



101⁺
ways to
Care
for **Kids**

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Child Care Basics

You have decided to become a child care provider. Taking care of children is an important and challenging job. You have the opportunity to teach children and to provide a secure, safe, and healthy place for them to be when their parents are at work. Your work days will be busy and rewarding. This booklet contains some basic information to assist you with your important job.

The new Department of Public Welfare (DPW) regulations require that every six months all child care providers complete and give parents a copy of a Child Service Report that describes their child's growth and development. Parents must sign a copy of the form that will be kept by the provider to show they have read it. One copy goes to the parent and the signed copy stays in the child's file at child care. The Child Service Report forms can be found on the DPW Web site at www.dpw.state.pa.us.

Things Every Child Care Provider Should Do

Anyone who cares for other people's children should:

- Have a place that is bright, clean, and safe.
- Supervise the children at all times.
- Encourage parents to visit any time.
- Have toys and playthings that are safe and right for the children's ages.
- Plan both active and quiet play times for the children.
- Have a daily schedule posted for parents to see.
- Schedule both indoor and outdoor activities.
- Wash your hands and the child's hands before and after preparing food and eating meals and snacks.
- Wash your hands and the child's hands after diapering and using the toilet.
- Have updated emergency contact information for each family.
- Post emergency numbers by the telephone.
- Have quiet areas for naps and rest times.
- Provide nutritious snacks and meals.
- Have required health assessments and immunization records for each child.
- Have a first aid kit and fire extinguisher.
- Have a working smoke detector on each level where children are cared for.
- Make sure all medicines, cleaning supplies, and other toxic materials are stored in original or labeled containers and stored in a locked area.
- Keep any guns or weapons in a locked cabinet with ammunition stored in a separate locked cabinet.
- Notify parents if you have any guns or weapons in your home.
- Be willing to obtain training on child development and other children's issues.
- Greet parents and talk with them about their child every day. Good communication will give you information you need to provide better care for the child.



State Regulations & Offices

The Department of Public Welfare Office of Child Development regulates child care in Pennsylvania. The regulations provide minimum standards for the operation of child care homes, group homes, and centers in the state to protect the health, safety, and rights of children and to reduce risks to children in child care facilities. Any



one caring for more than three children, unrelated to the caregiver, is required to be registered with the state. Child care for more than six, but less than thirteen children, is considered a group home and must be certified by the state. It is important for you to be aware of the state regulations and to keep updated about any changes in the regulations. Contact your regional office for information about regulations and becoming a registered child care provider.

State regulations can be found on the PA Department of Public Welfare Web site at www.dpw.state.pa.us. Go under **Provider Information**, then under the **Early Learning** section click on **Provider Requirements**. The regulations for all types of child care, including family child care homes, are listed there.

Child Care Information Services

Child Care Information Services (CCIS) can provide you with lists of registered providers, information about subsidized child care, and other child care information. A list of county CCIS offices can be found at www.dpw.state.pa.us.

Office of Child Development & Early Learning (OCDEL) Regional Certification Offices in Pennsylvania

Western Region

701 State Office Building
300 Liberty Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15222
Phone: 412-565-5183
Toll Free: 800-222-2149

Northeast Region

Scranton State Office Building
100 Lackawanna Avenue
Scranton, PA 18503
Phone: 570-963-4371
Toll Free: 800-222-2108

Central Region

DGS Annex,
Hillcrest #53
P.O. Box 2675
Harrisburg, PA 17105
Phone: 717-772-7078
Toll Free: 800-222-2117

Southeast Region

502 State Office Building
1400 Spring Garden Street
Philadelphia, PA 19130
Phone: 215-560-2541
Toll Free: 800-346-2929

Training Opportunities

Every registered child care provider in Pennsylvania is required to take a minimum of six hours of training each year. Training is also referred to as professional development. Once you begin caring for children you are a child care professional. Many often think of themselves as a babysitter, but you are providing much more for the children you care for. You are really a child care provider. As a teacher of young children, you will benefit by learning as much as you can about child development and other children's issues. Good child care providers consider themselves life-long learners. There's always a lot to learn about children!

Penn State Better Kid Care Program

We are here to help you! The Better Kid Care Program at Penn State has developed a variety of training options and other educational materials. Information about these can be found on the Better Kid Care Web site at www.betterkidcare.psu.edu or by calling 800-452-9108.

Penn State County Cooperative Extension Offices

You can also contact your Penn State Cooperative Extension county office for information about training the cooperative extension educators offer and other resources that may be available for you locally. Phone numbers for the Penn State Cooperative Extension offices can be found on the Better Kid Care Web site at www.betterkidcare.psu.edu.

ECELS –Healthy Children PA

ECELS –Healthy Children PA, sponsored by the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, has a Web site at www.ecels-healthychildcarepa.org. They provide information on health and safety issues, training modules for child care providers to borrow, updated immunization requirements, a newsletter, and much more.



Pennsylvania Regional Keys

The six Pennsylvania Regional Key offices provide a training calendar and other support services for child care professionals. The professional development calendar can be found at www.pakeys.org/profdev/calendar.

Northwest Regional Key

3823 West 12th Street
Erie, PA 16505
(814) 836-5898
(800) 860-2281
Fax: (814) 836-9615
www.nwregionalkey.org

South Central Regional Key

13 West Market Street
York, PA 17401
(717) 854-3539
(800) 864-4925
Fax: (717) 843-4158
www.ChildCareConsultants.org

Northeast Regional Key

1520 Hanover Avenue
Allentown, PA 18109
(610) 437-6000
(800) 528-7222
Fax: (610) 432-5700
www.cscinc.org

Southwest Regional Key

305 Wood Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15222
(412) 255-1175
(877) 349-4850
Fax: (412) 255-1178
www.ywcapgh.org

Central Regional Key

2138 Lincoln Street
Williamsport, PA 17701
(570) 601-9736
(800) 346-3020
Fax: (570) 323-7510
www.pakeys.org

Southeast Regional Key

1500 South Columbus Boulevard
Second Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19147
(215) 271-1267
(877) 660-2273
Fax: (215) 271-1607
www.seregionalkey.org



Some Basic Information

You may decide the ages of the children you wish to provide care for. Some caregivers prefer working with infants and others want to work with toddlers or preschoolers. You decide, then put that in your advertising. Some child care providers like to keep a balance of different ages in their child care.

Remember, it is illegal to not take a child because of their race, religion, if they have a disability, or if they are receiving state subsidy monies.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality means not discussing information about or talking about a child or a child's family with other parents or anyone else. Pennsylvania state child care regulations require child care providers to maintain confidentiality in regards to the children in their care. Confidentiality is a legal issue and can protect you legally.

An example is if one child hurts another child. Simply fill out an accident report to give to the parent of the injured child, but do not include names. Assure the parent you are doing all you can to teach the child correct behaviors and your primary goal is to keep all children safe. Even if the children tell who did it, you may not talk about that child with the other child's parent.

Mandated Reporter

Anyone working with children in any way in Pennsylvania is considered a mandated reporter. This means if there is any reason you believe a child in your care has been abused in any way, you are required to report the suspected abuse. Types of abuse are physical, sexual, emotional, neglect, and imminent risk, which is the failure to act to prevent the abuse of a child.

To report suspected abuse call **Childline at 1-800-932-0313.**

Business Basics

Here are some things to check on in your area:

- If you rent your home or apartment, check with your landlord to get written permission for running a child care home.
- Check about zoning regulations in your area at your county planning office, township office, or municipal office. You may need a permit to operate a business in your area.

If you receive money for providing child care, you are running a business. Parents have chosen you to provide the quality care that is important to them and to their child. You are being paid for providing a very valuable service. The value of your profession is extremely important to the children, their parents, and to society. Remind yourself often that your job is important.

Small Business Development Centers

Every business, including your small child care business, must follow specific state tax, health, and safety regulations. To help small businesses determine which regulations they must follow, the Bureau of Small Business Development was established. There are eighteen Small Business Development Centers in Pennsylvania. For the center in your region go to their Web site at www.pasbdc.org.



Advertising for Family Child Care

A common question from family child care providers is, "How do I get more children?" One answer is to advertise. The sample ad below might appear in the classified section of your local newspaper. Look at it closely. Does it answer questions that parents might have?

- Where is the home located?
- What activities are planned?
- Are meals provided?
- What are the rates?
- What are the hours?
- What age child does the provider care for?
- Are references available?

