

# Home-Based Child Care



Keeping the friendship & heart in home daycare

## Start-Up Kit

### Home Child Care Support

*For Home-Based Child Care Providers*

#### **Simcoe County:**

##### **Child Care Provider Connection**

1771 George Johnston Road, Minesing, Ontario L0L 1Y0

(705) 734-0761 or Email: [tdcherutti@sympatico.ca](mailto:tdcherutti@sympatico.ca)

Website: [www.thechildcareproviderconnection.com](http://www.thechildcareproviderconnection.com)

#### **Ontario Early Years Centre**

Victoria Village-Barrie Satellite

72 Ross Street, Unit 11, Barrie ON

(705) 792-7878 or Email: [oeycbarrie@simcoecommunityservices.ca](mailto:oeycbarrie@simcoecommunityservices.ca)

Website: [www.ontarioearlyyears.ca/oeyc/oeyc.htm](http://www.ontarioearlyyears.ca/oeyc/oeyc.htm)

#### **OEYC Bradford Satellite:**

118 Barrie Street, Bradford

(905) 775-3039 ext. 229

#### **OEYC Innisfil Satellite:**

8000 Yonge Street, Innisfil,

(705) 431-7666

# Welcome

We at the Child Care Provider Connection are pleased to provide you with supports offered through this start-up kit. This kit has been compiled to provide information on starting and operating a home-based child care program.

We hope that you will find the contents of this kit helpful and informative.

It is important to note that each caregiver is different and provides his/her own unique program and environment. You will create your own style and preferences as your program develops. This kit will help you design your personalized home-based child care program. It will answer many of your questions and provide you with the ability to access the many resources in your area.

For more information, contact your area Home Child Care Services program.

## Home Child Care Support Services

The goal of Home Child Care Support Services is to provide home-based caregivers with information, training, education, support and other general services.

Home Child Care Support Services can be reached at the Professional Resource Centres listed on the cover of this handbook.

## Professional Resource Centres

There are many services available to home-based caregivers at the area Professional Resource Centre such as books, periodicals, and videos, teaching aids, educational toys for loan, equipment such as laminators and die presses, computers, meeting rooms and professional development workshops.

## Acknowledgement

Home Child Care Support Services would like to thank the Child Care Providers Association, Family Day Care Association of Manitoba and the Hamilton-Wentworth Home Child Care & Registry Transitional Advisory Committee. This kit contains information from these Associations/Committees.

They have provided strong leadership for home-based caregivers for many years. Many of their resources are available for loan from your local Professional Resource Centre.

## Child Care Providers Code of Ethics

- To foster the physical, emotional, social and cognitive development of children;
- To comply with all local, provincial, and federal laws governing child care;
- To keep confidential any information about clients or potential client families;
- To provide services to families without regard to race, colour, religion, national origin or ancestry;
- To maintain appropriate records of my child care business;
- To maintain a professional attitude in working with client families;
- To accept and respect client families differences in culture, customs and lifestyle;
- To be active in the community as an advocate for services for children and families;
- To continually work to enhance the status of family day care.

*Child Care Providers Association, Ottawa Ontario*

# The Home Child Care Start-up Checklist

Step	Task	Completed
1	Is Providing Home-Based Care For You?	
2	Quality in Home Child Care...It Cannot Be Underestimated	
3	Identify Your Goals	
4	Discuss, Plan, Issues, Roles With Your Family	
5	Contact Licensed Agency (If Desired)	
6	Learn About Rules and Regulations	
7	Have I Met Business Requirements?	
8	Setting Up Your Home For Home Child Care	
9	Identify Your Philosophy	
10	Plan Your Program	
11	Develop Policies/Procedures & a Written Contract	
12	Develop A Record Keeping System	
13	Set Your Fees	
14	Advertise	
15	Prepare For Parent Interviews	
16	Plan Your Communication Techniques With Parents	
17	When Problems Arise with Parents	
18	Build Community Partnerships	
19	Enhance Your Knowledge of Young Children	
20	Taking Care of You	
21	Professional Responsibility	
22	Where To Go For More Information	
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## Step 1: Is Providing Home-Based Child Care For You?

Not everyone is suited to providing home-based child care just as some people wouldn't make great doctors, lawyers, sales clerks or artists. And sometimes the person would make a wonderful home child care provider but she/he doesn't live in a setting that is conducive and safe for children or perhaps his/her family is not supportive of having other children in their home on a regular basis.

There are many considerations to ponder before taking the step to open up your own home-based child care business. When you are in the business of taking care of people, in this case – children – you owe it to them and yourself to make sure you are in the right business. Every child deserves the very best care – with a stable, loving home child care provider in a safe, healthy environment that is conducive to a child's positive growth and development. Where a child is concerned – there is no room for errors!

Take a moment to ask yourself and reflect upon the following questions:

1. Do you really like children?
2. Do you really feel you would like caring for children 9 to 10 hour days, 5 days a week or more?
3. Are your family members (partner/spouse and children) supportive of your decision to provide home-based child care?
4. Are your family members willing to make changes to accommodate the home child care? (i.e.: share their toys, help with household chores, revise physical set-up of home to ensure it is safe, etc.)
5. Do you have a safe and healthy home environment for children to play?
6. Do you have a home large enough to accommodate the need of the children in your care? Please note the maximum number of children that you can care for in your home by law.
7. Do you have the kind of personality required to deal with parents, neighbours and your own family, especially when problems arise?
8. Are you prepared to respect and accept differences in a client family's culture, lifestyle and attitudes?
9. Do you feel comfortable and confident working in an environment where you would have very little contact with others on a daily basis?
10. Are you prepared to take responsibility of being your own boss? (i.e.: recordkeeping, planning activities with the children, etc.)

Self-assessment and reflection should be regular and ongoing part of operating your own home-based child care business.

As previously mentioned, it takes a very special person to operate a successful home-based child care business. Yes, most people interested in providing home-based child care indicate their love for children but there are many different hats caregivers wear. They are too numerous to mention here but we feel it is important to give you a flavour of what qualities are involved in this career choice. A few essential traits that are needed are:

- ❖ An *entrepreneurial spirit* in getting through the joys and challenges of managing your own business.

- ❖ The ability to **organize** and **complete priorities** in a timely manner to maintain a sense of balance between your business and personal life.
- ❖ **Confidence** in your ability to communicate with parents and children assertively and with sensitivity.
- ❖ **Good health** and **high level of energy** when working with children on a daily basis.
- ❖ An awareness of the **responsibility** that comes with operating your own business and more importantly with the trust that parents place in you when they leave their children in your care.
- ❖ The **willingness** to actively seek out and participate in learning opportunities to keep abreast of new trends, developments and ideas in working with children and families.
- ❖ A **calm personality and good sense of humour** to help you get through those difficult situations which will undoubtedly arise from time to time.
- ❖ The ability to **juggle** a number of tasks and/or roles, for example mother, wife, nurse, social worker, caregiver etc.
- ❖ A **good understanding** of yourself – knowing when to take time out for you, your family or seek out people and places that can help you rejuvenate your spirit.
- ❖ Last but not least, a **warm and nurturing** nature in working with the small people in our lives who deserve our full attention, patience and respect.

*Excerpt from “Home-Based Child Care – An Information Guide for People Interested In Providing Child Care in their Home” (April 1999), Written by the H-W Home Child Care & Registry Transitional Advisory Committee*

## Step 2: Quality in Home Child Care...It Cannot Be Underestimated

We’ve all heard how important the early years are in overall health, development and well being of a child’s life. And we shudder when we here a news report that an infant has died from being shaken by a home child care provider or that 12 children were being cared for all at the same time by one home child care provider in her home. There is a huge price to be paid for the child, parents and the overall child care system when the quality of the child care arrangement is in question.

Recent research by Doherty, Lero, Goelman, Tougas, LaGrange outlined in the national study “*You Bet I Care!*” *Caring and Learning Enviroments: Quality in Regulated Family Child Care Across Canada*” (2000) and Kyle in the report, “*Quality in Home Child Care Settings: A Critical Review of Current Theory and Research*” has identified key factors that contribute to a higher provision of quality in home child care. Here is a board overview of their findings.

**Are You Providing Home Child Care for the Right Reasons?**

The findings suggest that a home child care providers decision to consciously provide home based child care as his/her career choice contributes to the level of quality child care being provided to children in his/her care.

This seems to be a logical conclusion that certainly makes sense and can make a whole lot of difference. If you love what you do you will put your best foot forward. It will be important to you to do a good job and likely you will do everything in your power to make it work.

### **Do You Believe in Life Long Learning?**

Training and specifically, training in the area of family home child care appears to be the predictor of the quality of child care provided by home child care providers. Of course, there are many levels of training from certificate and correspondence courses offered by community colleges to workshops and seminars available by community agencies.

Canada on the whole, unfortunately, is not as well developed in family home child care training as our neighbouring nation. In many U.S. States, home child care providers are required to participate in mandatory training courses; formal accreditation programs are available and incentives are offered to home child care providers who complete a specific number of hours of training on an annual basis.

### **Are You a Community Player?**

Home child care providers who belong to a networking group and access support services that are available in the community tend to provide higher quality child care. Support services in home child care include home child care agencies, adult/child resource centres, agencies that offer training, information, resources and supports such as Home Child Care Support Services and Caregiver Networking Support Groups.

Typically, home child care providers can feel somewhat isolated when providing home based child care. Connecting with others who offer a similar service or whose job it is to support you in your profession can be a breath of fresh air. Using others as a sounding board to discuss problems, suggestions and ideas is an effective way of both helping and learning from others.

### **Gaining Respect in Your Profession**

One of the areas that may seem a bit out of an individual home child care providers realm of control is how others perceive the profession in the community. Government support and funding, legislation, the level of community supports available, participation in community planning processes, as well as support from your family, friends and neighbours also influence the quality of child care provided.

But do not feel discouraged. Even small inroads promote home based child care as a career choice can make a difference. So the next time someone raises their eyebrows when you explain what you do for a living – don't lose your cool, take a deep breath and give them your best sales pitch! The first six years of a child's life are critically important to his/her future health and development. Every quality moment you spend with a child makes a difference in that child's life and every life that child touches in the future. Who knows you may be helping the next Albert Einstein, Martin Luther King or Margaret Atwood!

### **Characteristics of Home Child Care Providers Associated with Quality in Home Based Child Care**

- Intentionally – the home child care provider is genuinely interested in working with children and families
- Family is supportive to home child care provider offering home based child care
- Home child care provider is satisfied with their work
- Home child care provider is committed to working with parents to provide quality child care
- Home child care provider seeks the support of other providers and community agencies
- Home child care provider sees themselves as business owners – takes a professional approach to operating their business
- Home child care provider offers a balanced curriculum for children in her care
- Home child care provider is willing to attend training opportunities to expand knowledge and skills in working with children and their families
- Home child care provider is an advocate for her chosen profession and/or makes a contribution to the community (i.e.: is a mentor for other home child care providers, volunteers for a good cause, etc.)
- Home child care provider recognizes the importance of balancing her work, family and personal life – she recognizes the value of taking time for themselves

## Step 3: Identify Goals of Home-Based Child Care

Home-based child care is the most frequently used type of child care in Canada. To develop a quality program, one must understand two basic issues:

1. Why do parents access home-based child care? (What are their goals and can you fill them?)

PARENTS ARE LOOKING FOR...	TO MEET THIS NEED I CAN OFFER...
Individual Attention	
Child care close to home/work	
Home setting	

2. Why do you want to offer home-based child care? (What are your goals...and what do you feel are the pros and cons of providing home-based child care?)

