- Crayons and Markers--secure scrap papers from printers and offices.
- Play dough--homemade is better.
- Make a tent--sheet or blanket over table or chairs. (Make sure you know what is going on under the tent.)
- Paper bag masks.
- Blow bubbles--"purchased", or use dish washing detergent.
- Musical Instruments--make, or buy a few.
- Chalk and chalk board.
- Colored chalk on white paper, white chalk on colored paper.
- Dress-up clothing, almost any kind.
- Play grocery store--save clean empty grocery packages and cartons. Make money and cardboard coins. Use old purses and billfolds.
- Building blocks of any size.
- Sewing Cards--for any season. Cut shape from poster paper or cardboard, punch holes around the edge. For lacing wrap yarn ends tightly with masking tape. Before punching the holes, the poster paper may be covered with clear contact paper.
- Doll Bathing--supply dishpan or sink of water, washable baby dolls, soap and towels.
- Wash Dishes--let the children wash play or plastic dishes.
- Wash Doll Clothes--stretch a small clothes line for drying.
- Decorate the play area. Use children's art, posters, and seasonal pictures from old calendars.
- Make a mobile--paper umbrella shape with hanging rain drops, snow flakes from a cloud, leaves in the fall, hearts for Valentine Day.
- Carbon paper tracing--for older preschool child or after-school care. Use simple pictures.
- Tie Dye coffee filters--Use food colors and water in muffin pans. Fold the filters any way and dip in the water. Let dry. Use the dry filters to make flowers or butterflies.

- Water Play--in dishpan or sink. With bottles, turkey baster, medicine dropper, plastic cups and spoons. Put water in muffin pans--put a different color of food coloring in each cup.
- Plant seeds and plants. Water plants and watch them grow.
- Painting--I use diluted Crayola finger-paints for all painting. Paint on paper--any kind of paper. Build or buy an easel. Try large brushes, small brushes.
- Sandbox in a dishpan. Use other textures such as rice, cornmeal, oatmeal, etc. Provide measuring containers, scoops, toy cars, etc.
- Marble Painting--roll several marbles on sheet of paper in a cake pan or box. Drop on several drops of colors. Roll the marbles around on the paint drops. These pictures are often pretty enough to frame with a construction paper frame. Supervise marbles closely.
- "Fishy" Painting--tie a "fish" (a peg or small object) to a piece of yarn. Let the child dip the "fish" into the paint and dance it on the paper. Try using more than one color.
- String Painting--dip strings or yarn into paints and drop or pull across the paper.
- Splatter Painting--dip an old toothbrush in paint and rub across screen wire with paper underneath.
- Finger Paints--with shaving cream. Try different brands to find a mild one that does not hurt the children's hands. Add Crayola paints or food colors for variety. Let the child draw a design in the paints, pat the design with a clean piece of paper and the design is transferred to the paper. Let the child play with a car or a truck in the shaving cream. It will make neat tracks. Use white shaving cream and trucks or tractors for snow plowing. Whipped ivory flakes and water may also be used. Add liquid soap or liquid starch for economy.
- Finger paint with chocolate pudding or peanut butter on a clean table.
- Glue/paste--glue anything on anything. Use pictures cut from magazines or catalogs. Use scraps of construction paper, pictures and pieces from wall paper sample books, string, ribbon, styrofoam pieces, junk.
- Sand Painting--color sand with food colors. Let dry. Sprinkle dry, colored sand on glue designs.
- Glitter--make a design on paper with glue, sprinkle with glitter. Put paper inside a cake pan or box top. Glitter requires close supervision. Watch eyes.
- Make a boy/girl--lay child on large piece of paper, draw completely around the child. May be colored or painted and cut out. We also do this with chalk on the blacktop.
- Stencils--make stencils for drawing, tracing and painting. Make seasonal shapes, alphabet, numbers, animals.
- Large appliance box--make dollhouse, play house.
- Quiet time games--boxed games such as Candy Land and Memory.
- Rubber band stretch--stretch rubber bands over nails in a board.

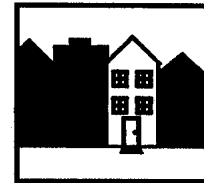




CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

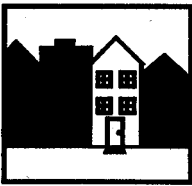
AGE	PHYSICAL	SOCIO-EMOTIONAL	COGNITIVE
0-3 MONTHS	<p>Born with birth reflexes—sucking, grasping</p> <p>Lifts head when held at shoulder</p> <p>Moves arms and legs actively</p> <p>Able to follow objects and to focus</p>	<p>Concerned with satisfaction of needs</p> <p>Smiles spontaneously and responsively</p> <p>Likes movement—being held and rocked</p> <p>Expresses discomfort by crying or tensing body</p>	<p>Makes sounds (coos)</p> <p>Smiles and expresses pleasure when sees faces</p> <p>Looks at patterns (e.g., faces, shapes)</p>
3-6 MONTHS	<p>Rolls over</p> <p>Holds head up when held in sitting position</p> <p>Lifts up knees—crawling motions</p> <p>Reaches for objects</p>	<p>Makes sounds to get attention</p> <p>Smiles responsively</p> <p>Laughs aloud</p> <p>Socializes with anyone but knows mother or father and other primary caregivers</p> <p>Smiles at reflection in mirror</p>	<p>Recognizes primary caregiver</p> <p>Uses both hands to grasp objects</p> <p>Likes to watch objects and people</p> <p>Recognizes bottle</p>
6-9 MONTHS	<p>Sits unaided—spends more time in upright position</p> <p>May be able to crawl</p> <p>May be able to climb stairs</p> <p>Develops eye-hand coordination</p>	<p>Prefers primary caregivers</p> <p>May cry when strangers approach</p> <p>Commonly exhibits anxiety when parent or caregiver leaves</p> <p>Pats own reflection in the mirror</p> <p>May push away things not wanted (e.g., bottle, toys)</p> <p>Begins to “play” with adults (e.g., peek-a-boo)</p>	<p>Babbles to himself or herself</p> <p>Puts everything in mouth</p> <p>Solves simple problems (e.g., will move obstacles aside to reach object)</p> <p>Transfers objects from hand to hand</p> <p>Responds to changes in environment and is able to repeat actions that cause change (e.g., sound of rattle)</p> <p>Drops objects repeatedly</p> <p>Fascinated with small objects</p> <p>Begins to respond to words</p>