WORK WANTED

- Child care in my home
- Experienced caregiver
- Ages 12 months and up
- References available
- Avon School Area
- Planned activities
- M–F 6:30 AM – 5:30 PM
- Phone 111-CARE

Child Care Food Program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture funds the Child Care Food Program. Qualified family child care programs and child care centers can receive reimbursement for part of their food costs. A specific amount is given per child for each meal. For more information, call **1-800-331-0129**.

Insurance Concerns

Whether you have one child or three children in your care, you need to protect yourself with insurance. Insurance is needed because no matter how carefully you watch the children, they can get hurt. Even when you take all steps to keep children safe, parents can and do sue.

If you are caring for children in your own home, check your homeowner's policy.

Most homeowner's policies do not cover having a child care business in your home. It is important to check on that and make sure you obtain the correct insurance coverage. Pennsylvania Home-based Child Care Providers Association members qualify for group rates for the type of insurance that will cover your needs as a family home-based child care provider. For information about the association and qualifying for insurance, call **800-294-3324**.

There are several types of insurance available to child care providers. Liability insurance is the most important.

Liability insurance protects you if something happens to a child in your care. Most general liability insurance policies cover four basic types of costs:

1. personal injury
2. damage to others' property
3. medical care when an accident occurs
4. legal costs to defend you if you are sued

If you use your vehicle to take children anywhere, make sure you have the right kind of auto insurance. Also, you might have problems if you charge for transporting children.

Check on disability insurance for yourself in case you become sick or injured and cannot work. This will protect your income. If you have someone working for you, by law you are required to have worker's compensation insurance.

Safety Issues

Here are some steps you can take to reduce the chance of injuries:

- Imagine any possible accident and prevent it.
- Childproof every room where you care for children.
- Take an infant/toddler CPR course and a first aid course.
- Learn to keep an eye on all children, even when you are with one child.
- Keep all sidewalks, stairs, and walkways free from clutter.
- Have safety gates on stairways.
- Avoid fire hazards.
- Place a smoke detector on each level of your home and change batteries twice each year.
- Keep all cleaning materials, medicines, and other poisonous materials in their original or in labeled containers and store in locked cabinets.
- If you own guns or any kind of weapon, keep them in a locked cabinet separate from ammunition. Store ammunition in another locked area.
- If you take children places in your vehicle, make sure they are securely fastened in a safety-approved car seat.



Accidents

If an accident occurs, keep a record of what happened. Fill out an Accident Report Form, keep one copy for your files, and give one to the parent. Make several copies of the form to have handy when you need them.

ACCIDENT REPORT FORM

Child's name: _____

What happened? _____

Date: _____

Time: _____

How was the parent notified? _____

Date: _____

Time: _____

What kind of care was provided? _____

Results of care: _____

Did you call the doctor? _____

Date: _____

Time: _____

Name of doctor: _____

What happened? _____

Signature of child care provider: _____

Date: _____

Budgeting

Good business plans include a budget. You want to have an idea of how much money will be coming in and how much you have to spend to run your business. It is best to look at a budget for a year at a time.

How Do I Plan a Budget?

There are two main categories in a budget: Income and Expenses.

Income is money you will be paid for caring for children.

Expenses include food, toys, art materials, and other supplies for the children; household items such as paper towels, tissues, soap, and cleaning supplies; advertising, office equipment, photocopying, envelopes, paper, postage, and repairs (table, chairs, or toys) for the program. Part of your household utilities, including fuel to heat your home, electricity, water, telephone, sewage, and garbage pick-up, may be counted as business expenses.

Record Keeping

It is important to keep a record of all your income and expenses. You can buy a book or simply keep your records in a notebook. It is important to record all income on one page and all expenses on another page.

Use a folder or large envelope to keep all labeled receipts for items purchased for your child care business.

When you operate a small business you are legally required to pay taxes. You must file both state and federal forms. Check to see if you are also required to file forms for local taxes. Federal and state forms may be obtained at your local library, post office, or on the Internet. For federal forms go to www.irs.gov.

Red Leaf Press at www.redleafpress.org has resources to purchase to assist you with your taxes.

Disclaimer: Where trade names appear, no discrimination is intended, and no endorsement by Penn State Cooperative Extension is implied.

For tax purposes, your business expenses become deductions. The costs of running your business – your expenses – are subtracted from your income before the tax is computed.

You will want to take every deduction to which you are legally entitled. Deductions reduce the amount of income that is taxed. If you keep accurate monthly records you will have done most of the work required to fill out your income tax forms. This will make it easier for you or for the person who does your taxes.



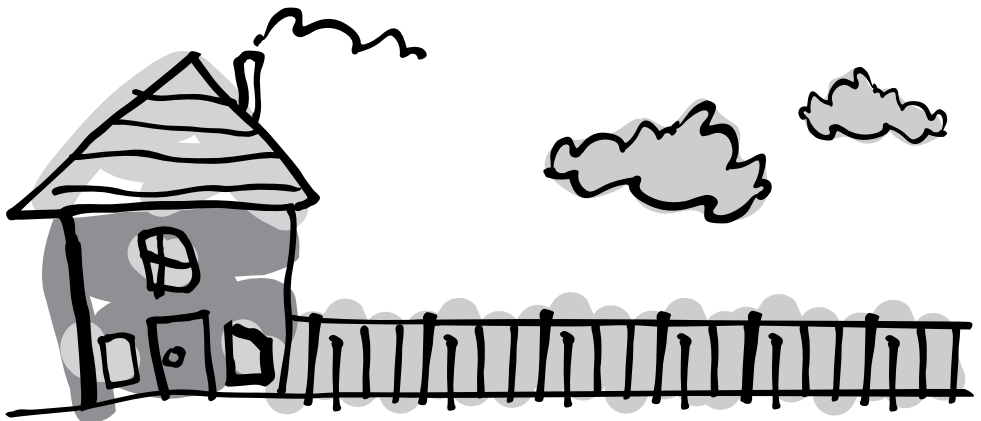
Checklist of Tax - Deductible Expenses

Use this checklist only as a guide for tax deductions. Be sure to consult the IRS, the person who does your taxes, or a current tax guide.

Start-Up Items

Only a portion of the cost of a large item (generally over \$100.00) may be deducted each year through depreciation.

- Cribs
- High chairs
- Strollers
- Rocker
- Potty chairs
- Footstool for children to reach the bathroom sink
- Child-size table and chairs
- Tricycles, wagons, and other wheeled toys
- Outdoor play equipment (sandbox, swing set, etc.)
- Car safety seats
- Storage shelves, crates, hooks for child care items
- Unbreakable dishes, child-size forks and spoons
- Pans and other utensils for preparing food
- Towel and wash cloth for each child
- First aid kit
- Calculator, filing cabinet, and other record-keeping supplies
- Telephone installations or extension, cell phone
- Bulletin board
- Fire extinguisher
- Smoke detectors
- Locks for medicine and cleaning supply cabinets
- Safety gate for stairs
- Handrails, air purifier, or other equipment for children with disabilities
- Home repairs and improvements such as a fence around a swimming pool or a fire escape ladder (plus labor cost) needed to make your home safe for children



Other Costs

- Food for meals and snacks served to children
- Household supplies such as toothpaste, soap, toilet paper, tissues that children use
- Cleaning supplies such as dishwashing detergent, chlorine bleach used to make home clean
- Property taxes (partly deductible)
- Art supplies such as paint, construction paper, paste, crayons, and markers
- Fuel for heating home (partly deductible)
- Electricity (partly deductible)
- Water (partly deductible)
- Garbage pick-up (partly deductible)
- Telephone (partly deductible)
- Rent (partly deductible)
- Photocopying of forms and bills
- Envelopes, paper, and postage
- Advertising costs
- Field trip costs
- Repair of play equipment that only child care children use
- Repair of household items such as the refrigerator or sink, which are used by both family and children (partly deductible)
- Payment to a substitute child care provider when you are ill or away
- State registration fee
- Child abuse, criminal history, and FBI clearances
- Local fees (home occupation permit, health inspection, fire inspection)
- Homeowner's insurance – if your homeowner's policy will cover a child care business (partly deductible)
- Additional child care liability insurance
- Medical examinations (such as TB tests) for yourself and family members, when required for registration
- Membership fee in professional organizations
- Registration fees for training workshops and expenses involved in attending (transportation, hotel)
- Subscriptions to magazines related to child care
- Recordkeeping supplies such as receipt book, calendar

IMPORTANT – IRS Information

Always check with the IRS, the person who does your taxes, and/or tax guides published by the IRS. Tax laws change. Check every year.

