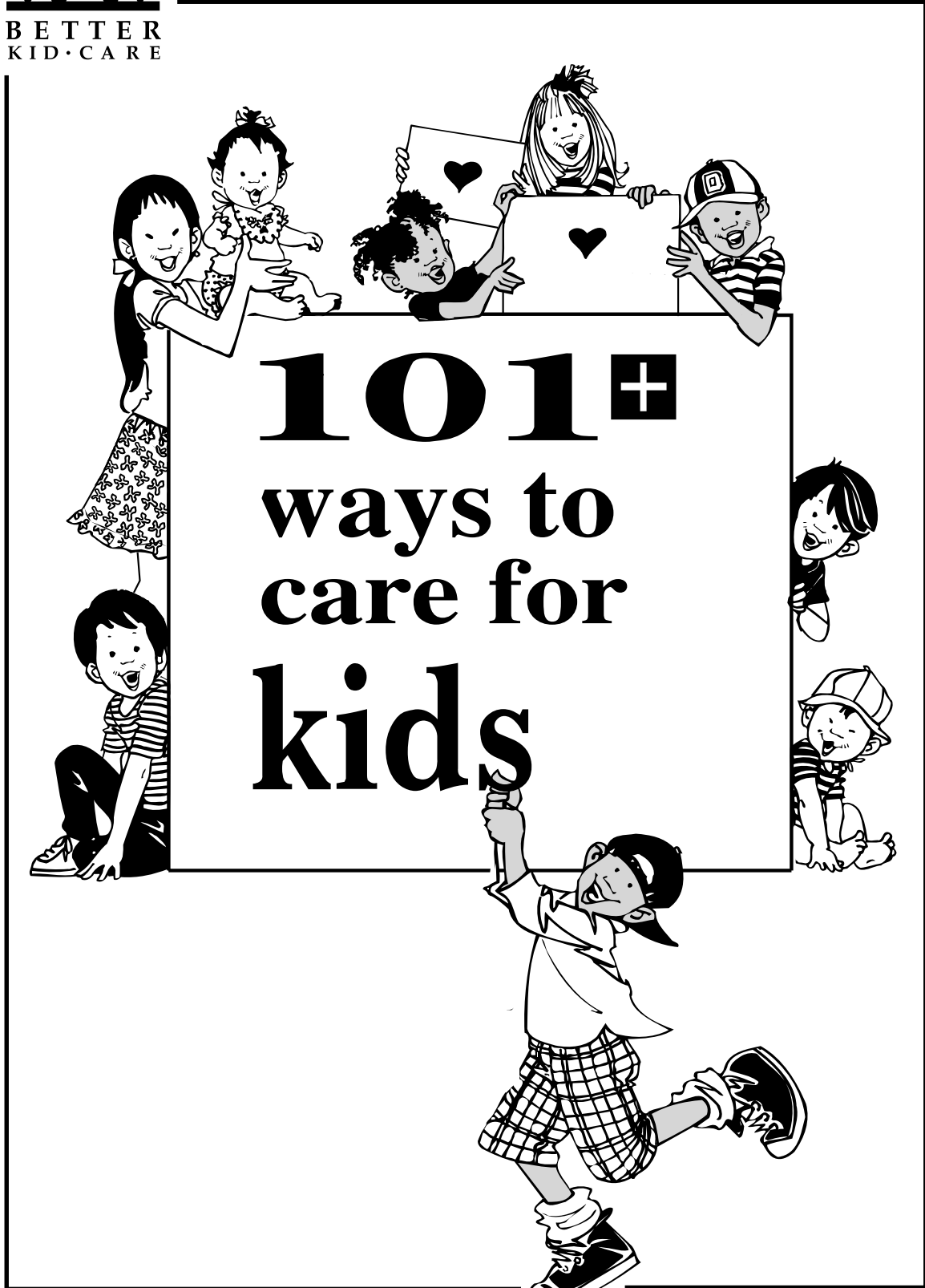




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101+
ways to
care for
kids

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Things Every Child Care Provider Should Do