NOTE: Children move through developmental stages at their own pace; within each age group, children acquire skills at different times. The ranges prescribed here are approximate rather than precise times when children acquire these skills.



CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT (continued)

AGE	PHYSICAL	SOCIO-EMOTIONAL	COGNITIVE
9-14 MONTHS	<p>Achieves mobility—strong urge to climb, crawl</p> <p>Stands and walks</p> <p>Learns to grasp with thumb and finger</p> <p>Feeds self</p>	<p>Extends attachment for primary caregivers to the world—in love with world and wants to explore everything</p> <p>Knows that objects exist even when they can't be seen (object permanence); thus knows that when parents or caregiver leave, they will return</p> <p>Typically friendly and affectionate with caregivers—less so with strangers</p> <p>Responds to his or her name</p>	<p>Demonstrates intentional behavior—initiates actions</p> <p>Eager for sensory experiences; explores everything, has to touch and mouth every object</p> <p>Curious about everything</p> <p>Realizes objects exist when out of sight and will look for them (object permanence)</p> <p>Stares for long periods to gain information</p> <p>Interested in and understands words</p> <p>Says words such as “mama” and “dada”</p> <p>Likes to look at books</p> <p>Combines gestures with words—waves hand and says “bye-bye”</p>
14-24 MONTHS	<p>Walks and runs</p> <p>Drinks from a cup alone</p> <p>Turns pages of books</p> <p>Scribbles spontaneously</p> <p>Walks backward</p> <p>Loves to practice new skill</p> <p>Likes gymnastics, climbing, going down slides</p> <p>Stacks two to three blocks</p> <p>Climbs into chairs</p>	<p>Tends to be opinionated—“no” stage—and/or very directive</p> <p>Aware of being an independent person; starts to assert independence</p> <p>Tests limits</p> <p>Develops concept of self, is fearful of injury (bandaid stage, “I wanna” stage, everything “mine,” stage)</p> <p>Tends to stay near mother or father and make regular overtures—seeks approval, asks for help</p> <p>Plays beside other children but has difficulty sharing</p>	<p>Can follow simple directions</p> <p>Uses language to serve immediate needs (“mine,” “cookie”) and names familiar objects</p> <p>Imitates words readily and understands a lot more than he or she can say</p> <p>Has improved memory</p> <p>Experiments to see what will happen and observes cause-and-effect relationships</p> <p>Learns to use new means to achieve end (i.e., can tilt objects to get them through bars in crib)</p> <p>Spends long periods of time exploring a single object</p> <p>Loves to play with objects</p> <p>Recognizes self in mirror</p> <p>Begins to be able to think about an action before doing it (e.g., reaching for a toy)</p>



CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT (continued)

AGE	PHYSICAL	SOCIO-EMOTIONAL	COGNITIVE
2-3 YEARS	<p>Has sufficient muscle control for toilet training</p> <p>Highly mobile—skills are refined</p> <p>Uses spoon to feed self</p> <p>Throws and kicks a ball</p> <p>Takes apart simple objects and puts them back together</p> <p>Has increased eye-hand coordination—can do simple puzzles, string beads, stack blocks</p> <p>Likes to help dress and undress self</p> <p>Washes and dries hands</p>	<p>Has strong urges and desires but is developing ability to exert self-control; wants to please parents but sometimes has difficulty not acting impulsively</p> <p>Displays affection—especially for caregiver</p> <p>Imitates own play activity and occupies self</p> <p>Able to hold a conversation</p> <p>Developing interest in peers but may still have difficulty sharing</p> <p>Displays sense of humor</p> <p>May exhibit fears of the dark, “scary” faces, masks, or witches</p>	<p>Has a beginning awareness of time</p> <p>Capable of thinking before acting</p> <p>Becoming very verbal</p> <p>Enjoys talking to self and others</p> <p>Loves to pretend and to imitate others</p> <p>Enjoys creative activities such as block play, art</p> <p>Thinks through and solves problems in head before acting (has moved beyond action-bound stage)</p> <p>Can make simple choices</p> <p>Begins to use language to express ideas and feelings</p>
3-4 YEARS	<p>Jumps in place</p> <p>Walks down stairs</p> <p>Balances on one foot</p> <p>Uses toilet consistently</p> <p>Begins to dress self</p> <p>Builds with blocks and construction toys</p> <p>Has developed fine muscle control</p> <p>Has boundless energy</p>	<p>Knows name, sex, age, and sees self as part of family unit</p> <p>Plays alongside other children and begins to interact with them; is learning to share</p> <p>Helps with small household tasks</p> <p>Likes to be “big” and to achieve new skills</p> <p>Shows affection for friends</p> <p>Can express anger verbally</p>	<p>Believes there is a purpose for everything and asks “why?”</p> <p>Uses symbolic play—has strong fantasy life, loves to imitate and role-play</p> <p>Understands some number concepts, comparisons, colors</p> <p>Shows logical thinking</p> <p>Interested in letters</p> <p>Able to scribble and draw recognizable objects and circles</p> <p>Speaks in longer sentences and uses language to describe events and explain behavior</p> <p>Asks lots of questions</p>



CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT (continued)

AGE	PHYSICAL	SOCIO-EMOTIONAL	COGNITIVE
4-6 YEARS	<p>Has improved coordination and is learning many new skills</p> <p>Has improved coordination in fingers—able to hold and use a pencil, cut with scissors, catch a ball, use a fork and spoon, brush his or her teeth</p> <p>Climbs, hops, skips, and likes to do stunts</p> <p>Able to ride a tricycle</p>	<p>Plays cooperatively with peers</p> <p>Can share and take turns</p> <p>Identifies with own gender and ethnic group</p> <p>Displays independence</p> <p>Protects self and stands up for rights</p> <p>Identifies with parents and likes to imitate them</p> <p>Often has “best friends”</p> <p>Likes to show off skills to adults</p> <p>Continually forms new images of self</p> <p>Enjoys being a leader</p>	<p>Shows increased attention span</p> <p>Expands dramatic play with attention to detail and reality</p> <p>Has increasingly more complex language skills</p> <p>Expresses ideas, asks questions, engages in discussions</p> <p>Speaks clearly</p> <p>Able to draw pictures that represent objects or things</p> <p>Likes to tell or act out stories</p>
6-12 YEARS	<p>Enjoys using new skills, both large and small muscle skills</p> <p>Likes to achieve in sports</p> <p>Energetic and tends to have large appetite</p> <p>Gaining in height and weight at a steady rate</p> <p>Has increased coordination and strength</p> <p>Developing body proportions similar to adult</p> <p>Practices self-care habits independently (e.g., brushing teeth, combing hair, dressing)</p>	<p>Developing a more defined personality</p> <p>Acts very independent and self-assured but at times can be childish and silly</p> <p>Enjoys working/playing with others and alone</p> <p>Defines self-image in part by success at school</p> <p>Has a strong group identity</p> <p>Plays almost exclusively with same sex</p> <p>Begins to experience conflicts between parents’ values and those of peers</p> <p>Has a strong sense of fairness and fair play</p> <p>Believes that rules are important and must be followed</p> <p>Likes affection from adults—especially true of girls</p> <p>Increasingly independent but still emotionally dependent on adults—wants them to be there to help</p> <p>Able to assume responsibility for self and may care for younger siblings</p>	<p>Enjoys projects that are task oriented (e.g., sewing, cooking, woodwork)</p> <p>Highly verbal—enjoys jokes and puns, uses language creatively</p> <p>Asks questions that are fact oriented—wants to know how, why, and when</p> <p>Likes to make up stories, plays, and puppet shows</p> <p>Understands cause-and-effect relationships</p> <p>Able to deal with abstract ideas</p> <p>Judges success on ability to learn to read, write, and do arithmetic</p> <p>Organizes collections and enjoys sorting objects by shape, size, color, etc.</p>

IN GUIDING CHILDREN

Do

- * Give choices
- * Communicate clearly
- * Arrange tempting interest centers
- * Facilitate children's play
- * Focus on guiding children toward self-control
- * Be a friend
- * Focus on interesting and fun learning activities
- * Set and maintain a few clear limits
- * Enjoy children
- * Establish a routine that balances active and quiet activities
- * Develop a genuine and special relationship with each child
- * Arrange your room to minimize traffic problems, wasted time and confusion
- * Keep a sense of humor
- * Encourage cooperation
- * Keep your voice well-modulated
- * Praise and correct children in private
- * Foresee and prevent problems from occurring
- * Choose the most strategic position for supervising
- * Help children find solutions to conflict situations
- * Facilitate reconciliation
- * Give children time to accept directions

Do Not

- * Focus on punishment
- * Nag children to be polite
- * Meet anger with anger
- * Focus on control
- * Interrupt children's play unnecessarily
- * Be a critic or judge
- * Be a didactic instructor
- * Threaten
- * Command
- * Preach
- * Lecture
- * Make children sit quietly and wait quietly for long periods
- * Ask a child why he/she behaved inappropriately (often they don't know why)
- * Foster competition
- * Use a loud voice
- * Ridicule or shame
- * Force children to apologize
- * Talk down to children
- * Demand instant obedience
- * Grab a child by the arm or shoulder

DISCIPLINE

Love is the basis of effective discipline. Within the framework of love and knowledge, these practical suggestions are worth remembering. A long-range purpose of discipline is to help the child develop inner controls which meet not only social demands but also his own needs and plans.

Suggestions to Help Avoid Behavior Problems

- * Be positive in your expectations and anticipate good behavior. Labels like bad boy, monster etc. are often the action the child will fulfill.
- * Good discipline is based on the establishment of a routine. The child needs to know what to expect.
- * The child has the right to dignity. Discipline should never be an outlet for the adult's anger. Express feelings about their behavior. Discuss misconduct in privacy.
- * Be consistent. He needs to know what consequences to expect when he disobeys. Be prepared to repeat over and over again. Small children cannot easily remember.
- * When first getting acquainted with a child, make rules simple and clear. Let him know what you expect and what the consequences will be if the rules are broken.
- * Avoid making threats. (If you do that one more time.... I'll smack you.) Children will begin testing you and the rules.
- * Disapprove of the act not the child and redirect his action to desired behavior.
- * If a child receives affection and praise when he is behaving well, he won't be as likely to misbehave just to receive attention.