Setting Fees

How much should you charge to care for children? Naturally you will want to charge enough to cover the expenses of operating your day care home and you will want to earn an income. Compare prices of other caregivers in your immediate area. If you set your fee too high, parents will find other care. When setting your fee, try to set it between the highest and lowest fees charged for child care in your area.

When deciding how much to charge you need to decide what services you will provide.

- Do you provide meals and snacks for the children?
- Do you provide diapers and formula for infants?
- Does a child require special foods or infant formula that you are asked to purchase?
- Will you provide breakfast to a child if she arrives early?
- Do you take children on special field trips or take daily trips to the neighborhood park?
- Will you provide special transportation, such as taking a child to a swimming or music class?

You need to think about how the payment will be handled

- when a child is sick
- when a child goes on a vacation
- when you are sick or take a vacation
- if a parent requests part-time care
- if you are asked to care for more than one child from the same family

You can charge parents a flat rate (so much per week or day), an hourly figure, or a flat or hourly rate with money added for “extras” such as special food or transportation.

You may want to consider an “overtime” charge to prevent parents from running errands before they come to pick up their children. Some providers allow ten minutes grace and then charge \$1.00 per minute for the first five minutes, \$5.00 per minute for the next five, etc.

- Put the payment (fee) schedule in writing.
- Be sure to go over your fee schedule with parents. This eliminates later misunderstandings.
- Remember, you are running the business. The actual decision on charging is up to you.



Setting Up Your Home for Child Care

Community Resources

As a small business person, you will want to locate community resources to help you.

- Contact your county Penn State Cooperative Extension family living educator for information about child care resources and training workshops that may be available.
- Many public libraries have books, toys, puzzles, story tapes, and puppets you can borrow. Some have story hours and other special events.
- If your town or city has a Parks and Recreation Department, check to see if they have events or activities appropriate for the children in your care.
- Join a caregiver support group if there is one in your area.

Children's Activities

All children need to play to learn. They need to be active to be healthy. Provide playthings, equipment, and toys that are right for their ages. Children benefit from both active and quiet times. Outdoor play is important every day except in extreme weather.

Please note: The best field trips for children are right in your own yard. It's handy and safe. The children can learn so much from nature by exploring the outdoors in your yard. They can play actively with toys and equipment you know are safe. You do not have to take them to other places to provide things to explore and have fun with.

It is best for children to play rather than spend time at the computer or watching television and videos. They learn better and are healthier when actively playing and exploring.

Read to the Children Every Day

Children of all ages benefit from listening to stories. Make books and reading an important part of your child care. Infants and toddlers learn language when you read to them and talk to them. Older children learn about so many things from books and do better in school when they are eager to read.

What Toys Do You Need?

You don't need to spend a lot of money on toys for your family child care home. Think about what you have and what you need.

You need to have toys that:

- use kid power
(things to push, pull, or ride)
- get children to play with other children
(toys that need two children to work them)
- teach children self-help skills
(buttons, laces, zippers, snaps)
- help children to pretend
(things to be: a mother, father, doctor, grocery store clerk)
- have no right or wrong way to play with them
(blocks and building sets)
- the children enjoy playing with

Try borrowing books, cassette tapes, and records from your public library or bookmobile. Some libraries also offer toys, games, and puzzles. Check your area to see if there is a toy lending library or resource center for teachers and child care providers.



Choose Toys Carefully

Garage/yard sales and used toy and furniture stores are good places to look for inexpensive toys or equipment.

Before you buy any new or used toy, ask yourself the following questions:

- Is this toy appropriate for the age of the children in my care?
- Is the toy safe and durable?
- Are there any sharp, jagged edges or loose, dangling parts?
- Is the toy made of a sturdy, lightweight material or heavy metal?
- Does the toy shoot or throw objects that may injure the eyes?
- Does the toy make loud noises that may damage a child's hearing?
- Is there anything about the toy that could raise tensions or cause stress?
- Do the labels on painted toys state "non-toxic"?
- Is the toy easy to wash and keep clean?
- Can the toy be used in more than one way?
- Can the toy be used by children of different ages?
- Do I have room for the children to play with the toy and space to store it?
- Does the toy work well?
- Is the toy worth the price?

Child care providers are responsible for having safe toys for children. For health and safety reasons, unsafe toys are prohibited. Providers must keep up-to-date about product recalls from the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). Recall information can be found on the CPSC Web site at www.cpsc.gov. The Web site has lists of recalled items. There is also information on how you can sign up to receive an email message whenever a product is recalled.

Planning Your Space

Outdoor play space is good for sand, water, riding toys, running, swinging, and climbing activities.

You may want to plan doing different activities in certain areas of your home.

The kitchen would be a good place for a child-size table and chairs. The children can eat at the table and use it to play with clay or do other art activities.

A quiet area with a couple of pillows or cushions is a good space where children can go to look at books or listen to tapes.

An active area may include cars, trucks, building blocks, dress-up clothes, and things for pretend play.

Locate the sleeping or rest area in a space away from the active areas. That way children will know when it is rest time and that it will be calm and quiet. They will not be distracted by other activities.

Storage Ideas

Children can help put away coats, toys, art supplies, etc. Keep the children in mind when you plan storage areas.

Place low hooks or hang a low bar in your coat closet so children can hang up their own coats.

Use colorful storage boxes with pictures of the toys to be stored inside.

Have some low shelves so children can easily select toys and put them away.

To store toys or supplies, try a pyramid of circular cardboard or plastic ice cream containers, instead of one gigantic toy box.

Colorful plastic dishpans, sturdy cardboard boxes, and shallow clothing boxes work well and can be slid under a bed or sofa, out of sight.

Hang a plastic shoe bag from a door handle for crayons and other small objects.

Small, deep baskets, low dresser drawers, and sturdy shelves at the bottom of a closet or bookcase are all storage places children can reach.

Planning Your Day

Every good business makes plans. Successful business days don't just happen. They require planning.

The same is true with the business of caring for children. No matter if you care for one child or several, successful child care providers plan for each day.

Your plans may be very simple. Do you have a routine that you follow each day with the children? Make that part of the plan. Keep your plan flexible.

Children have characteristics and needs that must be considered when planning the day or week.

Working with the Children

What Young Children Are Like

1. Children are active. A schedule must allow for movement, noise, and working with their hands.
2. Young children want activities that are fun.
3. Young children are interested in things that relate to themselves.
4. Young children need a daily schedule of activities, but there must be some flexibility.
5. Children want to explore and learn.
6. Children learn by doing.
7. Children like to do things themselves when they can.
8. Getting down to a child's level helps with communication.
9. Enjoy the children in your care. Laugh and play together.

Your Own Children

If your child seems jealous of the child care children, here are four suggestions that work for many child care providers:

1. Help your child select his favorite toys and make these toys off-limits to the other children. This tells your child you think he is special and that his toys are HIS.
2. Make time (5 to 15 minutes) each day to sit down alone with your child and read her a story. Some caregivers do this before the other children arrive, while the other children are napping, or after they go home.
3. Make your child's bedroom off-limits to the other children. His room is special and the child care children aren't allowed in.

Do something special for your child each day. Make her favorite sandwich, play a game, read a story, sing her favorite song...

Plan for Comings and Goings

Take a sheet of paper and block out the hours of the day, starting with the time the first child arrives and ending with the time the last child leaves. For example, one child arrives at 7:30 a.m. and the last one leaves at 5:30 p.m. Also mark the time when the last child arrives in the morning and when the first child leaves at night.

Plan quiet activities (puzzles, story reading, coloring, listening to records, building with blocks) during the times when children arrive or leave. The children can explore on their own and enter or leave these activities easily. This gives you a chance to greet and say goodbye to each child and his parent.

Quiet activities at the beginning of the day also allow the children to wake up and adjust to each other slowly. A quiet activity at the end of the day relaxes the children after an exciting afternoon and prepares them to meet their parents.

Morning Tips

When all the children have arrived, and the last child has had some time to get settled, you can spend some time doing an activity together. A nutritious snack is a good start. Eating brings the group together to make plans for the day. It gives the early risers an energy boost for the morning.

After snack there is time for a walk to the store, baking cookies, or an art activity. If there is still a large block of time, you can spend it outdoors. Even in cold weather, the children should get outside every day. Playing outside builds muscle, burns up energy, and helps children have healthy appetites.