My Goal Is...	Pros are...	Cons are...

## Step 3: Identify Goals of Home-Based Child Care (con'd)

The child care program offered varies from home to home. This is one of the strengths of home-based child care...it adapts to the caregivers personality, strengths, and circumstances and offers parents a variety of settings with which to choose.

### What will you be offering?

Care in your home?	Care in the child's home?
Informal Structure?	Detailed Schedule?
Simple Program?	Formal Program?
Daytime only?	Evenings/weekends?

**What do you feel is important to offer young children throughout their day?**

Creative Art	Story Time	Large Muscle Activity
Dramatic Play Area	Real Life Activities	Field Trips
Music	Quiet Time	Snuggle Time
Cooking	Games	Cognitive Learning
Creative Movement	Fine Motor Activities	Science Experiences

**Is This For Me?**

- ❖ Will I enjoy it?
- ❖ Can I handle the long hours?
- ❖ Have I considered the isolation?
- ❖ Do I have support from my family?
- ❖ How will the home child care space affect my home?
- ❖ Will I enjoy it?
- ❖ Can I be assertive?
- ❖ Diplomatic?
- ❖ Empathetic?
- ❖ How will my family like the life/role changes?
- ❖ Will I enjoy it?

## Step 4: You and Your Family

### It's Your Home-Based Child Care but it's Your Home Too!

So you've decided to start a home-based child care business. The space and equipment you have and how you make use of that space and equipment are important considerations in the design of your home-based child care.

Are you planning to use all areas of your home, only the prime living areas such as the family room, kitchen and bathroom or are you dedicating an area of your home-such as a playroom, to your home-based child care?

#### Keeping Peace in the Family

Involving your family in the planning is key to the overall success of your business. Remember, it is your home **first** and **foremost**. When all the daycare children have left for the day, your home needs to provide the comfort your family requires and deserves.

An open discussion with all your family members will help you plan what space is available and what areas are off-limits to the daycare children. Is it important for your 4 year old daughter, Jessie, that the daycare children do not invade her bedroom? Does your spouse need a quiet and relaxing place where he/she can unwind at the end of the day to watch T.V. or read the newspaper away from the active inquiring minds of the children? Respecting your family's needs for privacy will go a long way towards developing a balance between your business and personal life.

Topics of discussion (how do your family members feel and how are you going to plan for any unexpected problems?)

1. They will be sharing their space with other families...
  - a. Their living room/kitchen
  - b. Their toys
  - c. What places, things in your home are off-limits to day care children?
  
2. They will be sharing you with other families...
  - a. Your time
  - b. Your energy
  - c. When will special time with everyone occur?
  
3. Roles will be changing in the family...
  - a. Yours
  - b. Your children's
  - c. Your spouse/partner
  
4. Other issues:

## **Transforming Your Home into a Safe and Somewhat Temporary Play Haven**

In this section, we will focus on giving you helpful tips and ideas on how to maximize your space and equipment without dedicating specific play space within your home to your home-based child care.

### Furniture

1. Stackable chairs can be stacked in sets of two to become a booster seat.
2. Attach Velcro to opposite ends of a bath towel; secure around back and seat of upholstered chairs to protect them from spills, etc. Completely washable
3. Protect your sofa cushions by making special slip covers with Velcro fasteners that can be removed and washed when the daycare is not operating. For sofa arms, place a large bath towel over the arm and tuck the one side under the cushion. Easy to remove and wash.
4. Use a flannel sheet as a table protector for your coffee table or table cloth for your kitchen table. The flannel is excellent for absorbing spills and with a quick wash is ready to use again.
5. Venture out to garage sales. Buy inexpensive, sturdy, adult coffee/kitchen tables and chairs where the legs can be cut down to child size.
6. Lawn lounge chair cushions make comfortable mats for sleeptime. Sew a sheet together in a sleeping bag style that can fit over the lounge chair cushion as a blanket.

### Entranceway

1. Use a portable bulletin board display by the entranceway to post information for parents such as the menu plan, fire evacuation plan, etc. This can be in the front closet when the daycare is not operating.

### Kitchen

1. Designate a cupboard and/or shelf in your kitchen to store any dry foods and supplies for the daycare that is off-limits to family members.
2. Use stickers to identify foods in the refrigerator to remind family members that these items are for daycare use only.

### Storage

1. Large pads of paper can be stored under the sofa or a bed.
2. Use the top half of shelving units to display breakable objects and family mementos; use the bottom section for children's toys and books.
3. A gently used change table placed in a cupboard makes an excellent storage unit.
4. Secure an expandable mug rack inside the closet door for children to hang their coats. A multi-pocket shoe bag hung inside the closet is an ideal place to store mittens and hats.
5. Keep your eye out for homes that are in the process of having their kitchens remodelled. As if you can purchase the discarded cupboards and mount them in the children's playroom for use as storage shelves/cupboards.

### Bathroom

1. Use a plastic skirt rack and suspend from the towel bar in the bathroom for the children to clip their individual face cloths to dry.
2. An expandable laundry drying rack can be placed in the bathtub for children to hang their hand towels to dry.
3. Have a small stool handy for children to use for easy reach in the bathroom or kitchen sinks.
4. To avoid children climbing on counters to see themselves in the mirror, prop a small mirror on the counter that they can use.
5. When the daycare is in use, throw a bath towel over the bathroom door so it can't close completely. This will ensure children cannot lock themselves in.

6. Find a cupboard in the kitchen and bathroom area where personal and hazardous products (cleaning supplies, medications, etc.) can be stored safely out of the reach of children. For extra safety, secure with a locking device.
7. Bath products can be safely stored in a tiered wire rack in one corner of the bath/shower, high enough so it is out of reach of the children.

### Safety

1. Keep children out of off-limit areas by placing an eye-hook latch on the outside top of the door. This technique can be used for screen and patio doors to ensure the safety of the children in the warmer weather.

## **Step 5: Contact Licensed Agency (if desired)**

Home child care providers which are affiliated with an agency licensed by the Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services are screened, trained and monitored by the agency. Please contact the agencies in your area for further information.

## **Step 6: Learn About Rules and Regulations**

### **Operating a Home-Based Child Care Business Independent of an Agency**

In the Province of Ontario, *independent* caregivers (not affiliated with a Licensed Home Child Care Agency) may provide care for up to 5 children under ten years of age in addition to their own children at any given time in their home.

#### **Example 1**

If you provide care for 1 infant and 2 preschool children during the day, you may also provide after-school care to 2 school age children in addition to your own.

#### **Example 2**

If you provide care for 1 infant, 2 toddlers and 2 preschool children during the day, you are at your maximum number of children; hence you cannot care for any additional school-age children after school.

Home child care providers are professionals who have made a conscious decision to provide child care in his/her home as a career. Home child care providers are committed to providing quality child care and recognized the importance of:

- The early years of a child's life and providing a program which enhances the health, development and well-being of children in their care
- The support of their own family while they provide child care in their home
- Participating in professional development and training on a regular basis to continually expand his/her knowledge and skills and keep up to date on emerging trends in the early childhood education field
- Obtaining support and assistance from other home child care providers, Caregiver Support Networking Groups and various community agencies to reduce the feeling of isolation
- Involving parents in their home child care business

- Being involved in the community planning processes and other volunteer-related activities pertaining to child care
- Balancing her work, family and personal life

### **Operating a Home-Based Child Care Business with a Licensed Home Child Care Agency**

Caregivers working with a Licensed Home Child Care Agency may care for five or fewer children under the age of ten years of age. In addition, there are limits on the number of children in specific age groups, which can be cared for in the caregivers home:

- ❖ 2 children under the age of two
- ❖ 3 children under the age of three
- ❖ To a maximum of five children under the age of ten (including the caregivers own children who are under the age of six)

For information on how to place children ten years of age or older, contact the Licensed Home Child Care Agencies.

Caregivers with a licensed home child care agency can also provide care privately. It is important for parents to be aware of whether the caregiver is presently providing care through the agency. Caregivers who do not have a child currently placed by the agency are not being monitored.

**Please Note:** Should you have any questions regarding the number of children you are legally allowed to have in your home during the hours you are providing care, please contact the Child Care Provider Connection.

\*\*Should you wish to care for more than 5 children plus your own at any given time in your home, you would require to be licensed under the *Ontario Day Nurseries Act* and meet all of its regulations.

For more information, contact a Program Advisor of the Ministry of Community Social Services.

*Above information is an excerpt compiled by the H-W Home Child Care & Registry Transitional Advisory Committee*

### **Benefits of Operating a Home-Based Child Care Business Independent of an Agency**

An independent home-based caregiver is solely responsible for the service she/he provides to the children and families in her/his care. The caregiver decides how the business will be operated in all areas including:

- ❖ The development of policies, procedures and contracts
- ❖ The days and times the business will offer service is set according to the caregivers family schedule, for example, whether child care is available on a full/part-time basis, accept early drop offs or late pick ups, etc.
- ❖ How much to charge families for the services provided
- ❖ The number of children cared for within the legislative requirements, for example the caregiver may only want to care for toddlers or preschoolers
- ❖ Whether the caregiver will provide backup care to families when they are not available

An independent home-based caregiver has the flexibility and control to decide whether a particular family is a good match taking into consideration the manner in which she/he operates her/his business,

the other children presently receiving care as well as the caregivers own family needs and schedules, etc. Lastly, should a problem arise regarding the child care arrangement, the caregiver would have the ability to deal directly with the parent on how the issue could be resolved.

### **Benefits of Operating a Home-Based Child Care Business Upon Joining a Home Licensed Home Child Care Agency**

The Licensed Home Child Care Agency offers the caregiver the opportunity to work as an independent subcontractor for an organization licensed by the Ministry of Community and Social Services. The agency is responsible for ensuring that the rules and regulations of the *Ontario Day Nurseries Act* are followed. Some of the features that may be available to you when you join a Licensed Home Child Care Agency are:

- ❖ Set policies and procedures that both parents and caregivers follow
- ❖ A support network provided to both parents and caregivers
- ❖ Guaranteed payment to the caregiver for services provided
- ❖ Back-up care supplied for day care children
- ❖ Some equipment supplies
- ❖ Appropriate and necessary forms supplied
- ❖ Advice and guidance given regarding offering safe child care environment
- ❖ Liability insurance coverage offered to caregivers
- ❖ Financial guidance and income tax assistance offered for professional development
- ❖ Agency promotes, markets and advertises home-based child care
- ❖ Access to day care subsidized parents
- ❖ Encouragement in offering a quality day care program in home setting

*Above information by the H-W Home Child Care & Registry Transitional Advisory Committee*

## **Step 7: The Business Side of Home-Based Child Care**

### **When to Register Your Home-Based Child Care Business**

Caregivers who provide child care independently or with a licensed home child care agency are considered to be self-employed business operators and are subject to the laws and requirements to small business. Since 1991, it is a requirement under the Business Names Act for all small businesses in Ontario to register their name if it is different from their own name. For example if your home-based child care business is under your name – Jane Smith, then you are not required to register your name. However, if Jane Smith names her business “Jane Smith’s Home Child Care”, then she is required to register her business name.