Guidance Suggestions

- * Children have short attention spans. When they become bored, they often misbehave, so frequently change activities and environment.
- * Shaming only makes a child feel bad about himself. Instead repeat a fair warning.
- * Children come from many different home environments. Understand their individuality and try to openly discuss them with parents. You may often set good examples for parents dealing with their children.
- * Angry tempers can often be subdued by directing them to other activities.

DISCIPLINE IS NOT A FANCY WORD FOR PUNISHMENT

Physical punishment may stop a child from doing something, but the reason he doesn't do it is fear. Fear is not a good basis for learning self-control.

Hitting a child teaches him to hit others (pets, smaller children). It also causes anger because it's not acceptable to hit adults back.

CHRONIC PROBLEMS

1. Do not allow a chronic misbehavior problem to become a source of attention for the child, which will encourage him to continue unacceptable behavior.
2. Always verbally disapprove and tell the child why it is not acceptable.
3. Remove the child from the situation.
4. If consequences have been explained, take action. Be consistent.
5. Sometimes, the child is following an example from home or neighborhood. "At my house, I get to...."

BITING Children are often meeting oral needs and still cannot verbalize well. Remove the child when he bites and closely supervise.

SPITTING Remove child. "We don't spit in this house."

SWEARING Advise, "We don't say those words in this house."

TALKING BACK May feel anger, lack of respect or too many restrictions. Ask why they are saying it, ignore and explain, "We don't talk that way to others here."

DESTROYING What is the source of the anger? Can the object be fixed by the child? "How would you feel if your favorite toy was broken?"

FIGHTING The child is often looking for attention and it is helpful to give little jobs and more attention. Provide more physical activities, punching bags, etc.

TEMPER A child is learning to deal with emotions and frustrations. Try to ignore and hold him close to protect and calm him.

SCREAMING Sometimes a feeling of frustration or that no one is listening. Speak softly and calmly, allow loud voices outside only.

WHINING Has the child been babied too long or is he tired? Ignore or say, "I can't understand you when you whine."

LYING Is he constantly ridiculed or criticized? Is he fantasizing and story telling or knowingly lying? Does he know what the truth is? Is he always expected to have the right answers?

CREATIVE DISCIPLINE

The word "discipline" is often thought to mean punishment. When we look at the origin of the word, however, we discover that it comes from the Latin word meaning "to teach." The most complete meaning of discipline includes all the ways that adults teach and guide children. Children can be viewed as "disciples" or those who learn from a leader or disciplinarian. In order to understand behavior, we need to know how children become socialized, learn some effective discipline techniques, and consider how the age and personality of the child need to be taken into account.

THE SOCIALIZATION PROCESS

Infants come into the world unable to control much of their behavior and oblivious to the needs of others. It is the task of parents and teachers to shape the child's behavior so as to be consistent with the values, attitudes and morals of the society in which the child is raised.

During this process, parents must encourage children to adopt desirable behaviors that they do not spontaneously show (sharing, helping around the house) and discourage unacceptable behaviors that children naturally show (like hitting or yelling.) Furthermore, this must be done in such a way that the child internalizes these social rules in order to act from personal belief rather than through fear of punishment or hope of reward. The goal of discipline is to help the child develop self-control. Effective disciplinarians gradually work themselves out of a job as their disciples become more and more able to control their impulses and direct their actions.

ENCOURAGE POSITIVE BEHAVIOR

1. **Set expectations for appropriate behavior in new situations before the child gets into the situation.** Too often we wait to teach appropriate behavior until the child has misbehaved. Children are more likely to behave appropriately if we teach what is expected of them before they encounter a new situation for the first time.
2. **Arrange the situation so the child can easily succeed.** Low shelves and hooks will make it easier for children to put away toys and hang up their clothes. Assigning tasks that are manageable for young children will also make it easier for children to succeed. Finally, be aware of the child's limitations. Avoid or carefully plan for situations that are likely to lead to misbehavior.
3. **Notice and point out the child's positive qualities and behaviors.** Telling children you are proud when they succeed at difficult tasks or telling them when they share that they are the kind of person that helps others will make them realize these are important traits and will make them feel good about having these traits. This is especially important during the school years when children begin to act according to their perceptions of their abilities.