Anyone who cares for other people's children should:

- Allow the parent access to the child(ren) any time.
- Wash your hands and the child's hands after diapering and using the toilet.
- Wash your hands and the child's hands before preparing food and eating meals and snacks.
- Share provided information on immunizations with the children's parent.
- Have a working smoke detector on each level where you care for children.
- Keep all cleaning supplies in their original containers, or in other labeled containers.
- Keep cleaning supplies in a locked cabinet or in an area where children cannot get to them.
- Inform the parents of the children in your care if you have a gun(s) or weapons in your home.
- Keep guns in a locked cabinet.
- Keep the ammunition for guns in a locked area away from the guns.

For more information about child care providers, regulations, registering, or licensing contact your Local Management Agency (LMA) or your Department of Public Welfare Regional Day Care Office. They are responsible for the childcare homes and centers in the county where you live.

DPW Child Care Offices:

WESTERN REGION

701 State Office Building
300 Liberty Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

CENTRAL REGION

P.O. Box 2675
Harrisburg, PA 17105

NORTHEAST REGION

100 Lackawanna Avenue
Scranton Office Building
Scranton, PA 18503

SOUTHEAST REGION

502 State Office Building
1400 Spring Garden Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Business Basics

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.

ADVERTISING FOR FAMILY DAY CARE

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

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

WORK WANTED
 Child care in my home. Full-time child care by family day care provider in Hills Grove School Area. Experienced mother of three; clean, well-kept home; planned daily activities; lunch and snacks; large out-door play area. Ages 12 months and up, M-F, 6:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Reasonable rates. References available. Phone 111-CARE.

CHILD CARE FOOD PROGRAM

The U.S. Department of Agriculture funds the Child Care Food Program. Qualified family day 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.

SMALL BUSINESS OPERATING ADVICE

Every business, including your small day care business, must follow specific state tax, health, and safety regulations. To help businesses determine which regulations they must follow, the Bureau of Small Business Development was established. The Bureau offers quick answers to many questions, usually within 24 hours. The Bureau of Small Business Development can be reached at (717)-782-3840.

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 children are watched, they can get hurt. Even when all steps have been taken for a child's safety, parents can and do sue.



If you are caring for children in your own home, check your homeowner's policy first. Some homeowner's insurance policies will cover the children in your home with an addition (rider) to your policy.

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 car to take children on field trips, picking up or dropping off children, make sure you have enough auto insurance coverage.

If you are a member of The Pennsylvania Family Day Care Providers' Association you become eligible to apply for group liability, accident, and disability insurance.

STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO REDUCE THE CHANCE OF INJURIES:

- Imagine any possible accident and prevent it.
- Childproof every room in which you care for children.
- Take a CPR 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.
- Avoid fire hazards.
- Place a smoke detector on each level of your home.
- Check smoke detector batteries at least two times per year to make sure they are working properly.
- Store all cleaning materials, medicines, and other poisonous materials in locked cabinets.
- If you own guns, keep them in a locked cabinet. Store ammunition in a locked area separate from the guns.
- If you take children places in your car, make sure they are securely fastened in an approved child safety seat.

If an accident does occur, you should keep a record of what happened. Make several copies of the Accident Report Form to have on hand to complete for all types of accidents.



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 a doctor? _____ Date _____ Time _____	
Name of doctor _____	
Doctor's instructions: _____	
Signature of child care provider _____	
Date _____	

BUDGETING

Good business plans include a budget. You want to have an idea 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 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 labelled receipts for items you purchase 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. These forms may be obtained at your local library, post office or IRS office in your area. You can get other tax information from the person who does your taxes or from your local IRS office.

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 which 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 bathroom sink
- Child-size table and chairs
- Tricycles, wagons, and other wheeled toys
- Outdoor play equipment (sandbox, swingset, wading pool)
- 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 equipment
- Telephone installation or extension
- Bulletin board
- Fire extinguisher
- Smoke detectors
- Locks for medicine and cleaning supply cabinets
- Safety plugs for electrical outlets
- Safety barriers or gates 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, laundry detergent, chlorine bleach used to make home clean
- Property taxes (partly deductible)
- Art supplies such as paint, construction paper, paste, crayons, 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
- Local fees (home occupation permit, health inspection, fire inspection)
- Liability insurance for children
- Additional care liability insurance
- Homeowner's insurance (partly deductible)
- 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

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. Decide between the high and low.