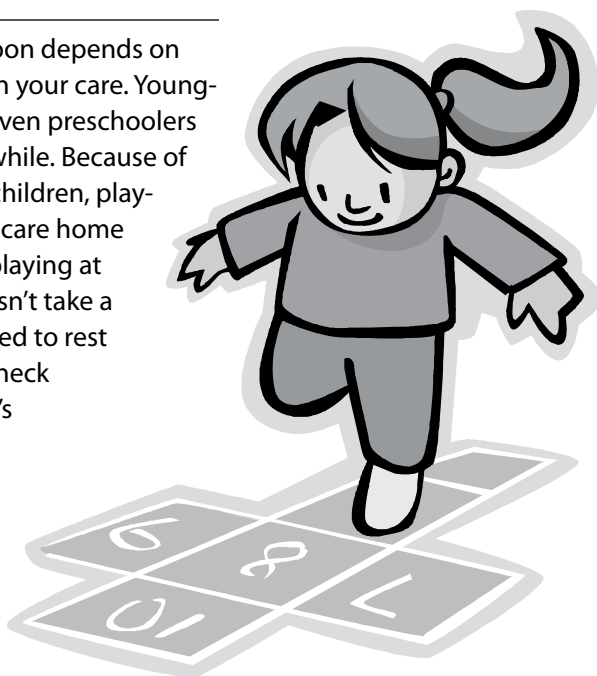
Plan to do something quiet for a few minutes before lunch so the children won't be so excited when they sit down at the table. This will make for fewer spills and arguments during the meal. You could read a story together, listen to music, spend a few minutes talking about your day, or how lunch will be prepared. Try to include the children in the lunch preparation as much as possible. They can set the table, wash the vegetables, help make the sandwiches, etc.

Afternoon Tips

How you plan the afternoon depends on the ages of the children in your care. Younger ones will need a nap. Even preschoolers should rest quietly for a while. Because of the stimulation of other children, playing all morning in a child care home can be more tiring than playing at home. Even if a child doesn't take a nap at home, she may need to rest at the child care home. Check with parents on the child's sleeping habits and how long she should nap.

SAMPLE DAILY PLAN

TIME	ACTIVITIES
7:30 a.m.	Children arrive, free play. Children help prepare breakfast and lunch.
9:00 a.m.	Eat breakfast or a morning snack. Discuss plans for the day. Cleanup from breakfast. Change diapers or use the toilet. Brush teeth.
9:50 a.m.	Table activities: art, puzzles, beads, small blocks, cooking; nature study.
10:30 a.m.	Free play; music/movement activities; outdoor play.
11:30 a.m.	Prepare lunch; children do quiet activities.
12:00 noon	Eat lunch; clean up; change diapers, use toilet, brush teeth; read stories.
1:00 p.m.	Nap time
2:30 p.m.	Wake up and cuddle time. Use toilet; eat snack. Free play indoors or out.
4:30 p.m.	Pick up toys, get ready to go home. Stories.



Children's Activities

Infants

Young infants learn through their senses: seeing, hearing, smelling, touching, and tasting.

- Play hand games like “peek-a-boo” and “patty-cake.”
- Give them soft things they can squeeze (sponges, balls, stuffed toys).
- Give them keys to shake or a spoon to bang.

CAUTION:

Due to possible choking hazards, keep small objects and things with small pieces away from infants. Anything that will fit through an empty cardboard toilet paper tube is too small to be safe.

Older infants need places where they can move around and explore. Keep non-breakable pots, pans, plastic dishes, cups, and spoons in a low kitchen cabinet where babies may play.

Place window decals and mobiles where babies can see them.

CAUTION:

Do not hang or fasten mobiles or toys on a crib or baby bed. They can be a strangling hazard once an infant can sit or stand.

Set out old magazines so babies can look at pictures and practice turning the pages.

Infants need lots of cuddling and attention. When you let them know you love them, they will feel secure and explore on their own. You may find that infants check back with you frequently before moving to a new toy.

Infants may not talk, but they are learning language from you every day. Talk to them often. Tell them what you are doing. Make eye contact when you talk to them and listen to their responses. You can help them learn by playing word games like “show me your eyes” (nose, arms, legs) or singing songs.

Toddlers

Toddlers spend more time learning how things work. They find out in a number of ways:

- turning knobs
- taking objects out and putting them back
- pushing and pulling
- doing things to see what will happen
 - dropping food on the floor, throwing toys.

Toddlers like to do the same things over and over again such as playing “peek-a-boo,” jumping off a low step, filling a container with things and dumping them out again, and reading a favorite story over and over and over!

Toddlers are naturally curious. They may try to explore things around your house such as the television, kitchen cabinets, chairs, and anything they can reach. Make sure to give them things they can do to keep them busy and happy.

Good Toys for Toddlers:

- large plastic jars with no lids, filled with brightly colored blocks
- things to push and pull
- bean bags to poke and squeeze
- a play telephone

Preschoolers

When planning activities for preschoolers, remember they:

- have short attention spans
- are learning to share
- need lots of physical activity
- love to pretend
- play actively
- make lots of noise
- move around a lot
- like simple songs and rhymes
- like short stories about animals, children, and everyday things
- like materials they can explore and experiment with, such as clay, paint, safety scissors, sand, and crayons

Have a variety of toys available. There should be a number of different toys to choose from but limited enough to encourage sharing and taking turns. For instance, you might have two glue sticks and two pairs of safety scissors for an art activity for four children. Or have one cash register and several shopping bags so that the children can take turns playing cashier.

Save boxes, cans, and paper bags for making rockets, string telephones, collage pictures, and so on.

Before you throw anything out, ask yourself whether you could use it. Go through your cupboards and closets. You will probably find many safe materials children can use in pretend play.

Don't expect preschoolers to stay interested for more than ten minutes. The only activities that keep most children involved for long periods of time are outdoor play and story reading. Don't hesitate to take children on a walk or to have a group listening time in your home. Walking from one place to another gives children the chance to stretch cramped muscles. Songs and music should also be included in group time.

Play Ideas for Preschoolers

Creative Play

Finger painting, painting with two colors, mixing colors, clay or play dough, sand play, cutting pictures out of magazines, pasting, tracing letters, numbers, shapes, drawing on paper with pencils, crayons, or chalk.

Large Muscle Development

Running, climbing, hopping, pushing, pulling, riding a tricycle, swinging, throwing, kicking a ball.

Small Muscle Development

Putting puzzles together, building with small blocks and construction toys, playing with pegboards, buttons, and zippers.

Visual Ideas

Matching shapes, colors, and pictures. Find things that look the same and different.

Listening

Playing with sound cans – cans filled with objects such as rice, beans, buttons, or pennies that make different noises when shaken. Put the lids on securely before the children shake them. (Due to potential choking hazards, never give sound cans to infants or toddlers.)

Mental Games

Playing naming, matching, and memory games. Sort the laundry, set the table, "remember when."

Pretend Play

Provide clothes, dishes, cans, boxes, etc. to play dress-up.



School-Age Children

Older children need less close supervision than younger children. In fact, they like and need a little privacy. While it's good for them to play with the younger children, make sure they also have some time to themselves without the little ones interfering. You must always be around to supervise from a distance. The children in your care may never be left alone.

Older children enjoy making things such as a picture or a house, building with blocks, a model car, or a fort. They can finish what they start. They may like to continue a project from one day to the next, so let them know ahead of time when that is not possible.

School-Age Activity Ideas

- dress-up
- cooking and handicrafts (woodworking, model building, sewing, painting)
- planning and putting on shows
 - puppet, magic, and holiday shows
- gardening
- collections –stamps, leaves, cards, rocks, seashells, etc.

Parents

Many child care providers say that working with parents is the most challenging part of being a child care provider. It is important to let parents know your rules and what you expect before you accept a child into care. An easy way to do this is to have the rules and expectations written. As a caregiver, you need to think through what is right for you and to set realistic expectations. Consider having your written policies in a "loose leaf" manner, so you can make additions or changes more easily when they are needed. Whenever you make a change or update your policies, give every parent a copy of those changes. Give a copy of your

written policies when a parent enrolls a child in your care. After parents have had time to read over the policies, have them sign a copy verifying they have read the policies. It is good to remind parents to review your policies every few months.

You can also communicate these expectations through a new parent letter, parent interviews, contracts, newsletters, daily logs, notes, bulletin boards, and quick conversations when parents drop off or pick up their children.