A name search can be completed at the time you are registering your business. The search will determine if the name you are considering is being used by another business in Ontario. There is a cost for registering and it must be renewed every 5 years provided there is no charge to your business name.

You can now register on-line at: <http://www.cbs.gov.on.ca/obc/english/4TG2AW.htm>

For more information and costs please contact:

*Ministry of Consumer and Business Services*

## **Income Tax & Record Keeping**

As previously indicated, caregivers who are providing child care independently or with a licensed home child care agency are operating a small business from their homes and are, therefore, required by law to file an income tax return on a yearly basis. When you operate a home-based child care business, you may deduct business expenses on your income tax return. For example, advertising, long-distance telephone calls, food, office and play supplies, etc., that pertains to your home-based child care business.

For more information on income tax and record keeping when operating a home-based child care business, contact Canada Customs and Revenue Agency at 1-800-959-2221 and request the guide entitled, “*Using Your Home for Day Care*”. Information can also be obtained by visiting Revenue Canada’s website at [www.ccr-aadrc.gc.ca](http://www.ccr-aadrc.gc.ca)

## **What You Should Know About Insurance Before Opening a Home-Based Child Care Business...**

There are different types of insurance coverage’s you need to consider before opening a home-based child care business, they are:

- ❖ Liability Insurance
- ❖ Motor Vehicle Insurance (if you are planning to transport the children who are in your care)

### *Liability Insurance*

Although it is not legally required, in practical terms it is essential when providing child care in your home. Accidents do happen – and if a child is injured while in your care, it is possible that you could be liable.

It is essential that anyone providing care should ensure that their liability insurance (whether homeowner’s or tenants package) includes coverage of all individuals who come onto their premises – day care children, parents, other visitors, etc. It is strongly suggested that if this is not available under your current insurance policy that you obtain a separate day care policy.

In any event, you should notify your residential insurance company that you are providing child care in your home. Most residential insurance policies contain exclusions regarding commercial or business activities in the home that can affect the dwelling and household contents coverage’s. Your residential insurance company may require a copy of the Certificate of Insurance if you have a separate insurance policy for your home-based child care.

The amount of insurance recommended by the Insurance Bureau of Canada is at least a minimum of three million dollars per incident.

### *Motor Vehicle Insurance*

If you are planning to transport children in your care in a motor vehicle, contact your automobile insurance company to make sure you have appropriate coverage. This would be necessary if you are

planning on going on field trips with the children and is beneficial to have should an emergency situation arise.

There are several helpful guides that you may wish to request that can assist you if you are planning to transport the children in your motor vehicle; they include regulation laws on motor vehicle insurance specific to home-based caregivers; “*Keep Them Safe – A Guide to Children’s Car Seats*” and “*What You Should Know About Air Bags*”. Remember to use appropriate child restraints when transporting the children in your care.

### **Zoning By-Laws and Other Contractual Considerations**

It is important to investigate the zoning by-laws in your area to ensure there are no restrictions which would prevent you from opening a home-based child care business. Zoning by-laws vary from area to area. The same applies if you are renting or leasing your home; check your contractual agreement or discuss your plan with the property owner prior to starting your business.

**In the City of Barrie, Municipal By-law Enforcement requires anyone operating a self-employed business from their home to have a Business license. For home child care the cost is \$100.00 annually and you must have your property taxes in good standing (paid) and your home must meet the required zoning bylaw (residential) . If you require more information regarding this part of your business process please contact Donna at 734-0761**

### **Resume**

Home-based caregivers often suggest maintaining an up-to-date resume. This is a helpful tool that can be used in discussions with parents about your training, experience and skills in working with children when talking to them on the phone or on their first visit to your home. It is suggested that you maintain a list of possible contacts that you can pass onto the parents as references. It is particularly beneficial, when possible, to give names of the people who are aware of your background and experience working with children, for example, Sunday School classes, youth groups or parents who presently are using or have used your child care services.

### **Other Screening Processes**

There are a number of other screening processes you need to be aware of and may want to consider implementing as part of your home based child care business. This section will attempt to briefly describe the screening process and also identify the limitations of these processes in terms of the information they offer to parents.

#### ***Police Check***

In the Simcoe County area you can obtain a “no record certificate” from the Police Department. You would need to go to the Central Police Department in person and provide the staff two pieces of identification; preferably with a photo. This certificate is granted if the applicant has not been convicted of a criminal offence in Canada or for which a pardon has not been granted. Other adults in your home would have to go through the same process outlined above in order to obtain a “no record certificate.

A “no record certificate” is severely limited in the information it provides because:

- ❖ It will not identify people who may have committed crimes but who have never had contact with the police (they were never caught)
- ❖ A person may receive this certificate even if they have warrants for their arrest, are currently facing charges before the courts, have been found guilty of an offence but received an absolute or conditional discharge, or offences that were committed when the person was a juvenile
- ❖ It may reveal a record of conviction that does not relate to the individuals stability to do this care giving job
- ❖ If someone has legally changed his/her name, any criminal record that person may have had under his or her previous name will not show up on police records unless that name is checked
- ❖ If someone lies about his/her name, or illegally obtains false identification, no record may show up for the person whose name and date of birth appear on the false identification
- ❖ Individuals may be convicted of various offences under the provincial statutes and not under the *Criminal Code of Canada*. These offences, including some sexual abuse offences, may not show up on police records at all
- ❖ A “no record certificate” is only true and valid on the date it was researched. If someone is convicted of a criminal offence after the check was conducted, that information will obviously not appear on the report.

A “no record certificate” should never be regarded as a statement or guarantee of an individual’s character and conduct or the first, last or only form of screening conducted.

### ***Fire Inspection***

The process for requesting fire inspections and the cost of having the completed my vary depending upon the specific municipality in which you reside. In Simcoe County, fire inspections can be requested at:

City of Barrie  
Fire Department  
65 Vespra Street  
728-3199

There is generally a cost to have a fire inspection conducted of your home. Prior to the inspection, caregivers should ensure they have one (1) working Underwriters Laboratories of Canada listed D. C. battery smoke alarm on every floor level containing sleeping areas, including those used by the home-based child care business. In addition, there must be installed at least one (1) Underwriters Laboratories of Canada portable fire extinguisher mounted near the kitchen area.

### ***Medical***

Caregivers and other adults and children who reside in the home should have their immunizations up-to-date. In addition, the caregiver should have a 2 Step TB test completed.

### ***References***

Develop a list of references that you can pass on to the parents in the interview. When possible, references should include both past and present clients as well as people who can provide you with character reference. Always check with the people you intend to use as references to ensure that they are comfortable with this and do not mind you giving out their name and number.

*Above information by the H-W Home Child Care & Registry Transitional Advisory Committee*

## Step 8: Setting Up Your Home Child Care Environment

### Home Checklist

#### *Physical Environment*

	Have you decided which parts of your home are for the children and which parts are off limits?
	Is your home clean?
	Do you clean and disinfect all the toys regularly?
	If there are pets present, are they currently vaccinated against rabies? (Provide certificate)
	Has your home been inspected by the fire department? Do you test smoke alarms on a regular basis (monthly recommended) to ensure they are in working order? Do you have a fire extinguisher that meets the Fire Departments specifications (minimum 2A 10BC rated)?
	Do you have a carbon monoxide detector in your home? (It is strongly recommended by the Fire Department that all homes and apartments install a carbon monoxide detector)
	Are toxins, medicines and weapons stored properly?

#### *Health*

	Do you request contact names and phone numbers from the parents for emergencies? (It is important to keep this information up-to-date and to ensure the people listed as emergency contacts are aware that they may be called to respond in an emergency situation. It is suggested that you request photo identification prior to releasing a child in someone else's care).
	Do you ask for medical, dental history and proof of immunization from all parents?
	Are you familiar with the signs and symptoms of childhood illnesses?
	Do you ensure that the parents are contacted when their child is ill?
	If sick children are in care, do you keep them apart from the other children?
	Is your home a smoke-free home?
	Are you planning to administer medications to the children in your care? (i.e. What processes have you put in place – consent form signed by the parent identifying the type of medication, date/time/dosage to be administered, etc.)
	Do you have a routine for proper hand washing after washroom and before meals and snacks?

#### *Safety*

	Is safety considered in the purchase and the use of toys and other equipment for use by the children? (i.e. car seats, etc.)
	Are the toys inspected on a regular basis for damage and removed when necessary?
	Is there a safe play area in the house? (i.e.: Appropriate use of safety gates, plugs over electrical outlets, no frayed extension cords, hazardous products and appliances out of child reach, etc.)
	Is the outdoor play area and equipment safe? (i.e. fenced yard, no sharp corners or slivers on play equipment)
	Are you aware of appropriate clothing to avoid injury on play equipment?
	Do you ensure there is sufficient supervision of the children during play?
	Are you up-to-date with CPR and First Aid Training? (Provide certificate)
	Do you have a First Aid Kit? Do you have a travel first aid kit if transporting children in your motor vehicle?
	Do you have an emergency/fire evacuation plan?
	Are emergency telephone numbers posted by the phone?
	Do your advertising materials (i.e. flyers, business cards, etc.) protect the safety and privacy of the children in your care, yourself, your own family? (Doesn't identify your last name and address)

### *Routine*

	Do you provide a consistent and age-appropriate routine for play, snacks, mealtime and sleep/rest for the children?
	Do you have a separate sleep area for the children? Have you considered how you will handle a child who does not sleep? Have you considered the options and/or opportunities for flexibility?

### *Play/Activities*

	Do you provide age-appropriate stimulation to promote physical (fine and gross motor), emotional, social and intellectual development?
	Do you limit the amount and type of T.V. programs the children watch (age-appropriate and educational)
	Are toys/equipment appropriate for the age of the children in your care?
	Does the equipment/materials used foster the child's independence? (i.e.: child sized equipment /materials so a child can hang up his/her own coat, serve themselves at snack/lunch, shelving units where the child can choose his or her own toy, etc)
	Do you provide for outdoor as well as indoor activities on a regular basis?

### *Meals*

	Do you provide nutritious meals and snacks on a daily basis?
	Do you provide snacks between meals? Do you serve sweet, sticky foods as snacks on a limited basis?
	Is the type and amount of food served appropriate for the age of the child?
	Are the meals served in a pleasant place?
	Are knives, forks, spoons, dining tables and chairs age appropriate?
	Do you have any formal food safety training?
	Do you have allergy awareness information?
	Do you ensure written menus are available?

### *Discipline*

	Do you use positive ways to discipline children? (i.e. encouragement, redirection, warnings, etc.)
	Does the discipline method maintain a child's self-esteem?
	Is it right for the child's age? Is it time-limited? Is it free of physical as well as emotional abuse?
	Is it the same as the parents discipline practices, if appropriate?

### *Storage*

	Is there space for the children to store their belongings? (i.e. coat, boots, special items from home)
	Is there a place to store the children's artwork until it is ready to go home?
	Do you have space to store art & craft supplies, outdoors toys and indoor toys that are not used on a daily basis? (i.e. closet space, under beds, outdoor shed, etc.)