DISCOURAGING UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR

1. **Identify the reasons for the misbehavior.** Children misbehave for many reasons. Sometimes it is their way of reacting to stress such as the birth of a sibling or beginning school. They might misbehave because they do not know what is expected of them. Understanding why a child misbehaves will help adults select the most appropriate way to deal with the behavior.
2. **Change the situation to avoid confusion.** Many times children need to be guided into appropriate behavior by avoiding confrontation and encouraging autonomy.
 - a. **Turn confrontation into a game or into choices.** Rather than turning confrontation into a power struggle in which no one wins, adults can make light of a situation or can respect the child's bid for autonomy by searching for acceptable ways to allow the child more control over his or her life. For example, setting a time in the morning by using a timer with a bell can challenge a pre-schooler to "beat the clock" and may avoid a power struggle over getting dressed. Letting a child choose the vegetable for dinner may reduce arguments at dinner.
 - b. **Redirect unacceptable behavior to appropriate activities.** Many times a child's behavior is not necessarily wrong. It is just that it is occurring in the wrong place or with the wrong materials. Giving a two year old a pounding toy will usually prevent pounding on the furniture. Allowing active, outdoor play will reduce running and yelling in the house.
3. **Teach the child.**
 - a. **Set clear limits and rules.** The first step in the socialization process is for the child to learn which behaviors are acceptable and which are not. It is therefore important for adults to set clear and reasonable limits on children's behavior and to be consistent in enforcing them.
 - b. **Give reasons for rules.** In order for children to learn the rules and values of society, it is necessary for adults to explain why it is important to act in a certain way. Giving reasons will help internalize these rules and to regulate their own behavior. Focusing on how the child's actions affect others is especially important during the pre-school and school age years in order to help the children become sensitive to the rights and needs of others.

- c. Teach children acceptable behavior. Children must not only know the rules and want to abide by them, they must also know how to act appropriately. Too often we tell children what not to do but fail to tell them what they should do. Saying, "don't leave your toys there," teaches the child nothing about where the toys should be left. A more effective statement would be "toys don't belong on the floor because people can trip over them and get hurt. Let's put them on the shelf."
- d. Let children experience the consequences of their behavior. When children misbehave, experiencing the consequence of their action can help them learn why it is important to behave appropriately. Many actions have natural consequences that the child can experience. For example, a child who refuses to eat supper will soon become hungry. When natural consequences are too dangerous or not available, adult should attempt to find logical consequences that are related to the misbehavior. For example, toys left on the floor can be put away for the rest of the day with the promise that the child can have them back with another chance to take proper care of them tomorrow.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING DISCIPLINE TECHNIQUES

There is no one single discipline technique that is best for all situations and all children. The challenge of being a disciplinarian is to be aware of the many tools that are available, and choosing those that are most suitable for the particular situation and the particular child.

Each child is unique. Children have different personalities. Some are very active while others are quiet. Some eagerly greet new people while others are shy. Some give up easily while others keep on trying. Because of these characteristics, children react differently to discipline. To discipline effectively, adult must choose those techniques that work best with that particular child.

Children change with age. Conflicts between parents and children sometimes arise because adult expect too much from their child at a particular age. In addition, some techniques work better at some ages than others. When disciplining a child, ask yourself whether your expectations are reasonable and your own discipline techniques are appropriate for that age.

CONCLUSION

At every stage in development, parents teach children the values and rules of society to help them learn how to act according to these values and rules. Through internalizing this knowledge, children are able to become independent and responsible given the situation and the age and personality of the child requires knowledge, flexibility, patience and love.

HOW TO PICK A BUSINESS LIABILITY INSURANCE POLICY

May 2005

Not all family child care business liability insurance policies are the same. To evaluate your choices among policies, here is a checklist to use:

- General liability coverage for accidents and lawsuits against your business: Your policy will have limits on occurrence coverage (the amount the policy will pay per accident) and aggregate coverage (the amount the policy will pay over the life of the policy--usually one year). Ideally, you want the policy limits to be at least \$1 million occurrence and \$2 million aggregate.
- Professional liability coverage to protect yourself in case you failed to adequately supervise the children in your care
- Legal defense in which the limits of this coverage are in excess of the general liability limits: In other words, you don't want legal fees to reduce your policy limits.
- Sexual abuse coverage with separate liability limits that cover you, your family, and your employees.
- Medical ("no fault") coverage to cover expenses when children are injured: You don't want your parents to have to look for coverage from their insurance first.
- Coverage for accidents when you are away from your home with the children
- Renters want the ability to list their landlord as an "additional insured."
- The policy should be an "occurrence form," not a "claims made," policy. An occurrence form covers you as long as the injury occurred while you were insured, even if you are sued many years later. A claims made policy only covers you if you are sued when you are insured.
- The policy should cover you for all the hours that children are present in your home (including evenings and weekends).
- The policy should cover food illnesses and dispensing of medicines.
- The company should have at least an "A" rating from the Best Company.

You may not be able to get a policy that has all the features identified in this checklist. Try to choose a policy that offers the most coverage. Purchase as much insurance as you can afford. The cost of business liability insurance is 100% deductible.

Business Property Insurance Policy

- This policy covers the cost to replace all property used in your business (equipment, furniture, appliances, toys, etc.)
- Coverage for business loss of income if your business is shut down because of a fire, bursting pipes, etc.

Car Insurance Policy

- If your car is used in your business, this policy covers you for injuries and damages suffered in a car accident while using your car for business purposes.

Workers' Compensation Insurance Policy

- If you have employees this policy covers them for injuries suffered while working for you.

You may not be able to get a policy that has all the features identified in this checklist. Try to choose a policy that offers the most coverage. Purchase as much insurance as you can afford. The cost of business liability insurance is 100% deductible.

QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT BUSINESS LIABILITY INSURANCE

1. Will the liability insurance cover injuries that occur away from provider's property (field trips, bus stops, parks, etc.)?
2. Are food illnesses and dispensing of medicine covered?
3. If a lawsuit occurs, will insurance provide immediate money for legal defense?
4. Are allegations of corporal punishment covered?
5. Are the actions of helpers and volunteers covered?
6. If a provider's pet causes injury, will insurance cover the medical costs?
7. Who pays the first dollar (emergency room, clinic visit) for "slip and fall" injuries to the children?
8. Can I get sexual/physical abuse coverage? What are the limits available?
9. Is all of my property used in my business covered under my homeowners insurance or do I need a rider for my business liability insurance?
10. Is my business income protected if something happens to my home and I have to close my business for a period of time due to flood, fire, storm damage, etc.?