Steps Before Taking a Child in Your Home

1. Plan for first telephone call
2. Visit with parent and child
3. Trial visit and time of adjustment
4. Agreement/contract

1. Plan For First Telephone Call

Most parents looking for child care will call first to get information about you and your program. Plan ahead what you will tell them.

- Where you are located.
- What hours you provide care.
- What ages of children you care for.
- If you provide meals and snacks.
- How much you charge.
- If you charge more for infants.
- If you charge less for several children from the same family.
- If you care for sick children.
- If you plan activities for the children.
- If the children play outside.
- How you discipline children.
- If parents have to pay when a child does not come.

1. Plan For First Telephone Call *(continued)*

Information you want to get from the parent includes:

- age of the child (birthday)
- hours and days when care is needed
- any special requirements: allergies, disabilities, etc.

If the parent's need matches what you offer then set up a time for a visit. Never accept a child for care over the telephone.

2. Visit with Parent and Child

Plan a first visit with the parent and child during a time when you are not providing care for other children.

You will want to:

- Show the parent and child around your home. Make sure they see where the children eat, where they play (indoors and out), and where they take naps.
- Give the parent a written copy of your rules, payment schedule, program, etc. Go over this information with the parent. This will help prevent misunderstandings in the future.
- Go over the daily routine with the parent.
- Provide activities for the child while you are talking with the parent. This will help the child feel comfortable in your home. If the child is old enough to talk, spend some time talking with him.
- Tell the parent what you want the child to call you. Most providers prefer using their first names, but you may want children to call you Mrs., Mr., or Miss _____.
- Get information about the family - address and telephone number, where the parents work with the address and phone number, and emergency contact information for others when a parent cannot be reached.
- Get information about the child - special interests, if there are siblings,

fears, nickname, eating and sleeping habits, and allergies or other health problems.

- Let the parent know he or she can come and visit any time.
- Remind the parent that you are running a business. You will be firm about things such as picking up a child promptly, payment of fees on time, and following other rules.

3. Trial Visit and Time of Adjustment

It is important for the parent and child to make a trial visit to your home for an hour or so when the other children are there. You should schedule the visit when they have a chance to see what you do and how you work with the children in your care.

If a parent is interested in child care at your home, begin with a two-week adjustment period. This gives you and the parent time to see if the child will "fit in" with you and the other children in your care.

If after the two-week adjustment period you do not feel the arrangement will work, that is the time to suggest that the parent find other care for the child. This is also the time for the parent to decide whether or not to keep their child in your care.

4. Agreement/Contract

If you and the parent agree to child care in your home, an agreement or contract between you and the parent should be signed.

SAMPLE AGREEMENT

This is an agreement to provide care for _____.
(Child's Name)

Care will be provided _____ from _____ to _____.
(Days of Week)

If the child is picked up later then that time, parents will pay an overtime charge of _____ per hour, payable with the next fee payment.

The fee is _____ per _____,
(Amount) (Month or Week)
payable on _____.
(Day of Month or Week)

If the fee is not paid by that date,
a penalty of _____ will be charged.
(Percentage)

Agreed to on _____
(Date)

By _____
(Signature of Parent/Guardian)

(Parent's Printed Name)

(Caregiver's Signature)

SAMPLE PROGRAM RULES AND INFORMATION

AS A CHILD CARE PROVIDER, I WILL:

- give your child loving care, constant supervision, and age-appropriate things to do
- provide lunch, mid-morning snack, and mid-afternoon snack
- cooperate with you in toilet training, guidance, and other needs of your child
- try to locate you first if emergency medical care is needed for your child. (If you cannot be located immediately, I will call your child's doctor or take your child to the hospital)
- inform you in advance of any field trips or activities away from my child care home

AS THE PARENT, YOU WILL:

- provide _____ (formula, diapers, toothbrush, or other special items needed for your child's care)
- provide a clean change of clothing for your child to keep at my child care home
- call me if your child is ill
- keep your child at home if he/she has a fever, diarrhea, or other signs of communicable illness
- pay for emergency medical treatment for illness or injury which may occur while your child is in care
- tell me at least one week in advance if your child will be absent because of holidays, vacation, or withdrawal from care
- inform me if someone other than a parent will pick up your child

PAYMENT

Payment should be made by cash or check on the first day of each week. Cash payments should be placed in an envelope with the parent's name on the front so I can give a receipt. At the end of the year I will give the parent a copy of the payment record.

DAILY PROGRAM AND SCHEDULE

I plan a variety of activities for children based on their ages and abilities. Some activities involve household tasks such as setting the table and raking leaves. Other activities such as block building, painting, and pretend play are based on the idea that children learn best through play.

A sample of the daily schedule is attached. It shows times for lunch, snacks, nap, toileting, and outdoor play. Children are encouraged to wash their hands after toileting and before eating, and to brush their teeth after eating.

DISCIPLINE

The goal of discipline is to help children learn to manage their own behavior. Your child will be given a safe and fun environment with materials suited to his or her age and abilities. He or she will be expected to follow a few simple rules for the safety and well-being of all the children in my care.

Two house rules are:

- We are kind and do not hurt each other.
- We ask first before taking someone's things.
(We do not permit one child to grab a toy from another child.)

As a child care provider, I use positive language in talking with children, show children how to behave by example, and give emotional support.

PARENT VISITS AND CONFERENCES

I will meet regularly with you to talk about your child's progress and growth. You may request other conferences at any time.

You may drop in for visits—expected or unexpected—at any time. However, during unexpected visits, I will continue to give the children my undivided attention.

Caregiver's Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Health Guidelines

Childhood Illness and How It Spreads

The body's system that fights infection is called the immune system. Immune systems of infants and children are not well developed. Therefore, they can't fight disease as well as adults.

Communicable illnesses, those that can be spread from person to person, are caused by bacteria, viruses, and parasites. An illness can spread in two ways:

- through the air from coughs and sneeze.
- from touching someone or something that has the germs

Hands are more important in the spread of disease than people think. Your hands pick up germs from things you touch. Unless you wash your hands regularly, you can easily spread the germs to the children.

The most important rule for preventing the spread of illness is: Wash hands often, especially after toileting and before eating. This rule applies to both you and the children.

Wash Hands Often

- Before you prepare food
- Before eating meals and snacks
- After using the bathroom
- After changing diapers
- After wiping runny noses
- After playing with pets
- Use warm running water and soap.
- Rub the hands together for at least 15 seconds.
- Rinse hands in warm running water.
- Dry hands with a paper towel and throw it away.



Dirty Diapers

Feces are full of bacteria, which get on your hands when you change a baby's diapers.

The bacteria can pass from your hands and contaminate other children, toys, food, and anything else you touch.

Wash your hands with hot soapy water after changing diapers.

Keep the changing table clean. Make a disinfecting solution:

- 1 tablespoon liquid bleach
- 1 quart warm water

Place it in a spray bottle to be kept near the changing table, but out of reach of the children. Spray the changing table with disinfection solution and wipe dry with a clean paper towel after changing each child's diapers. Throw the paper towel away after each use. Throw away disinfectant solution at the end of each day (bleach loses its effectiveness).

Immunizations

Children in child care should have immunizations to prevent them from getting childhood diseases. Ask the parent of children in your care to see each child's immunization record. A local pediatrician, doctor, or the state health clinic can tell you if a child is overdue for a vaccine.

You will need to monitor immunizations records of the children in your care and exclude any child who is not immunized. This means you need to make sure parents keep their child's immunization records updated.

Updated information about immunizations can also be found on the ECELS - Healthy Children PA Web site at www.ecels-healthychildcarepa.org

Dental Care

Give children time to brush their teeth after eating. Brushing teeth requires a lot of hand and wrist coordination, so you should expect to spend more time with them when they are first learning.

Use masking tape to label each child's toothbrush with his or her name. Store toothbrushes and toothpaste in the bathroom. Give children disposable paper cups for rinsing. A sturdy foot stool will help children reach the sink.