*Other Business Considerations*

	Have you developed a written philosophy statement, policies and procedures that can be shared at the first meeting you have with a parent? Do you provide the parents a copy of this information?
	Have you developed a written contract, which is to be signed by the parents prior to starting care?
	Do you have a resume that can be shared with parents outlining your training and experience
	Do you have a list of references of families you have previously and/or currently providing child care for that parents can contact?
	Have you determined the days and hours you will offer child care, including whether you will offer part time, part day care, on call child care, back-up care when you are not available?
	Have you formulated a plan on issuing receipts to parents?
	Have you developed a format for conducting parent interviews? (i.e. list of questions you need to address with the parent on their expectations, child care and the needs of their child, tour of home, etc.)
	Have you considered how you would like to introduce new children to your home and how you will communicate this to parents? (i.e. suggesting the parent come for one or more visits with the child prior to the start date, gradual enrolment, etc.)
	Will you encourage parents to visit your home unexpectedly during the hours child care is provided?
	Have you made parents aware of other adults who will be in the home during business hours?
	Do you have proof of liability insurance for your home-based child care business?
	Do you have proof of motor vehicle insurance if you are planning to transport the children in your car during business hours?
	Are you providing care within legislative requirements? (Please refer to the section on “ <i>Rules and Regulations</i> ”
	Do you have a mechanism for ongoing communication with parents? (i.e. parent bulletin board, communication book, monthly newsletters, parent meetings, progress reports, etc.)

*Above information by the H-W Home Child Care & Registry Transitional Advisory Committee*

## Backyard Play Structures

If you decide to install play equipment in your BACKYARD, here are a few safety tips to keep in mind:

- ❖ Assemble and install the equipment in strict accordance with the manufacturers instructions
- ❖ Keep the instruction sheets. You will need them to make repairs or to order parts
- ❖ Make sure all nuts and bolts are tight and continue to stay tight over time by regularly checking them for looseness, wear and tear, rust, etc.
- ❖ Remove or cover sharp edges. Any exposed bolt that extends beyond the nut should be replaced with a shorter bolt or covered with an acorn nut or plastic cup
- ❖ Adjust swing heights so children can get on and off safely
- ❖ Location is important – keep swings away from fences, trees and other children’s areas to avoid collision
- ❖ Place the equipment on a soft surface. Sand or wood chips work well to cushion falls. If you are using moulded vinyl play units (Little Tykes or Step 2) these should be placed on an impact-absorbing surface. Grass does nothing to cushion a fall.
- ❖ If you choose to cement the structure into the ground, make sure the concrete footings are recessed into the ground and are not exposed at any time. Children can trip and fall onto them
- ❖ If your equipment has a metal slide, position it away from the sun. Young skin can get burned from the metal slides that sit in the full summer sun
- ❖ Make sure there isn’t any part of the structure that could trap a child’s head or limbs
- ❖ Maintenance is VERY important. Check all components weekly and monthly to ensure everything is tight, well fitting and in good working order. Replace broken or worn pieces immediately
- ❖ Plastic parts can weaken over time if left outside year-round. Check these carefully every spring to make sure they are still strong.
- ❖ Never allow children skipping ropes to be tied to the equipment. These can strangle small children

Remember! Preschoolers need constant supervision and should never be left alone on play structures. Older children often try and make equipment more challenging and use it in unexpected ways. Younger children may try to mimic this more challenging play not realizing their physical limitations. Consider teaching children how to use the equipment safely.

For more information, contact your local Professional Resource Centre, Public Health Unit or Health Canada, *Regional Product Safety Office* at (416) 973-4705.

*Written by Christine Simpson, Product Safety Officer, Health Canada*

## Toy Selection & Activities

The following is a guideline only to provide suggestions on appropriate activities based on a child's age and level of development. It is important to consider each child as an individual and base activities on their interests and abilities.

<b>Birth – 1 year</b>	<b>1 - 2 years</b>	<b>2 – 3 years</b>
Nursery Mobiles Unbreakable Mirrors Cradle/Floor Gyms Squeeze & Squeaky Toys Teething Rings Cloth Books Rubber Hammers Push/Pull Toys Shape and/or Colour Toys Soft Blocks	Pegboards Building Blocks Nesting Cups Stacking Rings Assortment of Animals Cobblers Bench Simple Puzzles Toy Telephones Large Crayons Small Slides	Finger Puppets Play dough & Cookie Cutters Threading Beads Stacking Toys Nesting Cups Purses, Hats, Dress-up Clothes Riding Toys Chalk Boards Child-sized & child safe scissors
<b>3 –4 years</b>	<b>4 – 5 years</b>	<b>5 – 6 years</b>
Lotto and Matching Games Lego Blocks Climbers Sewing Cards Painting Activities 5 – 10 Piece Puzzles Construction Manipulative Toys Tricycles Fisher Prices/Little Tykes Toys Lego Blocks	Dominoes Pencils/Markers/Crayons Hoops & Skipping Ropes 20 Piece Puzzles Carpentry Tools Tinker Toys Housekeeping Equipment Stencils/Tracing Tools Word/Number Games Construction Toys	Board Games Kites Bicycles Marbles Yo-yo's Craft Kits Advanced Construction Toys Educational Computer Games Pencils/Markers/Stencils Interlocking Puzzles
<b>6 – 9 years</b>	<b>Wish List</b>	
Board Games Educational Computer Games Bicycles Kites Reading/Writing Activities Assisting the caregiver by being the “helper” with the younger children Sports Advanced Construction Toys Craft, Woodworking & Science Kits Developing Plays/Skits		

## Step 9: Identify Your Philosophy

Prior to providing care for their children, parents are going to want to know your philosophy. Are you ready to answer their questions?

What are your practises in regards to?

- ❖ Snack/meal time?
- ❖ Sleep Time?
- ❖ Behaviour Management?
- ❖ Toilet Training?
- ❖ Care of ill children?

To get you thinking about what your values and beliefs are as they pertain to children, complete the following statements in as many ways as you can:

“I believe....”

- ❖ Children should be treated with respect.
- ❖ Children develop at their own rate
- ❖ Children need a variety of play experiences, etc.

Your philosophy is considered to be the foundation piece of your home-based child care business. It will help you to develop your policies and procedures and this information should be included in your agreement/contract with the parent (see the step in the index for more information on developing policies, procedures and a written contract).

It is very important for home child care providers to thoroughly discuss their philosophy and child rearing practices with a prospective parent in the initial interview. From our experience, issues and problems between the home child care provider and parent often arises weeks or months later in the child care arrangement when they do not share the same philosophy, values and child rearing practices. It is best to try to determine from the onset whether your philosophies match those of the parent and if they do not, you need to give careful thought as to whether you feel this is the best arrangement for you, your own family as well as the child and parent who will be using your services.

## Step 10: Plan Your Program

What is your schedule for your home-based child care? What activities and routines are you going to offer throughout the day?

Whether you offer a structured schedule or very flexible one you must remember that a quality environment for children has some type of routine, so the child knows what to expect in their day and has some control, as well as stimulating activities and materials. Consider if/when/ and how you will offer:

- ❖ Craft Time
- ❖ Story Time
- ❖ Outdoor Time
- ❖ Free Play

The charts in the Appendix are provided to help you in your planning and can be posted to let parents know what you and the children will be doing.

**Sample Program Plan**  
***What Your Day May Look Like***

7:00 – 9:00	Arrival Time Quiet Activities (books, puzzles, building blocks, Fisher Price toys, etc.)
9:00 – 9:30	Group Time (story, songs & games) Washroom & Snack
9:30 – 10:00	Craft/Sensory Play
10:00 – 11:00	Outdoor play (weather permitting) or Active Play indoors
11:00 – 11:45	Washroom & Educational Television show or Children Help With Setting Up Lunch
11:45 – 12:30	Lunch
12:30 – 1:00	Washroom and Quiet Activities (story before rest time)
1:00 – 2:30	Rest or Quiet Time Activities
2:30 – 3:00	Washroom & Snack
3:00 – 4:00	Outdoor Play (weather permitting)
4:00 – 6:00	Departure time Quiet Activities

Remember the above is just an outline. It is important to consider the children's' ages, moods and how you are feeling when planning your program on any given day. One of the strengths in home-based child care is that you can be flexible and make modifications to your program to accommodate the children's' interests and needs.

**Tips for Program Planning**

1. Keep your plans simple. The best plans are the ones that allow the most flexibility.
2. Allow sufficient time for preparation and clean up of activities
3. Try to schedule free play (activities that require minimum supervision) for times when you will be occupied such as when you are preparing lunch.
4. Transition times (when children are dropped-off, picked-up, washroom, etc.) are often most hectic times of day. Have a variety of quiet activities (i.e.: puzzles, books, table toys, etc.) available for the children to play with at these times.
5. Plan a quiet group activity before rest to settle the children down
6. Providing snack at story time keeps little ones sitting down and listening
7. Always be prepared to change your plans if something unexpected arises. For example observing and having a discussion about a new construction crew on your street can be as interesting and enriching to preschoolers as craft or a story
8. Don't be intimidated by the idea of programming. Remember, on a busy day, creative play can be as simple as colouring on a blank piece of paper

9. Programming is not reading, writing and arithmetic. Remember that young children learn through play. The most important “thing” you can teach a child is the joy of exploring and enjoying the world around them. Offer the children a variety of materials; make use of the environment around them, encourage them and praise them for their efforts. Let them make decisions and help you plan your day.

## **Step 11: Develop Policies/Procedures & a Written Contract**

Generally, home child care providers who present themselves in a professional manner and operate their home child care as a business tend to have more success than home child care providers who choose to operate on a more informal basis. Professionalism and the use of sound business practices demonstrate to the parent your commitment to providing quality child care and conveys the message that you take your job seriously.

Often home child care providers begin providing home child care when a friend, family member or neighbour approaches them to see if they would be interested in taking care of their child/ren. Many times the home child care provider has not even considered providing home child care and, therefore; when the moment arrives and someone approaches them informally, they are not prepared and may enter into an agreement without giving it careful consideration.

Based on our experience, we strongly suggest that home child care providers develop written policies/procedures and a written contract that can be used with parents of children in their care. Policies and procedures clearly outline for the parent the home child care providers’ practices in specific areas that relate to the provision of child care, for example:

- ❖ What the home child care provider will do when a child in her care becomes sick.
- ❖ What strategies the home child care provider will use when disciplining a child in care.
- ❖ How the home child care provider will ensure health, safety and well-being of children in her care, etc.

Typically, policies and procedures address the following areas with regard to the provision of care:

- ❖ Confidentiality
- ❖ Emergency procedures
- ❖ Releasing the child to an unknown person
- ❖ Illness policy for both the home child care provider/her family as well as the children in her care
- ❖ Mealtimes, rest times, outdoor play, etc.
- ❖ Discipline practices
- ❖ Back-up care
- ❖ Field trips & outings, etc.

It is recommended that the home child care provider ask the parent to find alternate care in the event that their child is ill and unable to attend the home child care or if the home child care provider is unable to provide child care due to illness, doctor’s appointment or vacation. It is important to note when a home child care provider provides back up care, he/she can be held legally liable should a child be injured or abused by the back-up home child care provider. It is imperative for the parent to meet any adults who may be left to care for their child even for a short period of time and give their approval in writing for their child to be left in this individuals care.