The amount of coverage your business liability provides is important. A provider should get as much as she can afford. Generally, a million-dollar policy is recommended.

FAMILY DAY CARE INSURANCE

The NAFDC (National Association of Family Day Care) Insurance Committee has thus far recognized * the following insurance companies for accident-medical and liability coverage. Each company has submitted answers to the NAFDC check list of available coverage, to assist providers who are seeking insurance.

**Recognition by the NAFDC Insurance Committee does NOT imply endorsement. A continuous update of coverage is expected, and addition of more companies.*

Adults & Children's Alliance
800/433-8108
www.acainc.org

Markel Insurance Company
888/845-8288
www.neisinc.com

American Federation of Daycare Services, Inc.
888/515-8537
www.afds.com

Thomco
800/476-4940
www.afds.com

You may contact the following independent agent for more information about Child Care Insurance.

Michael G. O'Brien
419 South 10th Street
Quincy, IL 62301
217/224-7474

Winters Insurance Group
201 South 5th Street
Quincy, IL 62301
217/223-4080

Freiburg Insurance
1409 Broadway
Quincy, IL 62301
217/224-7775

Gem City Insurance Agency
535 Maine
Quincy, IL 32301
217/214-0534

**For information about all types of
Insurance and insurance companies:**

Illinois Department of Insurance
320 W. Washington
Springfield, IL 62767
217/782/4515

THE IMPORTANCE OF RECORD KEEPING

Family child care providers are self-employed taxpayers who run a business out of their home.

The reasons for keeping complete and accurate records are:

- To obey the law by filing your business tax forms each year
- To be able to support your tax claims for business expenses
- To reduce your taxes and increase your profit
- To make it easier for you to understand your business and reach your financial goals

The rules of good record keeping

1. Track income from each family, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, and the IDHS Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP).
2. Save the receipts for all business purchases and home purchases (purchases, such as a refrigerator, may be partially deductible)
3. Mark what each item is on the receipt.
4. Organize receipts by category, not month.
5. Keep track of how much time each week you use your home for your business.
6. Take attendance each day.
7. Conduct a regular review (at least monthly) of your records.
8. After filing your tax return, keep your records in a safe place for 7 years.

Employer ID # (EIN)

Call the IRS at 800-829-4933 or visit www.irs.gov to request this id for business purposes (it replaces your social security number on tax forms, etc.)

Family Child Care tax expert

If hiring a tax consultant, make sure that they are well versed in the laws impacting Family Child Care homes. Visit <http://www.tomcopelandblog.com/> for more information.

TEN RECORD KEEPING AND TAX TIPS FOR THE NEW PROVIDER

By Tom Copeland, J.D.

1. **Receipts:** Business expenses can only be claimed if you have a receipt. Your goal should be to have receipts for every penny of your expenses. Because most of the cost to clean, maintain and repair your house can be partially deducted as a business expense (light bulbs, toilet paper, garbage bags, snow shovel, tools, etc.), you should remember to collect receipts whenever you go to the drugstore, hardware store, etc. Record on your calendar when you go on field trips or travel because of business. A canceled check may not be as acceptable to the IRS as a store receipt.

2. **When Can Expenses be Deducted?** You must report all income from caring for children even if you do not meet or have not completed local regulation requirements. You should begin deducting business expenses as soon as you begin caring for your first child, even if you do not meet local regulations. The only expenses you cannot deduct if you do meet local regulations are expenses connected with your house (utilities, insurance, taxes, interest and depreciation).

3. **Food Expenses:** Because food costs will probably be your single biggest expense, you should begin keeping careful records, including: store receipts, canceled checks, menus, and attendance records. Use your menus to calculate how much it costs to serve this food. If you cannot collect all your food receipts, do a careful accounting of at least several months of the year.

4. **Monthly Review:** Do not wait until the end of the year to collect your receipts and other records. Conduct a monthly review to make sure you have everything in order. Keep your records in one place. Make sure receipts are labeled and can be read. If you forget to get a receipt or if you could not get one (parking meter, garage sale, etc.), make one of your own to remind you of the expense.

5. **Estimated Tax:** You may have to pay some federal income tax before the end of the year. To find out if you must pay estimated tax, estimate your income and expenses through the end of the year. If you will owe \$1,000.00 or more in taxes, you will have to pay in quarterly installments due April 15, June 15, September 15, and January 15. There are a number of exceptions to this rule. See IRS Publication 505. Tax Withholding and Estimated Tax.

6. **Employees:** If you hire someone as a substitute or helper in your business, you should treat this person as an employee, which means you must withhold social security and income taxes for the employee and pay employers' social security taxes throughout the year. Many providers treat helpers as independent contractors (self-employed workers) and do not withhold taxes, but this practice is not advisable. Check with a tax professional to make sure you are filing the proper tax forms through the year.

7. Household Inventory: Your house and the items in your house that are used at all in your business are being worn out at a faster rate than if you were not doing family child care. As a result, you can deduct or depreciate a portion of the cost of these items as a business expense. Conduct a thorough room-by-room inventory and list every item (furniture, appliances, kitchenware, etc.). Consult the Family Child Care Tax Workbook (Tom Copeland) to determine how much expense can be claimed on your tax return.