You need to think about how the payment will be handled...

- when a child is sick
- when the 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

Remember, you are running the business. The actual decision on charging is up to you.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

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

- If you have a public library use it to borrow books, toys, puzzles, films, cassette tapes, and records. Some libraries offer children’s story hours and other special events.
- Parks and Recreation Departments may offer trips, special events, and sports activities.
- Join your local day care network or agency if there is one in your area.

MARJORIE JONES 6801 Main Street Newtown, PA 54321	5601
PAY TO THE ORDER OF _____ \$ <input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>	DOLLARS
NEWTOWN NATIONAL BANK	
MEMO <u>John's child care</u>	

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 he/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 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 the parent. This eliminates later misunderstandings.

Setting Up Your Home For Child Care



WHAT TOYS DO I NEED

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

Do you 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, like a see-saw)?
- √ 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 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, light-weight 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?

DEALING WITH YOUR OWN CHILDREN

Child care providers often report one of the biggest problems they have is with their own children.

If your child seems jealous of the day 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 "still" 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 day care children aren't allowed in.
4. Do something special for your child each day. Make her favorite sandwich, play her game, read her story, sing her favorite song....

PLANNING YOUR SPACE

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 look at books, listen to tapes, or records.

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

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

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.

Build inexpensive shelves from cement blocks and boards. Arrange shelves so children can easily select toys and put them away.

Try a pyramid of circular cardboard or plastic ice cream containers, instead of one gigantic toybox.

Colorful plastic dishpans, beer boxes with flip tops, 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 which must be considered when planning the day/week.



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. Allow children to do things themselves.

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 good-bye to each child and his or her 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, a field trip, 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 some music, spend a few minutes talking about the field trip, 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 he or she may need to rest at the daycare home. Check with parents on the child's sleeping habits and how long he or she should nap.

SAMPLE DAILY PLAN

Approximate Time	Possible Activities
7:30 a.m.	Children arrive, free play. Children help prepare breakfast and lunch.
9:00 a.m.	Eat breakfast. Discuss plans for the day. Clean up from breakfast. Change diapers, use 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: never give infants small objects; they will put almost everything in their mouth.

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

Place window decals and mobiles where baby can see them.

Caution: Do not hang or fasten mobiles or toys on a crib or baby bed.

Set out old magazines for baby to 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 everyday. 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 thing over and over, such as jumping off a low platform, or playing peek-a-boo with a blanket.

Toddlers may experiment with your TV, kitchen cabinets, chest of drawers, kitchen chairs, and anything they can reach. If you don't want them to play with these then provide substitutes that will keep them occupied and happy

Good toys for toddlers:

- large plastic jars with no lids - filled with bright colored blocks
- things to push and pull
- bean bags to poke and squeeze
- a play telephone
- empty thread spools



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, blunt 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 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 - fingerpainting, paint with two colors, mixing colors, clay or playdough, 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 tri-cycle, swinging, throwing, and kicking a ball.

SMALL MUSCLE DEVELOPMENT - put puzzles together, build with blocks and construction toys such as Legos, Lincoln Logs, and Tinker Toys. Play with pegboards, buttons, and zippers.

VISUAL IDEAS - match shapes, colors, and pictures. Find things that look the same and different.

LISTENING - Play with sound cans - can filled with objects that make different noises when shaken (rice, beans, pennies). Put lid on securely. (*Never give sound cans to infants or toddlers*).

Listen to records or stories on a tape recorder.

MENTAL GAMES - play 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 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.

Older children enjoy making things - a picture of a house, building with blocks, a model car, a fort. They can finish what they start. They may like to continue one activity from one day to the next, so let them know ahead of time that their forts and tents must be taken down at the end of the day, unless it doesn't matter to you whether they stay up awhile.