A contract on the other hand is a formal agreement between a home child care provider and a parent as it relates to the care of the child while under the supervision of the home child care provider. A contract is useful to:

- ❖ Outline and confirm what has been agreed upon between the parent and the home child care provider with regard to the provision of child care (i.e. start date of care, fees, when payment of fees is due, how care can be terminated by either party, etc.)
- ❖ Review established protocols and/or resolve any disagreements or differences that may come up during the provision of care.
- ❖ Provide supporting documentation should a home child care provider ever have to go to small claims court due to irreconcilable differences, for example: if a parent has an outstanding account with the home child care provider for care provided.

Please refer to the Appendix for sample policies/procedures and a written contract that you may wish to use with parents who use your home daycare services.

## **Step 12: Develop a Record Keeping System**

You have chosen to operate your own business and along with this exciting venture comes the responsibility to maintain appropriate records. (See the Appendix for sample forms). Canada Customs and Revenue Agency produces a helpful guide entitled, “*Using Your Home for Day Care*”, which you may be interested in requesting.

### **One should keep records of the following:**

- ❖ Parent/Caregiver Agreement/Contract
- ❖ The children in your care
- ❖ Financial Transactions
- ❖ Program Activities
- ❖ Any suspected signs of child abuse

### **Children’s Records**

- ❖ Registration information
- ❖ Permission Forms
- ❖ Accident Reports
- ❖ Child Development and/or Progress Reports

### **Financial Records**

- ❖ Child Care Payments
- ❖ Budget
- ❖ Income Tax

### **Program Activities**

- ❖ Weekly Activities
- ❖ Menu Plan

### **Suggestions on Developing & Maintaining a Record keeping System**

- ❖ Keep a carbon copy of receipts provided to parents for income received
- ❖ Keep a record of attendance and income received from parents
- ❖ Keep receipts for all purchases made
- ❖ It is advisable to keep a receipt book on your person, to complete and have the vendor sign in situations where a receipt for a purchase made for your home child care business is not readily

available (i.e. items purchased at a garage sale, bus fare, etc) If this is not possible complete and sign the receipt yourself

- ❖ *Filing Systems* – Use separate files or envelopes to save your receipts for your business in each of your expense categories (i.e. play supplies, training, etc.) You can total your receipts by the week, month or annual basis.

*The important thing to remember is to develop  
A record keeping system that is easy to maintain!*

### Commonly Asked Questions...

*How do I calculate food expenses for my home child care business?*

There are two methods you can use in calculating the food expenses for your home child care business:

#### Option 1:

One option is to keep your grocery shopping for your home child care business separate from your grocery shopping for your family. This will allow you to have a separate receipt for the business expenses. Keep in mind that there are always some common food items that will be shared between your home child care business and family use (i.e. hand soap, paper towels, flour, etc.)

#### Option 2

The second is to calculate a cost per day expense for food and snacks on a per child basis. To do this you would calculate the total number of meals served for a two-week period to both family members and day care children. Add the total amount spent on groceries for that time period (remember to allow a reasonable amount for food you have in stock). Divide the number of meals served by the amount spent to get an estimate of you cost per meal and snack. The following example is based on a family with 2 adults 2 family children and 3 full time day care children.

<i>Weekday</i>	<i>Number of Meals</i>
4 breakfast (family) x 5 days	20
5 morning snacks (day care and family children) x 5 days	25
6 lunches (3 family & 3 day care children) x 5 days	30
5 afternoon snacks (day care and family children) x 5 days	25
4 dinners (family) x 5 days	20
Total Weekday Meals	120

<i>Weekends</i>	<i>Number of Meals</i>
4 breakfasts (family) x 2 days	8
4 lunches (family) x 2 days	8
4 dinners (family) x 2 days	8
Total Weekend Meals	24

Total Number of Meals Served per Week	144
Total number of meals served in a 2 week period	288
Total Amount spent on Groceries in 2 week period	\$250.00
Estimate of food in stock prior to 2 week period	\$38.00
Total food expenditures	\$288.00

In the above-noted example, the average cost per meal or snack is \$1.00 per person.

To calculate your total food expense for that year, you would calculate the number of meals served to each child x the average cost per meal/snack.

**For example**, a full time child who attends 5 days a week for nine hours per day would likely have a morning snack and afternoon snack and a lunchtime meal. Assuming the child has 3 meals a day x 220 days per year (when the child is in home child care) means that the child had 660 meals/snacks at the average cost per meal/snack of 1.00.

660 meals x \$1.00 = \$660.00 food expense for the child in the year.

Calculate your claim for each child, total the food expense for all day care children and enter this amount on your income tax return.

### **Figuring It Out Information on Income Tax & Record Keeping**

1. *How should I keep track of automobile expenses and what can I deduct for income tax purposes?*

It is important to keep track of all gas purchases, maintenance and repairs. The amount that can be deducted for income tax purposes is the percentage of business to personal use of the car. For example, if the car is used 50% for your home daycare business, then 50% of the expenses can be deducted. In addition, the car can be depreciated each year according to Revenue Canada depreciation rules.

2. *If improvements are made to my home, can I consider this as an expense and use it as a deduction for income tax purposes?*

We recommend that the house and any improvements made are not depreciated. If you decide to sell your house in the future, this could create a capital gain and because of this you may end up paying more tax on the gain. However, the items that are repaired or installed for safety purposes and relate to the health and/or well-being of the children in your care can be used as a deduction in the current year. An example is a porch railing that has fallen off and needs to be replaced as it poses a safety hazard for the children in your home day care program.

3. *What do I need to be aware of in the event that I am audited by Revenue Canada?*

It is important to ensure you keep proper records and keep all, if not most, of your receipts for expenses. All expenses should be justified by a receipt or be considered a reasonable expense if not accompanied by a receipt.

4. *Can large pieces of equipment for my home day care program, such as a climber, be depreciated?*

It is recommended that large pieces of equipment over \$250.00 are depreciated on Revenue Canada rules. For items which are less than \$250.00, use it as a deduction in the year of purchase for income tax purposes.

5. *Can I claim items for income tax purposes that I purchased in the United States?*

Yes, you can deduct these purchases depending on the cost as a regular expense or a capital item. Also, remember to include the exchange and duty in the cost of the expense.

## 6. *What items can I deduct for income tax purposes?*

Any items that you specifically purchase for your home daycare program can be deducted for income tax purposes. A good guideline to use is that if the expense was incurred for the purpose of producing income, then it is a deductible expense.

For household items and supplies that you use for both your own family and daycare business, a portion of the cost can be used as an expense. In some cases, it might be wise to purchase a separate item specifically for your business and allocate the total cost as an expense. Some examples of this could be first aid kits, cleaning supplies, laundry soap, kitchen cups, etc. This also ensures that when you need it, the particular supply will be available and not be depleted by other family members without your knowledge.

Some items that you may not be aware of that can be deducted for income tax purposes are:

- ❖ Pet food, items and immunizations for pets who have been purchased specifically for the program.
- ❖ Call waiting feature or an answering machine/service that you have purchased specifically for the program. If the services are a shared item between your business and for personal use, then a portion of the expense can be used as a deduction.
- ❖ Cellular phone costs if the phone was purchased for your home daycare business( for emergency purposes, while on field trips, at the park, etc.) The phone can be either used as a capital expense or used as a deduction depending on the cost.
- ❖ Carpet cleaning regardless of whether you do it yourself or contract the job out to a company. You can claim the full cost if the room in which you are having the carpets cleaned is used solely for your home daycare business; otherwise, it should be based on the percentage of use between your business and for personal use.
- ❖ Items installed in your home for safety reasons, for example, safety gates and locks, etc.
- ❖ Treats purchased for children while on field trips.
- ❖ Long distance phone calls pertaining to your business.
- ❖ The cost of any courses, workshops, or seminars taken pertaining to your business or the cost of any educational or reference books purchased.
- ❖ The cost of office stationery pertaining to your business such as receipt books, stamps, envelopes, photocopying..
- ❖ Bank charges if a separate account is held for business income and expenses.
- ❖ Accounting or bookkeeping fees and income tax preparation.

## 7. *What is the best way to keep track of food expenses for the children in my home daycare program?*

There are two methods that you can use to keep track of food expenses for your business, they are:

- ❖ keep separate receipts-this means you will have to keep groceries you purchase for your home daycare separate from the groceries for your household.
- ❖ keep track of the cost of food for a time period that is representative of what you provide for snacks, lunches, etc. for the children in your care (i.e.: for a one-month period). Extend this cost to the entire year.

In both cases, it is important to keep track of the “extra” items you buy for the children such as treats, juice boxes, etc.

8. *Can I claim the costs of repairs to furniture, carpets, windows, etc. in my home that have been damaged by the children in my care?*

Yes, you can use this as a deduction for income tax purposes in the current year that the repair was made.

9. *Can a fence be used as a deduction for income tax purposes?*

A permanent fence constructed around a pool, for example, is considered an improvement to the property and cannot be used as a deduction for income tax purposes. However, a temporary fence that can be removed can be used as a deduction.

### **Five Tips to Assist you with Record Keeping**

1. Keep track of expenses for your business. Every dollar spent for your business that you are not using as a deduction against your income, translates into approximately 27 cents in income tax you will be paying.
2. Record the income and expenses as soon as possible after they occur to avoid losing receipts or forgetting the information. Some expenses may not come with receipts and may be hard to remember later.
3. Maintain a central area for all data relating to your bookkeeping, for example, file folders or a filing cabinet.
4. Pay attention to what you are spending your money on. Ask yourself if you would be making the purchase if you did not operate a home daycare business. By doing this, you can alert yourself to items that need to be recorded as expenses.
5. In most cases, it is advantageous to keep a separate bank account for your income and expenses related to your home daycare business. It allows you to deduct the full amount of bank charges and provides a safeguard in the event of a Revenue Canada audit. It will make it easier to legitimize what you have claimed on your return.

*Article published in the Quiet Times Newsletter-March, April, May 1998. Written by Dale Kern and Tami O'Reilly, C>M>A>*

## **Step 13: Setting Fees**

It is important for caregivers to decide what they are going to charge before they begin advertising or conducting parent interviews.

There are a number of considerations that will help you to determine your rates they include:

- ❖ Your expenses for operating your business – food, toys, equipment, etc. Remember this is your business so ensure you are charging a rate that will provide you with sufficient income after you have covered your expenses
- ❖ The going rates in your area to ensure that your fees are competitive with caregivers in the area
- ❖ Your training and experience in working with children

- ❖ The type of service you are offering such as days/hours of operation, whether you are willing to transport children to/from school, special services (i.e. music lessons, field trips/outings, etc.)
- ❖ Whether you will charge different rates based on the child's age or one rate for all age ranges. Generally if you are planning to charge different rates, infants and toddlers are a higher rate than preschool and school age children
- ❖ Whether you will offer full day, weekly, part day, hourly or rates for unusual hours (i.e. overnight, weekend, evening, etc.)

Other Considerations:

- ❖ Whether you will charge a parent if they drop off their child early or pick up their child late
- ❖ Whether you will offer a discount or family rate if more than one child from a family is placed in your care

It is wise to implement an annual review of your rates at the same time each year. It is advisable to place this policy in writing to parents in your care, for example, in your Policy and Procedure Handbook and/or written agreement/contract. Ensure you clearly outline to the parents when the review will take place, how much notice will be given to parents to advise them of an increase or change in rates, etc.

### **Setting, Justifying and Promoting Fees for Your Home Child Care Business**

Before we begin discussing strategies to deal with this important issue, let me share a small story with you that comes from Jean Steiners's and Mary Steiner Whelan's book, "For the Love of Children". This story will illustrate what I believe you are really worth.