8. Year End Expenses: Be aware that if you purchase 40% or more of capital expenses (items lasting longer than one year) during the last three months of the year, you may not get all the deductions for all of your capital expenses for that year. To avoid this ("mid-quarter convention" rule, plan your purchases before October or after December. If you begin your business during the last quarter of the year, this rule will apply to you. See the Family Child Care Tax Workbook for more details.

9. House Improvements: You should begin depreciating a portion of your house as a business expense. The amount of the house expense you can depreciate is the purchase price of your home (minus the value of the land) plus all major house improvements made before you went into business. Go back and record all your major house improvements (new roof, furnace, remodeling, etc.) Save receipts. Get replacement receipts from contractors, if necessary. As a last resort, photograph the improvements and write down your best recollection of the cost and date it was done. Keep records of any house improvements you make after you start your business. Having records of house improvements will help reduce your taxes.

10. Time/Space Percentage: This number will probably have the greatest impact on your tax return. The Time-Space Percent is a formula used to calculate how much of your business and personal expenses (furniture, utilities, supplies, etc.) may be deducted as a business expense.

Tom Copeland writes Family Child Care Tax Workbooks; for a free copy of the catalog call toll-free 1-800-423-8309.



SOME ALLOWABLE TAX DEDUCTIONS FOR CHILD CARE HOME PROVIDERS

Many items that are usual and necessary for the conducting of a child care home business may be deductible on your income tax return. Adequate documentation is necessary as it might be necessary to explain how your figures are obtained.

It is recommended that you consult with an accountant or other tax professional. You may get information and forms at your local library or by calling the IRS toll free at 1-800-424-1040.

You may want to investigate tax deductions for the following items:

Accounting fee	Advertising
Auto expenses	Bookkeeping
Books	Depreciation
Brochure printing	Children's dishes and utensils
Professional dues	Educational expenses of the job
Equipment	Entertainment and gifts for the child care
Excursions	First Aid supplies
Food (which has not been reimbursed)	Interest on business loans
Linens, towels for children	Local transportation
Mailing costs	Office equipment
Personal Retirement Plan	Printing
Rent	Paper products
Professional assistance	Rent
Repairs	Safety barriers
Salaries of assistants	Smoke Detectors
Fire Extinguisher	Stationery
Subscriptions to professional magazines	Tax Preparation and advice
Telephone cost	Toys and games for children
Travel to conferences	Utilities

CHILD CARE
FREQUENTLY MISSED DEDUCTIONS

- Mileage -** bank deposits
post office
grocery shopping
field trips
school drop-offs
- Bank Charges -** service fees
check charges
stop payment order
bad check charge
- Rentals -** videos
VCR rental
carpet cleaner
- Postage -** birthday/holiday cards
payment on utility bills
- Field Trips -** admission fees to museum or zoo
county fair rides or admission fees
- Gifts -** birthday/holiday cards/valentines for children
gifts up to a limit of \$25 per child or parent per year
- Office Expense -** calculator
tapes/ribbons for calculator or computer
ledgers
calendars for child care records
- Cleaning -** carpet/furniture cleaning
Laundromat/dry cleaners for bedspreads/furniture covers

CHILD CARE IS A BUSINESS!!

Congratulations on being a child care provider! You have undertaken a monumental **JOB** of providing quality care for children of all ages. You are to be commended for your resourcefulness, vitality, excellent health, compassion, ingenuity, wisdom, and unlimited patience!

Now that we are past the compliment stage, did you notice the word "**JOB?**" Your **JOB** is officially recognized as a **BUSINESS!** Consequently, are you acting as a **BUSINESS?** Rate yourself on the following **BUSINESS** questions:

1. Do you have business cards? (The cost is deductible!)
2. Do you advertise your services? (Costs are deductible!)
3. Do you attend workshops, classes, or conferences or child care events? (Costs and mileage are deductible!)
4. Do you save your utility bills, water softener bills, property tax bills, telephone, and cable bills? (You are entitled to an office-in-home deduction!)
5. Do you join professional child care groups and organizations? (Dues and fees are deductible also!)
6. Do you take children to the zoo, library story hour, movies, museums, and fairs? (Costs you pay for admission are deductible!)
7. Do you buy cards and holiday gifts/treats for the children and/or their parents? (You have yet another deduction!)
8. Do you use postage stamps for cards, letters, and bills? (Buy a roll of stamps for child care use, and get a deduction!)
9. Do you use local newspaper for teaching arts and crafts, reading skills, cutting and coloring skills, or as a drop cloth under a high chair? (Yes, this can be deductible also!)
10. Do you participate in the food reimbursement program? (This program **PAYS YOU** for feeding your children! If not, why not???)
11. Do you ever use a professional cleaner or rented cleaning equipment when children continually throw up on you sofa and carpets? (Yes, you have another deduction!)

Save checks! Save receipts! Act as a BUSINESS!

Diane Ryon is a Tax Consultant, from Bloomington, IL, specializing in child care home taxes.

CHILD CARE FOOD PROGRAM FOR CHILD CARE HOMES

The Child Care Food Program, an extension of the school lunch act, is designed to improve the nutrition and eating habits of young children. It is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and administered through the Illinois State Board of Education. http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/pdf/daycarehome_fact_sheet.pdf

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Any licensed child care home can participate by serving meals that meet USDA requirements.

WHAT IS REQUIRED?

The child care home provider must record daily menus served to the child care children that participate in these meals. At the end of the month, the provider returns the menus and meal count forms to the sponsoring agency. Also the sponsoring agency must make three annual visits to the provider's home. All necessary forms are provided by the sponsoring agency.