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.





Working With Parents



Many child care providers say that working with parents is the hardest part of being a child care provider. It is important to let parents know your rules and what you expect before you accept the child into care. One of the easiest ways 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.

You can communicate these expectations through a new parent letter, parent interviews, contracts, newsletters, daily logs, notes, bulletin boards, and quick conversations when the parent drops-off or picks-up the child to go home.

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

Information you want to get from the parent includes:

- age of the child (birthdate)
- 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 may help to prevent misunderstandings in the future.

- ◇ Go over the daily routine with the parent.

- ◇ Provide activities for the child while you are talking with his or her 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 or her.

- ◇ 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 child and family.

- Where does the parent work? Address and telephone number?
- Does the child have special interests?
- Does he/she have a nickname?
- What are his/her eating habits?
- What are his/her sleeping habits?
- Does the child have allergies, injuries, or other health problems?
- What are the child's fears?
- Does the child have brothers or sisters?

◇ 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 during a time 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 you don't feel the arrangement will work, now is the time to suggest that the parent find other care for the child.

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/CONTRACT

This is an agreement to provide care for _____ .
(child's name)

Care will be provided _____ from _____ to _____
(days of week) (hours)

If the child is picked up later than 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 _____ If the fee is not paid by that date, a
(day of month or week)

penalty of _____ will be charged.
(percentage)

Agreed to on _____
(date)

By _____
(parent's signature)

(caregiver's signature)

SAMPLE PROGRAM RULES AND INFORMATION

AS A CHILD CARE PROVIDER, I WILL:

- give your child loving care, constant supervision, and pleasant 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 day care home
- find substitute care for your child if I will be unable to provide care

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 day 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) _____



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 sneezes
- from touching someone or something that has the germs or touching something that person handled.

Hands are more important in the spread of disease than people think. Your hands pick up germs from the 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.

Spray the changing table with disinfecting 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 many childhood diseases. Ask the parents 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.

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 footstool will help children reach the sink.

HOME SAFETY CHECKLIST

KITCHEN

- Knives and sharp tools out of reach
- Cleaning supplies and poisons out of reach in a locked cabinet
- Medicines out of 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.
- Store plastic bags in a locked cabinet or out of children's reach
- Cleaning buckets emptied immediately after use and stored out of children's reach
- Remove swinging doors that can squash children
- 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
- Adjust bathroom door lock to prevent children from being locked in
- Temperature of water adjusted to prevent scalding
- Toilet lid always kept closed
- Toddlers and young preschool children never alone in bathroom

LIVING ROOM/FAMILY ROOM

- Matches out of reach
- Electrical outlets covered
- Sharp edges on furniture covered
- Remove furniture which is not solid or steady enough for a newly standing child to use to pull himself up
- Remove coffee tables if you have toddlers
- Avoid use of portable electric heaters, kerosene, or space heaters
- Breakables out of reach
- Lamp, radio, and television cords moved so children can't trip on them
- Fireplace should have screen or glass covering
- Cords from window blinds out of reach
- Avoid placing furniture near windows to keep children from climbing 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 stored in a locked cabinet
- Ammunition is stored in a locked cabinet, separate from guns

SLEEPING AREA

- Cribs meet safety standards
- Cords from window blinds, lamps, and radios out of reach
- Remove plastic dry cleaning bags and discard or store 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 day care children

HAZARD HUNT GAME

NEED:

tray

assortment of potentially dangerous objects (pins, matches, knife, nail, medicine, balloons, hard candy, or nuts, cigarette lighter, broken glass)

TO DO:

Arrange objects on a tray. Talk about why each is dangerous. Take the tray out of the room and take away one of the objects. Have the children guess what is missing. Name other dangers in the home.

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.



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

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. Parents will feel more comfortable if you explain the accident, because children may not remember how they got hurt. If the child rides a bus or is in a car pool, send a letter home with him or her. Follow up with a call to the child's parent.

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 a 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, like "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.

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, 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 heart-beat.