*"Three of us lived within a two-block area. We all started doing child care about the same time. Sometimes we sat on my front steps while the children rode their Big Wheels and trikes. We shared concerns about children and our families. A common theme was our low pay. Taking a rest from pedalling, Jared stopped by us and heard our conversation. 'My mom says you're worth a million bucks,' he said. 'Get it!!'*

How many of us in child care have experienced similar scenarios? Jean and Mary also tell us in their book that, "We are allowed to dream and that someday all the people who care for children will earn what they deserve. Working together, we can make our dreams come true."

Where do you begin to make these dreams come true? What information do you need to know? What portion of the million bucks is reasonable to expect for your services? How do you start over if you are already in business and need to make changes? Just as in any small business, it is important that you do your homework and work out a sound business plan before you begin or before you implement a change. Take the business of caring for children seriously! The way you handle the business side of child care will indicate to parents your level of professionalism.

This article will give you only an overview of setting fees, identifying your business costs and making parents understand why you charge what you do. Home Child Care Networks can offer you opportunities to talk with other home child care providers who can share their experience and expertise.

Let's begin. When setting your fees, you must consider five factors:

1. What kind of program will you be offering?

2. What policies will you have around fees and how they are paid?
3. What do you need to charge to make a living?
4. What is the going rate in your community?
5. How much are families willing and able to pay for child care?

First, let's consider the variables in the type of program you will offer. For example, you will need to decide whether you will provide infant care. If so, who will supply the car seats, cribs, high chairs and Wet-Ones? Although you may charge a higher fee for infant care, there are added costs as well.

Will you take part-time children? How will you charge for part-time care? By charging a flat rate, you will not lose as much money. When you charge hourly rates, parents pay only for the hours the child is in care. This can mean less money. Disagreements can occur between you and the parents as to the hours of care received. Although many home child care providers ideally want all full-time children, realistically this is often hard to achieve.

Many families choose home child care because of the flexibility it can offer. However, this can be difficult for home child care providers to manage. How long will your program be open each day? Be careful! Home child care providers who do not set times can open themselves up to long hours. Working 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. is much different than working 7:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Not only are you asking a great deal of yourself but of your family also, and the longer day brings your hourly rate down. If you feel you need to be open longer hours, then include an extended day rate for those clients. You will also have to decide what you will offer within your program. Will you take children on special excursions, or provide enrichment activities that have added costs? Who will pay for these?

I think you are beginning to see that decisions within your program can seriously affect your financial outcome. Because home child care providers are nurturing individuals, they sometimes have difficulty saying "no" to parents. By working out the details and knowing what you can offer ahead of time, you will avoid hurting yourself and your family financially. Decisions are easier to make when you are informed and rehearsed.

Next you need to develop policies. Your amount of income will fluctuate greatly no matter what fees you charge if you do not have written policies regarding fee payment. When nothing is sure, everything is possible. Parents will use this to their advantage. You must create written policies that outline all your expectations around fee payment. For example, you must have a written policy that clearly outlines your fee structure. Consider different rates for each of the following categories: infant, toddler, preschool, kindergarten, school-age, professional development days, extended day, half-day, hourly. Decide whether you will charge late fees. How will you collect your fees? Many home child care providers find post-dated cheques easier to manage. Other policies you will need to develop may include the following:

- ❖ Notice for termination of care
- ❖ Payment for statutory holidays
- ❖ Vacation days allowed
- ❖ Yearly fee increases
- ❖ Payment when the child is ill or absent
- ❖ Charging a registration/holding fee

It is important that you protect yourself from being taken advantage of. Parents need to understand that in order to stay in business, you have to ensure a stable income. Your policies protect you. Without them you are vulnerable. If you are currently operating without any policies and are afraid to make changes, simply inform your parents, in writing, that you are currently looking into developing

polices and will be discussing them with the parents by a certain date. Let them know you are doing your research by attending workshops, reading up at the library, or perhaps attending a Care Provider Support Network meeting. List the areas you will address and clearly state the reasons why the changes are needed. By giving notice of impending change, they too can weigh their options. It is never too late for change. Parents will see that you take your job of child care seriously. What is wrong with that? Eleanor Roosevelt once said, “ We must do the thing we think we cannot do.”

How do you decide what to charge to make a living? In order to decide if this is going to be financially feasible for you, consider making the following calculations by determining:

***Wages you need to earn yearly and expenses to run your program per year = total needed from parents per year.***

***Total needed from parents per year divided by 50 weeks = weekly income needed.***

***Weekly income needed divided by five children = amount per child weekly.***

This is not the only work you will have to do in order to decide what you will charge and whether providing child care is what you can afford to do. You will also need to find out what the “going rate” is in your community. Rates vary according to the program offered and the home child care provider’s experience and qualifications. Decide where you fit in. Shop and compare just as the parents choosing care will do. Network with other home child care providers and find out what they are charging. Talk to neighbouring child care centres. What are their rates and how do their programs differ from yours? Contact licensed home child care agencies and determine whether you would like to work for them. Investigate home child care registries. Telephone home child care providers listed in the classified ads in the newspaper. A good manager knows her competition. Sometimes home child care providers are tempted to charge less than their competition. This is not always a good idea. Eventually, you will become disgruntled working so hard for so little. Also, many parents believe you get what you pay for, so low rates may deter them from using your services.

Finally, you will need to determine what families can actually afford to pay for your services and their child care needs. Who will your clients be? Will they be working shifts? Will you look after their infant, preschooler and school-age child? Each age group has different needs and the income you receive for each may differ. The parent may want to pay very little for the school-age child even though they count in your ratios. Will you give a discount for a second or third child from the same family? Once again, consider the change in your wages if you give discounts. Parents will be more likely to accept higher fees if they understand why they are needed. Help parents understand the affect quality care has on their child. Collect articles that support investing in quality child care. Make a simple budget that illustrates to parents how you arrived at your fee. Keep yourself and the parent informed of family tax laws. Working families are very busy and appreciate anything you can offer to help them balance work and home.

It is a difficult task for home child care providers to get the right balance. They often feel as client’s change they are starting over. However, by knowing clearly what your financial options are, you are in more control of your financial destiny. You may be disappointed if you fail, but you are doomed if you don’t try. In justifying our need for fair fees, we must stop apologizing for being a member of the most important profession in the world and celebrate the importance of our work. Hilary Rodham Clinton felt this strongly when she stated, “If children are not taken care of, whatever else we do won’t matter much.”

Article published in the Quiet Times Newsletter-March, April, May 1999. Written by Brenda Jenner, E.C.E.C.

# Step 14: Advertise

## Creating an Image – How to Effectively Present Your Home Child Care Business

### How to Create an Image

There are many aspects that you need to consider when developing an image for your home child care business. This part of the process does require careful thought and it will take time to develop. One of the key elements in creating an image is to finish with an end product that you will be happy with as there should be few or no changes made to it once it is established, at least for some time. Consistency in both content and design, as well as conveying your message in a professional manner, are critical elements to the success of establishing a name for your home child care business.

Some of the aspects that assist in creating an image are:

- ❖ The name of your business
- ❖ Logo or use of graphics for your business
- ❖ Key message(s) or advertising slogans
- ❖ The benefits of your service
- ❖ Signature colour(s) of your business
- ❖ Fonts used for heading, sub-headings and body text
- ❖ Type and quality of paper used for brochures, flyers, business cards, letterhead, etc.

### Ways to Generate Ideas

Before unleashing your creative energy, you may want to browse through brochures, newsletters, flyers, the yellow pages and newspaper ads, etc. advertising other services or agencies. As you review these advertising materials, take note of your preferences in the following areas:

- ❖ What catches your eye? What do you find appealing?
- ❖ What do you like? What do you dislike?
- ❖ How have they presented their information? Is there too much or too little information?
- ❖ Is the language used user-friendly? Or does it use too much jargon?
- ❖ The size of the advertisement-is it too large, too small?
- ❖ Are the graphics used appropriate to the service?
- ❖ Does it make good use of colour and fonts? Or does it look overdone?
- ❖ What impression does it leave you with?

It is better to aim for simplicity, less design and more versus less white space when developing your advertising materials.

It is important to consider the following questions prior to developing your advertising materials:

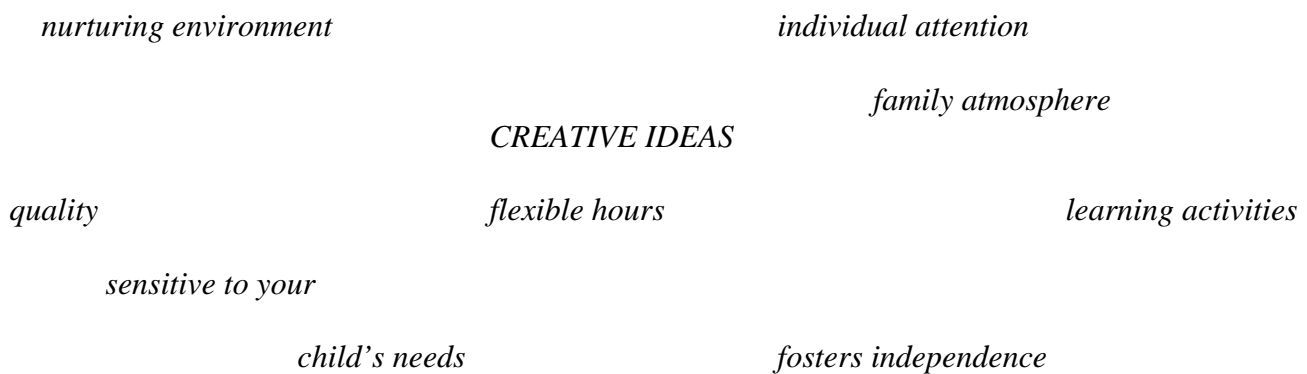
1. Service offered: What is your service? What are the benefits of your service? Are there any potential barriers?(i.e. location, hours of operation, etc.)
2. Public: Who are the customers? What are their needs? How do you plan to address their needs?
3. Cost: How much does it cost to provide your service? Is it affordable to the families who require your service?

4. Location: Where are you providing the service? Is the location convenient and accessible to the families who require your service?
5. Equipment: Do you have the necessary equipment, space, etc. to meet the demand for your service?
6. Promotion: What are the best ways for you to reach families who require your service and to convey your key message within the resources available to you (i.e. time, funds allotted for advertising, etc.)

Understanding both the benefits you have to offer families and the potential barriers of your home child care business will help you decide what information will assist you in promoting your service as well as advertising methods that may give you better results. It is not possible to convey all of the wonderful aspects of your home child care business, so it is important to identify your main features and this can be done through the development of *key messages*.

Home child care providers are known for their creativity and this is one time that you can give free rein and express yourself. If you are having difficulties allowing your mind to travel in this direction, you may want to begin with the following exercise:

*Take a blank piece of paper and in the centre of the page write “Creative Ideas”, or something to this affect, as a way of focusing yourself. Draw a circle around it. From here, write down any thoughts and/or ideas that come to you, drawing circles around each and connecting it with lines to your main theme, in this case “Creative Ideas”. It should look something like this:*



*Now with a highlighter or other coloured pen/marker, circle or highlight the words and phrases you feel are key and unique in describing your home child care business. When designing your marketing tools, these will be the areas you should be sure to include to advertise your business. These are often referred to as key messages.*

## **10 Effective Design Techniques**

1. Quotes are perceived to be more “conversational” and, therefore, more likely to be read. Ask parents who have used your service and made positive comments if you can use these in your advertising materials.
2. Frames give pictures a “finished” look and convey a sense of depth.
3. Characters such as checkmarks, children, etc. can be used in place of bullet points.