Safety Guidelines

Home Safety Checklist

Kitchen

- Knives and sharp tools out of children's reach
- Cleaning supplies and poisons in original or labeled containers out of children's reach in a locked cabinet
- Medicines in original or labeled containers out of children's reach in a locked cabinet
- Breakable dishes out of reach
- Electrical outlets covered
- Back door or basement door securely locked
- Curtains and towels away from range
- Pan handles turned toward back of range
- No frayed appliance cords
- Electrical cords out of reach
- Fire extinguisher checked and serviced regularly
- High chair and infant seat checked regularly for loose screws, broken straps, cracks, etc.
- Plastic bags stored in a locked cabinet or out of children's reach
- Cleaning buckets emptied immediately after use and stored out of children's reach
- Swinging doors that can squash children removed
- Children never left alone in the kitchen

Bathroom

- Lock on medicine cabinet
- Razors and glass bottles placed out of children's reach
- Appliances unplugged after use
- Lock on sink cabinet if used for storage of cleaning supplies
- Bathroom door lock adjusted to prevent children from being locked in
- Temperature of water adjusted to prevent scalding
- Toilet lid always kept closed
- Toddlers and preschool children never left alone in bathroom

Living Room/Family Room

- Matches out of children's reach
- Electrical outlets covered
- Sharp edges on furniture covered
- No furniture that is not solid or steady enough for a newly standing child to use to pull himself up
- No coffee tables if you have toddlers
- No portable electric heaters, kerosene or space heaters
- Breakables out of children's reach
- Lamp, radio, and television cords moved so children can't trip on them
- Fireplace has screen or glass covering
- Cords from window blinds out of reach
- No furniture near windows so children won't climb to a window seat or sill
- Stairways free of toys
- Safety gates installed at top and bottom of stairs
- Beware of small rugs on polished floors, especially near stairs
- Poisonous plants removed
- Unloaded guns or weapons stored in a locked cabinet
- Ammunition stored in a locked cabinet, separate from guns

Home Safety Checklist *(continued)*

Sleeping Area

- Cribs meet safety standards
- Cords from window blinds, lamps, and radios out of children's reach
- No plastic dry cleaning bags, or stored in a locked cabinet
- Smoke detector in working condition
- Cosmetics, shoe polish, jewelry, and medicines out of children's reach
- Cribs and beds away from windows
- Separate sheets and blankets for child care children

Fire Drill – Exit Safely

Make a fire exit plan for your home, including a safe meeting place outside, away from the building. Discuss your plan with the children.

Begin with where to leave the room, what route to follow, and where to meet outside. Practice walking the children through the escape plan. Talk about the importance of being quick, calm, and meeting outside. Repeat the drill and have one of the children lead the others to the outside meeting place.

Emergencies

Emergency Tips

Planning for accidents and emergencies should begin before you accept a child. Keep an emergency information form on every child. This information should include:

- Child's name, address, and telephone number
- Parent/guardian's name, address, and telephone number
- Parent/guardian's work telephone number
- Two persons to contact in case of emergency, their addresses, and phone numbers
- Child's doctor and dentist phone numbers
- Specific health problems, eating problems, allergies, etc.

SAMPLE EMERGENCY MEDICAL RELEASE FORM

EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE

I give my permission to _____ to call an
(Family Day Care Provider)
ambulance, a physician, or go to an emergency room with my
child/children _____ and in the case of a
(Name)
medical emergency, obtain treatment. Intending to be legally
bound hereby, I agree to pay all expenses incurred.

_____ Date _____
(Signature of Parent/Guardian)

Emergency Preparedness Plans

Registered providers are required to have an emergency preparedness plan. Better Kid Care has developed some materials to help you. They can be found on the Web site at www.betterkidcare.psu.edu.

In Case of an Accident

Be sure the parent fills out an emergency medical release form during their first visit, so the child can be treated in case of an emergency if the parent cannot be reached.

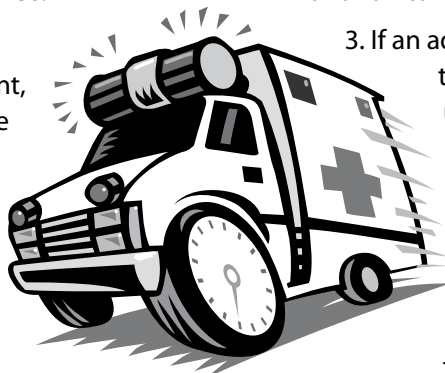
Your first concern is the child. You may have to call an ambulance or revive the child.

Try to contact the child's parent as soon as possible. If the parent cannot be reached, try to phone the other emergency contact person.

You should always tell the parent about an accident, even if it was not serious. Fill out an accident report form. Keep one copy for the child's file at your child care and give one to the child's parent. Also, take time to explain to the parent what happened. The child may not remember how he got hurt. If the child goes home with someone else, call the parent to explain what happened and mail the accident report.

What Should You Do First?

If one of the children in your care has an accident, make sure the child's life is not in danger before you go for help.



Check to See if the Child is Breathing

You can do this by watching the child's chest go up and down, or put your ear close to the child's nose and mouth to hear and feel the child breathing. Supporting the child's neck with one hand and clearing the mouth out with the other ensures that the child's airway is clear. You can also open the airway by tilting the child's head back so the chin points up.

Check for the Child's Pulse

Place your fingers against the artery on the child's neck to feel for a pulse. If the child is an infant, put your fingers under the left nipple to feel the heartbeat.

Check the child for shock, serious bleeding, or mouth stains or burns that indicate poisoning.

If You Need Help

Teach the children to call for help. All of the older children in your care should be taught how to call for help. They may have to do this if you are injured or you cannot leave an injured child.

1. Make a bright orange or yellow sign with **HELP** written on it and place it by the telephone or some other place where the children can reach it.
2. Show each child how to grab the card and run to neighbor or another adult.
3. If an adult cannot be reached the children will have to use the phone.
4. Show the children how to dial the "0" or "911" if available in your area.
5. Tell the children something simple to say: "Mrs. Jones (your name) is hurt. My address is (your address)."
6. Tell the children to stay near the telephone receiver and wait for help.

First Aid Kit

Every home must have a first aid kit in a convenient location, out of the reach of the children. The new DPW regulations require that a first aid kit must contain the following:

- Soap
- An assortment of adhesive bandages
- Sterile gauze pads
- Tweezers
- Tape
- Scissors
- Disposable non-porous gloves

Additional items to include:

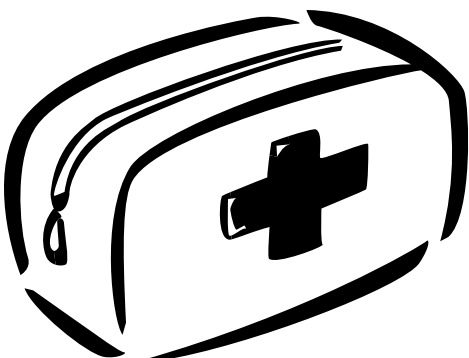
- Ice bag
- Poison control number
- Pencil note pad emergency contact information

A first aid kit must accompany the children and the supervising provider on any excursions away from the facility. This kit must also contain a bottle of water.

Guns and Ammunition in Your Home

If you have guns in your home they must always be kept in a locked cabinet. Children are explorers. If they see a gun, they will likely pick it up, look at it, and try to shoot it. Avoid accidents by keeping guns in a locked cabinet. Store ammunition in a separate locked cabinet, away from guns.

Parents must be told if you have guns in your home.



Keep Food Safe

Cleanliness

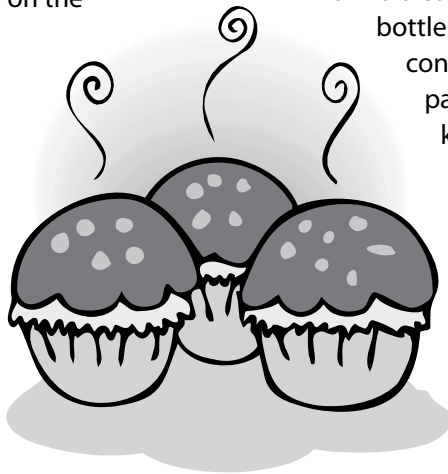
- Wash your hands in hot soapy water:
 - ◆ Before touching food
 - ◆ After touching raw meat
 - ◆ After using the toilet
 - ◆ After changing diapers
 - ◆ After wiping runny noses
 - ◆ After playing with pets
- Make sure the children in your care wash their hands after using the toilet and before they eat.
- Cover cuts or burns with a bandage.
- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze. Turn your head away from food if you cough or sneeze. Wash your hands again before touching food or children.
- Wipe the top of cans before opening them. Clean the blade of your can opener after each use.
- Use a spoon, not your hands or fingers, to mix or taste food.
- Wear a clean apron or clothing every day.
- Use a plastic cutting board.
- Bacteria can hide in the cracks of wooden cutting boards, making it easy to contaminate other foods. Wash cutting boards in hot soapy water after slicing raw meat, poultry, or seafood. Rinse well.
- Wash kitchen towels and dishcloths often. Replace kitchen sponges every few weeks.
- Wash counter tops, cutting boards, and other cooking utensils with hot soapy water after each use.
- Disinfect with a chlorine bleach solution (1 tablespoon liquid bleach to 1 quart water) to kill bacteria.
- Keep raw meat, poultry, and fish away from other foods.