CHECK THE CHILD FOR SHOCK, SERIOUS BLEEDING OR MOUTH STAINS OR BURNS THAT INDICATE POISONING.

- ◇ 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.



HEAT AND COLD

- ◇ 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.



KEEP HOT FOODS HOT AND COLD FOODS COLD

- ◇ Serve food immediately after cooking.
- ◇ Refrigerate leftovers right away.
- ◇ Never leave food out of the refrigerator for more than a total of 2 hours (less than 2 hours on a hot summer 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 in 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, 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 5 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.
- Another safe way to take formula is to pack a can of 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 partially used bottles of formula for another feeding. As the baby drinks

from a bottle, 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.)

BREASTMILK

- Breastmilk 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 2-3 ounces in the freezer in case the baby needs more milk one day. Breastmilk can be frozen for up to 3 months from when it was expressed, but must be used within 24 hours once thawed. Do not refreeze. Throw away any breastmilk that has been stored too long.
- Thaw frozen breastmilk 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 5 months of age by placing in boiling water for 5 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 breastmilk 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 breastmilk 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 breastmilk that protect babies from sickness.

- Throw away any unused formula or breastmilk. 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.



Children need a variety of foods to meet their bodies' nutritional needs. Use the Daily Food Guide to plan healthy foods for meals and snacks.

DAILY FOOD GUIDE

Plan to serve at least 1 food from each group for every meal.

BREADS AND CEREALS

6-11 servings needed per day
1 child's serving =
1 slice bread OR 1/2 cup dry cereal
OR 1/2 cup rice, pasta, cooked cereal

FRUITS

2-4 servings needed per day
1 child's serving =
1 small piece of fruit OR 1/2 cup
cooked fruit OR 3/4 cup juice

VEGETABLES

3-5 servings needed per day
1 child's serving =
1/2 cup cooked or raw vegetables

MILK AND MILK PRODUCTS

2-3 servings needed per day
1 child's serving =
1 cup milk; yogurt OR 2 ounce
cheese

PROTEIN FOODS

2 or 3 servings needed per day
1 child's serving =
2 Tbsp. cooked meat, fish or poultry
OR 1 egg OR 1/2 cup cooked
beans OR 2 Tbsp. peanut butter

Feeding Toddlers and Preschoolers

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% 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 AND OLDER—1% or skim milk

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 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.

“I'M NOT HUNGRY.”
“I DON'T WANT TO EAT NOW.”
“NO!!”

- When a child says these things at mealtime or snacktime, 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 or her reach at the table. Sometimes

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. Casse-roles are often disliked because children 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 on

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 FIZZ

Add club soda to fruit juice instead of serving soft drinks.

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.



Caregiver Tips

MAKE A "TO DO" LIST

The easiest way to make sure you "get things done," is to make a list and update 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 doing 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. Allow time for them to do things on their own. 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 day 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. But, when their behavior endangers themselves or others, you should get involved.

CHILDREN LEARN BY DOING

Children need a balance of activities:

- ◇ individual and group play
- ◇ active and quiet play
- ◇ playing pretend
- ◇ 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.

Young children often don't re-

alize 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 some misbehaviors you won't be able to ignore, such as when one child hits another.

Take a positive approach. 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."



STRESS RELIEF

Even when you do your best, some days may be too much. Whenever you feel on the edge, ready to explode, try one of these stress relievers:

- Count to ten before you speak.
- Put the children in a safe area (crib, playpen, child-proof room) and sit in a comfortable chair for a few minutes.
- During the children's naptime, forget about what you should be doing. Put your feet up, read, think about a peaceful scene, listen to music.
- Lie on the floor with your feet up on a chair. Place a cool wash cloth on your face. Stay there 5 minutes.
- Tell the children exactly what is making you angry.
- Save a special, quiet plaything

to be used only at certain times. It will be a treat for the children and will provide some quiet time for you.

- Hug a pillow.
- Turn on some music. Maybe even sing along.
- Plan some physical exercise.
- Schedule time for total relaxation.
- Eat balanced meals.
- Get enough sleep and rest.



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