4. Putting a graphic such as curling the bottom corner of a page leads the reader to turn the page.
5. Sentences of 10 words or less are more likely to be read.
6. Only use two fonts in any advertising materials
7. Consider what you hope to accomplish with a headline, for example, are you trying to attract the reader's attention, create a specific mood or convey information.
8. The normal viewing pattern for readers is "Z" shape beginning in the upper left section of the page.
9. Popular techniques to present information are through posing a question or offering appropriate responses or 12 reasons/10 steps to....
10. Exclamation points convey excitement.

### **Key Elements**

- ❖ Sincerity and the human component (word-of-mouth is the most effective form of advertising)
- ❖ Visibility, participating in community events and sitting on committees increases the number of people who can advertise for you...+ "Word of mouth" potential
- ❖ Signs...one idea is to create a changeable display in the back window of your car with art work and your business name
- ❖ Special Events: organize special events for the families you work with and your community to raise the value of your service in their eyes and thus creating "Word of Mouth" potential
- ❖ Share your expertise: develop partnerships with the community...offer to speak at organizations, etc.

### **Some other suggestions**

- ❖ Registry of the Child Care Provider Connection – 734-0761
- ❖ Home Child Care Provider Listing Binder at the Ontario Early Years Centre – 792-7878
- ❖ Business cards (use the children's artwork on the card or as the card)
- ❖ Newspaper ads
- ❖ Door-to-door flyer delivery
- ❖ Distribute flyers/posters to other community locations (i.e. schools, recreation centres, libraries, doctors offices, etc.)
- ❖ Have an Open House
- ❖ Newsletters
- ❖ Create crafts to give to seniors' residences, neighbours, libraries, etc.
- ❖ Team up with businesses...coordinate mutually benefiting advertising

### **Creating a Flyer**

Things you may wish to include:

- ❖ Business name
- ❖ First Name (optional – for security reasons it is wise to only use your business and/or first name in any advertising materials)
- ❖ Phone number
- ❖ General area of the city (i.e. nearest major intersection)
- ❖ Basic vision/goal of your program
- ❖ What makes your service unique and/or different from other home-based businesses
- ❖ Layout which is eye-catching and appealing
- ❖ Graphics (child's artwork or other)

Remember to keep it neat and professional looking, not cluttered. This will be the prospective family's first impression of you and your business – make it count!

Whatever technique you choose to use in advertising your home child care business, be sure to follow up with families who contact you to find out how they learned of your service. This will help you determine whether the dollars invested in that method were well-used and worth investing in again.

### **If You Are Not Receiving Parent Calls....**

You may want to ask yourself the following questions:

*“Am I doing everything possible to advertise my service to families in the community?”*

Word-of-mouth is still the best form of advertising. A good marketing plan for any business is to spread the word to as many potential customers as possible-in different locations and in different formats (i.e. flyers, business cards, friends, business associates, pens/magnets/t-shirts with business contacts outlines, etc.)

*“Are the rates I charge parents for my service competitive with home child care providers in my community?”*

Are you losing potential clients because your rates are above or below your nearest competitors? Rates that are low may leave the parent with the impression that you are not providing quality child care or do not value yourself in your chosen profession.

*“Am I too narrow in the type of care I offer, ages of children I will have in my care, in the days/hours I operate my service or specializes services I provide ( infant care, walk or drive children to and from elementary school, provision of part-time or shift-work care, etc.)”*

If you offer care Monday to Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. versus Monday to Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., I am sure you can imagine the number of potential parent calls you would not be eligible to receive. From the parent calls many home child care providers receive, we have noticed a high need for infant, part-time and shift work care as well as home child care providers who are willing to walk or drive children to and from school.

As in any business, you need to meet the needs of your clients/customers. So, from time to time, you may wish to do a self-assessment or evaluation of your business-how well are you meeting the needs of the children and families in your care and the community?

## **Step 15: Preparing for Parent Interviews**

### **The 5 Interview Sessions**

1. The Initial Contact by Parents
  - a. Have all information available by the phone for easy access including your resume
  - b. Be prepared to answer questions on the following:
    - i. Your name
    - ii. Location
    - iii. Hours and days you operate your business
    - iv. The cost of your service
    - v. If you presently have an opening
    - vi. The ages of your own children and those in your care
    - vii. Whether there are any pets in the home and, if so, what type of pet

- viii. Whether your home is a smoke free environment
- ix. Whether the child has any special needs of which you need to be aware of
- x. Don't forget to schedule an appointment date and time with the parent if all of the above meets with the expectations of both parties

## 2. The First Interview...in your home

When the parents arrive, the first matter of business is to properly introduce yourself and create a welcoming atmosphere in your home. For some parents, this may be their first experience interviewing a caregiver, so as it is your home and business, it is important that you take the lead and guide them through the process. Parents will appreciate your forthrightness and even if the match is not successful, the interview will provide them with the tools to make more effective decisions in seeking child care.

Here are a number of areas that parents will be interested in finding out about you and your business:

- ❖ When you started providing home-based child care
- ❖ How long have you been working in the child care field
- ❖ How long you have resided in the community and provided home-based child care
- ❖ If you have lived and provided home-based child care in other communities and if so, where this was
- ❖ Information about your family, for example, whether you are married, the number and ages of the children who live in the home, other adults who reside in your home, who will be in your home while the children are in your care, etc.
- ❖ Other related interests and professional affiliations in which you have been involved, for example, whether you are a Sunday School teacher, Girl Guide Leader, involved with a Caregiver Support Network or Licensed Home Agency, etc.
- ❖ Professional development activities you have participated in such as workshops, conferences; if you are up to date with CPR/First Aid, etc.

The parents will also want to see the areas in your home where their child will be playing, eating and sleeping. This gives you the opportunity to discuss your child care program, policies and procedures while you give them a tour of your home. You will want to point out and discuss the following with parents:

- ❖ Your daily routine/schedule and level of flexibility to deal with situations that arise unexpectedly or if the children are particularly involved with an activity
- ❖ Where the children hang their coats and store their bags or other items during the day
- ❖ Play areas and activities (i.e. toys, books, arts and crafts, equipment supplied, etc.)
- ❖ Washroom and changing area for infants and toddlers; this is a good time to discuss health and sanitary practises (i.e. use of individual wash/hand towels, level of supervision provided during this routine, etc.)
- ❖ Snack and eating area; take this time to discuss the preparation of snacks and meals, child's involvement in the preparation, your participation at meal time
- ❖ T.V. area and type and length of time children watch television programming during the day
- ❖ Sleep areas and make parents aware of the length of nap, whether you allow a stuffed animal or special toy to help the child fall asleep at this time, how you settle the children for naps, how you handle a child who doesn't sleep; the different options and/or opportunity for flexibility regarding sleep time
- ❖ Discuss and show the parents the safety equipment you have in your home, for example, smoke detectors, fire extinguisher, first aid kit, where you store medications, cleaning supplies, other

child proof features, safety gates, liability insurance and motor vehicle insurance, if applicable, etc.

- ❖ Outdoor play area and equipment
- ❖ If you have not done so already, this is the time to discuss any other information that is outlined in your Policies and Procedures handbook and/or contract such as your philosophy, behaviour management practises, confidentiality, drop off and pick up procedures, child related information, payment policies, custody or visitation agreement when applicable, etc. It is recommended that you ask the parent for a copy of the court order outlining the custody agreement, when applicable, to maintain in the child's file. It is also suggested that you request photo identification prior to releasing the child in someone else's care and to ensure that their name is listed on the application form as a person who the parent has granted permission for the release of the child in their care
- ❖ Provide references of the past and current families for which you have provided care, encourage the parents to give them a call.

Before closing the interview, ensure that you have answered any additional questions the parents may have and summarize what you have agreed thus far, for example, it may be that the parents have a few more interviews scheduled with caregivers and they will get back to you to let you know of their decision.

*Above information by the H-W Home Child Care & Registry Transitional Advisory Committee*

**Tip:** When meeting and/or talking to parents, indicate it is a two-way interview. As parents seeking child care you can expect them to ask you questions that will help them decide whether this is a “good fit” for their situation. Tell parents that you will also be asking them questions to determine whether you feel it will be a good match based on...

- ❖ The program you offer and the needs/interests of the child/parent
- ❖ Your philosophy and whether it is similar to the parents beliefs, values and expectations.
- ❖ The needs of the children/families already in your care.
- ❖ It being in the best interests of their child as well as the other children/families and your own family.

**Don't underestimate your “gut reaction” when meeting the child and family. If something makes you feel uneasy, pay attention to it whether you can pinpoint the reason or not...it is trying to tell you something.**

### **How to Say “NO”**

Honesty is important in any situation. If you feel the child and/or family is not a good match for whatever reason, there is a polite way of conveying this to the parent while still being honest. Try one of the following suggestions the next time you find yourself in this situation:

*“I can't provide for your needs or your child's needs right now.”*

*“I don't think this arrangement would be in the best interests of your child and/or family or of my own family or the children and families in my care.”*

*“I feel our philosophies and child rearing practices do not match and it would be best for you to consider other child care options.”*

**Keep the explanation simple and brief. Remember this is your business and you don't owe anyone you interview a detailed explanation.**

If a parent contacts you and you are full, you may indicate to the parent that availability of space does change quickly. If you do have space available but it's not the type of space the parent requires, for example, an infant space, you may want to make that clear to the parent. "I have a space available for a child three years and older but I'm sorry, I don't have any infant spaces open at this time."

We strongly suggest however, that you never tell a parent that you do not have spaces available as a way out of telling them you will not provide child care for their family. Honesty is always the best policy.

3. The Second Interview...in the families home (optional)
  - a. Meet the child's family, pets, etc. to gain an understanding of what the child is referring to when they talk to you about his/her home
  - b. Answer/ask any questions that might have come up since the first interview
4. The Third Interview...in your home
  - a. Go through the contract one more time
  - b. Sign the contract
5. The orientation Session...in your child care setting
  - a. This may take place during the same time as the signing of the agreement/contract
  - b. Let the child participate in the day's activities...or explore/play with the toys available if no program is occurring at the time.

### **If Parents Come for an Interview but do not place their Child with You...**

You may want to ask yourself the following questions:

*"Am I prepared and able to respond to the parent's questions when they come for an interview?"*

First impressions count! If you appear disorganized, flustered or are unable to respond appropriately to a parent's questions, you may need to spend some time before parent interviews to think through possible questions you may be asked and how you will respond.

*"Is my home clean and safe for children?"*

Although it is your home, you have to remember that you are also providing a service to young children. The safety, health and well-being of the children should always be your first priority! It is common for items in a home to continuously move around and not always remain in the same place. Therefore, it is important to do frequent checks of your home to ensure the safety of the children in your care.

On the other hand, some parents become just as concerned when they enter a home which is spic and span. Parents want to know that you are supervising and interacting with their children when they are in your care. An exceptionally clean home can give the parent the message that little time is actually being spent with the children.