Food Safety

- Cook meat, poultry, fish, and eggs until well done. Cook red meat until it is brown or grey inside or to a temperature of 160° F on a meat thermometer. Cook poultry until the juices run clear or to a temperature of 180° F on a meat thermometer. Cook fish until it flakes with a fork.
- Raw milk and raw eggs may contain harmful bacteria. Never serve raw milk or eggs. Serve only pasteurized milk. Cook eggs until the yolk and white are firm, not runny. Scramble eggs until firm.

Hot Foods and Cold Foods

- Serve food immediately after cooking or preparing.
- Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold.
- Refrigerate leftovers right away.
- Never leave food out of the refrigerator for more than a total of two hours (less than two hours on a hot day). Bacteria that cause food poisoning grow quickly in warm temperatures.
- Divide large amounts of soups, stews, casseroles, or leftovers into small, shallow containers for quick cooling in the refrigerator. Do not cool on the counter or range.
- Reheat leftovers thoroughly or until the temperature on a meat thermometer is 165° F. Use leftovers within three or four days.



Food Storage

- Keep food away from harmful chemicals or metals.
- If you have trouble with roaches or other insects, clean out all your food storage areas, throw away all opened containers, and seal all cracks and crevices.
- Use only containers intended for food preparation.

Feeding Infants

Formula

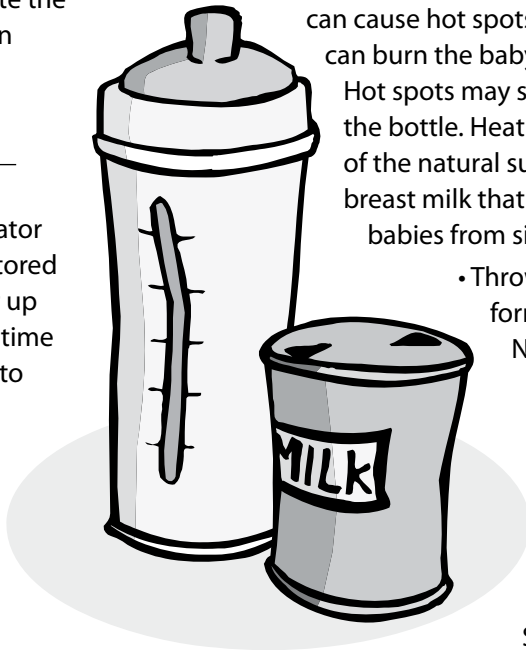
- Powdered formula needs to be mixed with water in a clean baby bottle. The water does not need to be boiled, unless you are not sure if the water is safe.
- If you are not sure the water is safe to drink, boil it for five minutes. Fill clean bottles with the right amount of cool boiled water, then add formula.
- Formula does not need to be heated. Babies can drink cold formula without harm.
- Keep prepared formula in the refrigerator. Formula should not be kept in a diaper bag or on the kitchen counter.
- When transporting, keep prepared formula cold in an insulated thermos bottle or carry it in an insulated container with a freezer gel pack. If you are unable to keep formula cold, bring an unopened can of ready-to-eat formula and a can opener. Open the can and fill a clean bottle at feeding time.

Formula (continued)

- Another safe way to take formula is to pack powdered formula and a bottle of water. Mix the powder with the water when the baby is ready to eat. Powdered formula is a good choice because you do not have to keep it cold, it is easy to carry, it doesn't go to waste, and you can prepare just the amount you need. When mixed with water, it is the same as ready-to-feed formula.
- To prevent lead poisoning, prepare the formula with cold water. Always run the tap at least one minute before mixing water with formula. Run the water longer if you have not used it for a few hours.
- Never save a partially used bottle of formula for another feeding. As the baby drinks from a bottle, the bacteria move from the baby's mouth into the bottle. Saving the bottle for another feeding allows time for the bacteria to grow and contaminate the formula (even if it is in the refrigerator).

Breast Milk

- Breast milk must be stored in the refrigerator or freezer. It can be stored in the refrigerator for up to 48 hours from the time it was expressed. Try to keep two to three ounces in the freezer in case the baby needs more milk one day. Breast milk can be frozen for up to three months from when it was expressed, but must be used within 24 hours once thawed. Do not refreeze. Throw away any breast milk that has been stored too long.



- Thaw frozen breast milk by running the container under cool water. Do not thaw by setting the container out on the counter.

Bottles

- Use a clean bottle for each feeding. Sterilize bottles and nipples for infants up to five months of age by placing in boiling water for five minutes or by washing in a dishwasher.
- Label bottles with the baby's name. For formula-fed babies, write the amount of water and formula needed on the label. For breastfed babies, label with the date the milk was expressed.
- Warm formula or breast milk by placing the bottle in a pan of warm water or holding it under running warm water for a few minutes. Do not heat formula or thaw or heat breast milk on the stove or in a microwave. Microwave heating can cause hot spots in the milk that can burn the baby's mouth and throat. Hot spots may stay even if you shake the bottle. Heating destroys most of the natural substances in breast milk that protect babies from sickness.
- Throw away any unused formula or breast milk. Never save partially used bottles for another feeding. As the baby drinks from a bottle, bacteria move from the baby's mouth into the bottle. Saving the bottle of milk for another feeding allows time for bacteria to grow and contaminate the milk, even if it is in the refrigerator. Use only the amount needed for a feeding in a clean bottle.

Baby Food

- Remove some of the baby food from the jar and put it in a bowl or on a plate. Close the jar and refrigerate any unused food.
- Throw away uneaten food on the plate or in the bowl – it contains bacteria. As a child eats, bacteria move from the mouth to the spoon and into the dish of food.
- Feed each child from a separate plate or bowl with a separate spoon. Using the same plate, bowl, or spoon can pass bacteria from one child to another.

Feeding Toddlers & Preschoolers

Daily Food Guide

For children ages 2 - 6 plan to serve at least one food from each group for every meal unless the requirement is less than three servings per day.

Breads and Cereals

Six servings of grains per day, with half of them whole grains

Vegetables

Three servings per day

Fruits

Two servings per day

Milk, Yogurt, and Cheese

Three servings per day

Meat and Beans

(Meat, Poultry, Fish, Dry Beans, Eggs, and Nuts) – preferably lean or low fat

Two servings, for a total of 5 ounces per day

For more information about children's nutrition go to the USDA Web site at www.usda.gov.

Portions

Think small amounts when feeding pre-schoolers. Many people serve children portion sizes that are too large. This can be overwhelming for some children and cause others to overeat. A simple rule to follow is one tablespoon of each food for each year of age. For example, a three-year-old would receive three tablespoons of yogurt. Start with a small plate for a child and offer small portions of each of the foods on your menu. For new foods, offer small "try-me" portions. A child can always ask for more. Remember that variety is the key. Offer a variety of foods and let the children decide how much to eat. Children naturally know when they are hungry and when they are full. Young children's appetites can vary widely from day to day, depending on how they are growing and how active they are.

What Type of Milk is Best?

Infants to 1 Year

Breast milk or iron-fortified infant formula

1-2 Years

Breast milk, whole milk served in a cup (this is the time to stop using the bottle)

2-3 Years

2 percent milk

Children at this age can be fussy eaters. A glass of chocolate, banana, or strawberry flavored milk once a week is okay, in addition to plain white milk.

3 Years and Older

1 percent or skim milk

The Best Drinks for Children

The best drinks for children are milk and water. Children under two years of age need either breast milk or whole milk for proper brain development. After age two, children can drink reduced fat milk such as 2 percent or 1 percent. Children over four years old may have non-fat milk.

The Best Drinks for Children *(continued)*

Take a close look at juice. Fruit juice is mostly sugar water and very few nutrients. The word fruit on the label can be misleading because there is little nutritional value. Even 100 percent juice has a lot of sugar—as much as a can of soda! It is best to limit juice to $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ cup per day. Encourage children to drink water. It is good for them. Set a good example for the children by drinking water yourself.

“I’m Not Hungry.

I Don’t Want to Eat Now. No!”