REIMBURSEMENT RATES

The purpose of the Child Care Food Program is to provide nutritious well-balanced meals and snacks to children in your care. The money you receive is considered a partial reimbursement for your child care food costs - it is not intended to cover your total bill. The children enrolled in your program may receive either Tier I or Tier II reimbursement rates. Several factors are taken into consideration to determine your reimbursement. Consult with a Food Program Representative for your program's eligibility rates.

Your reimbursement includes 2 main meals and 1 snack per child per day OR 1 main meal and 2 snacks per child per day. Remember! You may claim your own child for a meal or snack *only* if a child enrolled in your care child is present and claimed for that meal *and* if your family income meets federal guidelines. Children over the age of twelve are not eligible unless the child is handicapped and enrolled in a state certified program

FOOD PROGRAMS

Association for Child Development:

All Counties

www.acdkids.org

800-284-5273

708-236-0863

Better Child Care:

All Counties

800-659-0898

217-245-0949

Day Care Resources:

All Counties

www.daycareresources.org

800-238-0555

309-263-0701

United 4 Children:

Calhoun, Greene, Pike & Jersey

618-345-6213

800-467-2322

PROVIDING CARE FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provides child care professionals with an exciting opportunity to serve children with special needs or disabilities. The ADA is a federal law, enacted in 1990, that guarantees that children with disabilities can not be excluded from child care programs simply because of a disability.

Opportunity

When children can learn and play together, everyone benefits. A child care program that includes both children with and without disabilities reflects the larger community in which they live. Inclusion helps children to learn acceptance, improve socialization, and understand individual differences. Other benefits for child care providers include access to a helpful network of professionals, increased child development knowledge, and potential tax credits or deductions.

Basic Requirements of the ADA

Most child care providers probably already meet requirements of the ADA just by considering each child as an individual. Providers usually talk with parents about any unique needs their child has. Continuing this practice is the first step toward compliance with the ADA.

ADA Basic Requirements

- Child care homes and centers must make reasonable modifications to their policies and practices to integrate children with disabilities into their program unless doing so would constitute a fundamental alteration of the program. Reasonable modifications means changes that can be carried out without much difficulty or expense.
- Programs must provide appropriate auxiliary aids and services needed for effective communication with children with disabilities, when doing so would not constitute an undue burden. Auxiliary aids and services include a range of devices or services that help people communicate. Undue burden means changes that would result in significant difficulty or expense to the provider.
- Providers cannot exclude children with disabilities from their programs unless their presence would pose a direct threat to the health or safety of others or require a fundamental alteration of the program. Direct threat means the child's condition poses a significant threat to the health or safety of other children or staff.

SOME COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

(Adapted from U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Right Division and Child Care Law Center)

Q: Does the ADA apply to child care homes and centers?

A: Yes, Privately and publicly run child care homes and centers must comply with title III of the ADA.

Q: How do I decide whether a child with a disability belongs in my program?

A: Child care providers cannot just assume that a child's disabilities are too severe for the child care program. The program must make an individualized assessment about whether it can meet the particular needs of the child without fundamentally altering its program. Providers should talk to parents or guardians and other professionals who work with the child. Child care centers are not required to accept children who would pose a direct threat or whose presence or necessary care would fundamentally alter the nature of the child care program.

Q: Are there situations in which care can be refused?

A: These situations will be very limited. They include situations in which a child poses a direct threat or where the accommodations needed would not be reasonable for the program to provide.

Q: What do I do when another parent makes inquiries about a child with disabilities?

A: Information about a child's disability is confidential and should not be shared with others unless you have the consent from the parents of the child with the disability.

Q: Can I charge more for a child with special needs because they require more individualized attention?

A: When an accommodation is above and beyond a reasonable accommodation, an additional fee may be imposed but a legal consultation should be made with someone knowledgeable with the ADA laws. Programs may not charge the parents of children with disabilities more for providing reasonable accommodations.

Q: How can I care for children with disabilities if I am not trained? If I work on my own?

A: Many of the accommodations children need are not complicated and can be easily learned. Training may be available from the parent, early intervention specialists, health professionals and the child care nurse consultant at West Central Child Care Connection.

Q: May I automatically decline to serve a child with disabilities and simply refer them on to another provider who I think is better able to serve them?

A: No. A parent may prefer your care and if it is possible for you to make the reasonable accommodations necessary to serve that child he or she may not be turned away.

Q: If a parent of a child with a disability has conflicts with the provider or the parent fails to comply with rules applied to all families, may the family be terminated from the program?

A: Yes, if it can be documented that the reasons for termination have to do with failure to comply with rules or standards that are: uniformly applied to all families, not relevant to any potential required accommodations, and are not used as pretexts for discrimination.

For more information on ADA contact the child care nurse consultant for West Central Child Care Connection at 217-224-6399 or 1-800-782-7318.

ADA Resources:

U.S. Department of Justice

1-800-514-0301

www.ada.gov

Child Care Law Center

1-415-495-5498

www.childcarelaw.org

The ARC of the United States

1-301-565-3842

www.thearc.org

Illinois ADA Project

www.ada-il.org



In order to begin the licensing process, you will need to contact The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and request a licensing packet.

If you live in this county

Call this number

Adams and Hancock

(217) 221-2525

Brown, Cass, Schuyler

(217) 479-4800

Calhoun, Greene, Jersey, Pike

(217) 479-4800