- When a child says these things at meal time or snack time, the best answer you can give is, “It’s up to you.”
- Don’t force, bribe, coax, beg, or threaten a child to eat. Always remember a truly hungry child will eat.
- You may want to say “Okay, you don’t have to eat, but please keep us company while the rest of us finish eating.” If the child can sit quietly, leave the food within his reach at the table. Sometimes the child will eat to be part of the group.
- If a child starts to play with food, take it away. Tell the child there will be no food or drinks (except water) until the next feeding time (which should be a planned snack about 1 1/2 hours later).
- Be firm, even if the child starts begging for food soon after the meal has ended. Do not give the child any food, milk, or juice. Water is fine and a very good choice.
- Don’t worry—the child won’t starve. He will soon learn if he is really hungry, he needs to eat something at mealtime.

Working with a Fussy Eater

- Serve small portions on a small plate. A good guideline is one tablespoon of each meat, fruit, and vegetable dish for every year of the child’s life. For example, a two-year-old would be served two tablespoons of chicken and two tablespoons of peas.
- Don’t make an issue out of food preferences. If a child says, “Yuk, I hate peas,” a good reply is “Oh, I always thought you liked peas.”
- Try the one-bite rule. Encourage (not force) a child to eat one bite of each food on her plate.
- Don’t make a child feel guilty or ashamed. Comments such as “All good children eat peas” will not encourage a child to eat.
- Think about children’s food likes and dislikes when you plan meals and snacks:
 - Young children like mild, not spicy foods.
 - Young children like foods they can identify. They often dislike casseroles because they can’t pick out the ingredients.
 - Young children like foods that are soft, chewy, and can be held in their hands or eaten with their fingers.

Snack is Not a Four-Letter Word!

Young children have small stomachs. They can’t eat enough in one meal to last until the next mealtime. Regular meals and snacks give children the energy they need throughout the day. Plan good snacks to give growing children extra nutrients.

Healthy Snack Ideas

Fresh Vegetables

Serve with individual bowls of dip, made from cottage cheese or yogurt mixed with dried ranch dressing.

Celery

Spread with either cream cheese or peanut butter. Sprinkle with raisins or shredded carrots.

Bananas

Dip in yogurt or spread with peanut butter and roll in coconut, chopped nuts, or granola.

Sliced Apples or Crackers

Serve with a dip of peanut butter, cream cheese, honey, nuts, raisins, and coconut mixed together.

Bagels

Spread with cream cheese, cheese spread, or peanut butter and top with chopped bananas, crushed pineapple, or shredded carrots.

Quick Bread or Muffins

Make with carrots, zucchini, apples, pumpkin, bananas, nuts, dates, raisins, lemons, squash, and berries.

Flour Tortillas

Spread with refried beans or canned chili, sprinkle with grated cheese and broil; top with either sour cream or yogurt and chili sauce.

Pita Bread

Place strips of leftover meat, cheese, lettuce, and tomato in open pocket.

English Muffins

Top with spaghetti sauce and grated cheese. Broil or bake and cut into fourths.

Canned Chili

Use as a dip for Italian or French bread, biscuits, or corn bread.

Kabobs

Have children make their own using any combination of the following: cheese, fresh or canned fruit, vegetables, and sliced or cubed meat. Use thin pretzel sticks for skewers.

Popcorn

Serve plain or sprinkle with grated Parmesan cheese.

Parfait

Layer yogurt, fruit, and granola in a bowl.

Fruit Shake

Blend milk with fresh fruit (bananas, berries, or a peach). Add a dash of cinnamon and nutmeg.

Yogurt Frost

Combine fruit juice and yogurt. Add fresh fruit if desired.

Frozen Fruit Cubes

Freeze pureed applesauce or fruit juice into cubes.

CAUTION:

Be aware that infants and young children can choke easily on some foods, such as nuts, popcorn, fruit seeds or pits, pieces of hot dogs or bacon, and some raw vegetables, such as carrots and celery. Using grated or finely chopped foods may reduce the risk of choking. Never leave an infant or young child alone while eating.



Caregiver Tips

Make a “To Do” List

Make sure you get things done by making a list and updating it every day.

After you complete your list, rank each item with either an A, B, or C. The items marked “A” are the most important and need to be done first. The items marked “C” are least important. If you spend your time working on “A” items you will probably get most things done.

Children Learn by Watching You

The children in your care probably spend hours copying what you do around the house, such as stirring in their pots and pans while you cook, washing doll clothes while you wash, feeding and diapering their dolls while you do the same with a baby.

By watching you, children learn about the world around them and how to get along with others. Contacts with other adults will expand their understanding of the world. Introduce them to the mail carrier, the plumber, and other adults.

Practical Experience is Important

Learning to care for themselves is a major task for toddlers and preschoolers. Eating, washing, and dressing are skills that take patience and practice. For young children the process of doing these activities is as important as the final result. It’s very important for them to learn to do things for themselves, so allow time for this. For example, when you go out for a walk, start getting ready early enough so children can put on their own coats without rushing.

Adults Guide a Child’s World

You guide the children in playing with others in your child care home. Young children can do a lot of things for themselves. You can help children grow by allowing them to settle arguments on their own. Only when their behavior endangers themselves or others should you get involved.

Children Learn by Doing

Children need a balance of activities:

- individual and group play
- active and quiet play
- pretend play
- problem-solving activities
- using eyes and ears
- eye-hand coordination
- large muscle exercises
- running, climbing, throwing, bicycling



Reward the Good, Ignore the Bad

How can I get the children to do what I want them to do? How can I make children stop arguing and play nicely? What should I do when they misbehave? Almost all child care providers and parents ask these questions.

A good rule of thumb for behavior is, "Reward the good and ignore the bad." When children behave well, let them know you are pleased. They are more likely to continue being good than to misbehave. Give rewards for good behavior, such as smiles, hugs, kind words, and compliments. Expect good behavior. We often get what we expect!

Young children often don't realize they are misbehaving. For example, a toddler may pull another child's hair or knock over her tower and not understand that he is doing something wrong. Suggest an acceptable behavior to replace the unwanted one: "Susan doesn't want you to knock over her tower, Bill. Here are some more blocks; you can build your own tower and knock it over."

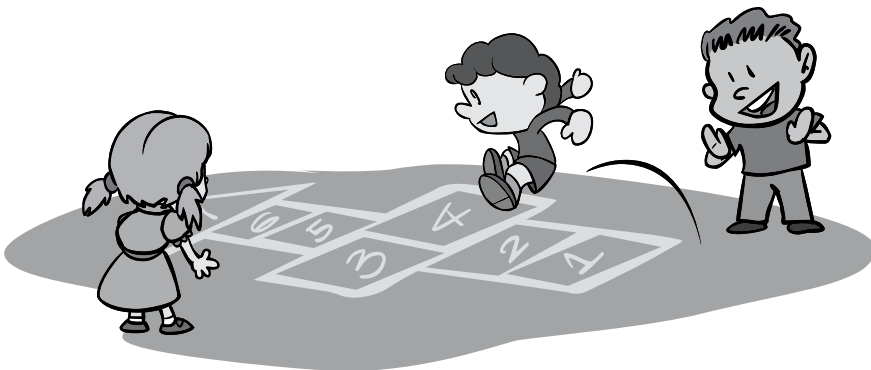
Sometimes you can stop a child's misbehavior simply by ignoring it. Ignoring bad behavior means paying no attention to it either positively or negatively. Don't scold, don't laugh, don't even look at the child. It won't matter that you're not doing anything, as long as the child is not harming herself, other children, or the house.

Your chances of success will greatly improve if you ignore misbehavior every time it occurs and don't give in. Be patient: Ignoring bad behavior may take a while to have an effect. In fact, you can expect behavior to get worse before it starts to get better.

There are times when it is best to redirect a young child to another activity to either prevent or resolve a conflict.

There are some misbehaviors you won't be able to ignore. If one child hits another child, stress that hitting "hurts!" Teach the child how to use words instead of hitting. Model for the child what you mean. Children learn faster when we show them how to do something instead of just telling them.

Take a positive approach with children. As soon as the child's behavior improves, give him attention and praise. Tell the children what they can do instead of what they can't. Try saying, "Billy, sit down on the chair," instead of, "Billy, don't stand on the chair."





Penn State Better Kid Care

www.betterkidcare.psu.edu

This training was developed and funded through cooperative efforts of the Office of Child Development and Early Learning, a joint office of the Pennsylvania Departments of Education and Public Welfare and The Pennsylvania State University, Better Kid Care Program.

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