*"Am I honest with the parent in the information I have shared?"*

Nothing is more concerning to a parent than being told one thing and seeing something different. To a parent, a "non-smoking" or "smoke-free" home is just that-there are no smokers in the household. Parents do not consider smoking outside or when the children are not on the premises a "non-smoking" or "smoke-free" home. Smoke lingers and second-hand smoke is known to have a negative affect on children and adults. So, only say something if you can say it is absolute certainty.

*“Am I doing what I say I’m Doing?”*

It is important that you are willing to provide the type of care that you outline in your advertising materials. For example, if you say you provide full-day, part-day, part-time, weekend or shift care that you will actually will consider a parent who calls inquiring for this type of care. It is frustrating for a parent who has read in your advertising materials that you will do one thing, then to be told when they contact you that “no, you do not offer the type of care they are looking for.”

*“Am I providing quality child care?”*

This may be the most difficult question for you to answer objectively but it is also the most important. Generally, home child care providers who are providing an excellent service to children and families in the community have no problem keeping their spaces full. In fact, they typically have to turn away children and families and often have waiting lists. However, it takes years to develop this kind of reputation in a community.

Networking with other home child care providers in the community and participating in professional development and training workshops are recognized as key factors in the provision of quality child care. Recommended practices change over time and it is to your benefit to keep abreast of new trends and directions in the early childhood education field.

The positive side is if you are doing a good job and genuinely enjoy your work, people will see this and keep you in mind the next time someone asks them if they know of anyone providing home-based child care. And yes, that person can be YOU!

## **Step 16: Communicate with Parents**

Communication is the key to a good relationship. This is an ongoing focus within your business. Arrival and departure are typical times for daily discussions regarding the child’s development and any changes in the environment or routines which affect the child’s well being. (See the Appendix for sample forms)

You should arrange for occasional meetings with the parents to discuss any issues you or they might have.

### **Ways to Communicate**

- ❖ Daily discussions
- ❖ Bulletin boards
- ❖ Newsletters
- ❖ Charts
- ❖ Notes attached to things going home
- ❖ Communication book (travelling in child’s backpack)
- ❖ Monthly meetings

## Step 17: When Problems Arise with Parents

Even when you have carefully planned and outlined roles and expectations and shared your philosophy for your home child care program, problems may still arise with a parent. It is never easy to bring up an issue or a concern with a parent, so in this section, we have tried to provide suggestions on how best to handle situations of this nature.

It is important to:

- ❖ Address situations as they arise. It is not a wise practise to ignore situations which make you feel uncomfortable. The longer the situation persists, the more difficult it becomes to address.
- ❖ Seek outside support from an objective third party-a trusted home child care provider or by phoning your Network Leader or Support Group warm line, if you are working for a licensed agency contact your Home Visitor/Coordinator. Remember to respect the confidentiality agreement you have with the parent. It is best to talk about a situation in general terms without releasing any names or personal identifying information..
- ❖ Think through the situation objectively and look at both sides-your perspective as well as the parent's
- ❖ Decide how you are going to approach the situation and exactly what you are going to say to the parent
- ❖ Remain calm and present the concern/issue or information in a factual manner, for example: "Dorothy, you still owe me \$15.00 for the three occasions this month when you picked Jessica up late. The late fee policy states you need to pay me on the day of the occurrence. When can I expect your late fee payments?"
- ❖ Stay away from making any kind of statements that would be judgemental in any nature.
- ❖ Be brief and say only what is necessary and/or pertinent to the situation.
- ❖ Be honest and objective as possible
- ❖ Maintain your professionalism
- ❖ Listen to what the parent is saying. You may be surprised with what you hear; perhaps they have an alternate solution that may work for both of you. Be open to negotiate other possibilities and options that you may not have considered.

Common reasons why a home child care provider may choose to terminate the care arrangement with a particular child/family include;

- ❖ Parent is violating your policies/procedures and contract
- ❖ The child's behaviour is beyond your control and creating difficulties in providing a high quality of care to the other children in your home
- ❖ Your anxiety or stress level is having a negative impact on you, your family or the other children in your care due to the present situation you are facing.

If you decide to terminate care with a parent due to irreconcilable differences, follow the guidelines noted above. It should not be a surprise to the parent that you are terminating the care arrangement. By this stage in the process, the parent should be fully aware of the differences or difficulties that have transpired between the two of you. If you feel you must give the parent an explanation, it is best to give as little information as possible and to make a statement such as; "I am providing you with two weeks' notice of termination that I will no longer be able to care for Jessica as outlined in the contract. I feel this is in the best interests of Jessica, the other children in my care and me and my family."

You may want to provide the parent with other options and/or contacts information for finding child care, such as, the Ontario Early Years Centre, Victoria Village, phone number 705-792-7878.

## **Step 18: Partner with the Community**

One of our roles with children is teaching them to be a member of our society. How do we do this? By showing them we are apart of the community and by modelling to them what we have to contribute.

Some ideas for doing this are:

- ❖ Make gifts for seniors' homes and businesses
- ❖ Go for walks and discuss the community and how we can help
- ❖ Participate in community events (this will be good advertising as well)
- ❖ Help clean snowy sidewalks and pickup broken branches along roadsides/streets

## **Step 19: Enhance Your Knowledge of Young Children**

There is continually new research on child development and learning, teaching styles and techniques, and “how to” methods in our society to help foster a child’s health and development. (See Appendix for information)

- ❖ Borrow library books
- ❖ Participate in Parent/Child Drop in and/or Parent & Tot Programs
- ❖ Attend community workshops and events
- ❖ Surf the Internet
- ❖ Chat with other parents and care givers at the park
- ❖ Have your name added to the mailing list for the “Quiet Times” newsletter for home-based caregivers (call the Home Child Care Support Services location near you: see front cover)
- ❖ Conduct a self-evaluation of the program you offer at least once per year. Reflect on the service you provide to children and parents and how to improve your program. See (Competency Standards For Family Daycare Providers In Appendix )

## **Step 20: Take Time for You**

Don't forget to take time for you during the week!

What do you do to relax?  
What are you going to do, just for you?  
When is your time to do what you want?

- ❖ No one but you has the time or inclination to tell you regularly how naturally beautiful and capable you are. (Susan L. Taylor)
- ❖ Truly great people emit a light that warms the hearts of those around them. (Banana Yoshimoto)
- ❖ Challenges make you discover things about yourself that you never really knew. They're what make the instrument stretch – what make you go beyond the norm. (Cicely Tyson)

- ❖ If you wait until you can afford to enjoy life, you might miss out on all the fun. (Dorothy Salone)
- ❖ The world is at your feet! Just take a look around you and you will discover it!
- ❖ Your mind will give back exactly what you put into it.

## Step 21: What You Should Know About Professional Responsibility

Home-based caregivers are considered “professionals” and as such have a professional duty to report the suspicion and the information upon which it is based to a Children’s Aid Society with respect to a child that **is or may be suffering or may have suffered abuse**.

The “*Child and Family Services Act (CFSA)*”, recognizes that persons working closely with children have special awareness of children who may be in an abuse situation. Thus the legislation gives these professionals a particular reporting responsibility. Failure to report is an offence under the “*Child and Family Services Act*”. Any professional who fails to report his/her suspicion of a child’s abuse is liable on conviction to a fine of up to \$1000.00.

A child suffers “abuse” in any of the following circumstances:

1. The child has suffered physical harm either inflicted by the person having charge of the child or caused by that person’s failure to adequately;
  - a. Care and provide for the child, or
  - b. Supervise and protect the child;
2. The child has been sexually molested or sexually exploited by the person having charge of the child, or by another person having charge of the child;
  - a. Knows or should know of the possibility of sexual molestation or sexual exploitation, and
  - b. Failure to protect the child;
3. The child requires medical treatment to cure, prevent or alleviate physical harm or suffering, and the child’s parent or the person having charge of the child:
  - a. Does not provide the treatment, or
  - b. Refuses to provide treatment, or
  - c. Is unavailable to consent treatment, or
  - d. Is unable to consent to treatment;
4. The child has suffered emotional harm demonstrated by:
  - a. Severe anxiety, or
  - b. Severe depression, or
  - c. Severe withdrawal, or
  - d. Severe self-destructive or aggressive behaviour

And the child's parent or the person having charge of the child:

- e. Does not provide services or treatment to remedy or alleviate the harm,
  - f. Refuses to provide such services or treatment,
  - g. Is unavailable to consent to such services or treatment,
  - h. Is unable to consent to such services or treatment;
5. The child suffers from a mental, emotional or developmental condition that, if not remedied, could seriously impair the child's development, and the child's parent or the person having charge of the child:
- a. Does not provide treatment to remedy or alleviate the condition,
  - b. Refuses to do so,
  - c. Is unavailable to consent to treatment or
  - d. Is unable to consent to treatment

Should civil action be brought against the person who made the report, he/she will be protected unless he/she acted maliciously or without reasonable grounds for his/her belief or suspicion.

We suggest you order a copy of the pamphlet entitled, "Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect-Your Responsibility under the Child and Family Services Act" (200). To order a copy of the pamphlet, contact 416-325-5666 or by internet at [www.gov.on.ca/CSS/page?brochure?puborder.html](http://www.gov.on.ca/CSS/page?brochure?puborder.html).

*Above information by the H-W Home Child Care & Registry Transitional Advisory Committee*

## **Step 22: Where Can I Go For More Information?**

There are several agencies and groups within the Simcoe County area that provide information, resources, training and support for home-based caregiver.

### ***Ontario Early Years Centre***

Contact: 705-792-7878

This agency provides information on a wide variety of topics pertaining to government, community and non-profit agencies and services located in the Simcoe County area.

### ***Licensed Home Child Care Agencies***

- ❖ County of Simcoe Home Day Care – 722-3132
- ❖ Kids Are Gems – 733-2205
- ❖ Raggedy Ann Family Home Day Care – 726-3762
- ❖ Simcare Child Care Services – 735-1773
- ❖ Wee Watch, Private Home Daycare – 722-5989

Licensed Home Child Care Agencies support both parents and caregivers in the community. Caregivers are contracted by the agency to provide care in their home following the requirements of the *Ontario Day Nurseries Act*. Caregivers are supported by the agency through the referral of

families to their care, regular visits to the home to enhance and support programming, the provision of training through workshops and small groups, and referral to community resources.

***Child Care Provider Connection***

Contact: 705-734-0761 – Donna Cherutti  
309 Grove Street East  
Barrie, ON  
L4M 2R6

Email: [tdcherun605@rogers.com](mailto:tdcherun605@rogers.com)

Website: [www.thechildcareproviderconnection.ca](http://www.thechildcareproviderconnection.ca)

The goal of the Child Care Provider Connection is to enhance the professional image of Home Child Care Providers and to create opportunities for mutual support, education and information sharing. This group meets informally to provide support, education, resources, information exchange and networking opportunities.

***Police Services***

Barrie Police Service  
Emergency: 911  
Office: 705-725-7025

South Simcoe Police Service  
Office: 705-436-2141

***Fire Department***

For fire safety information and guidance regarding home-based child care businesses, please contact your area Fire Department.

Fire & Emergency Service  
Emergency: 911  
Business Office: 65 Vespra Street – 728-3199  
Fire Prevention & Training – 728-3199  
Fire Chief – 728-1277

***Children's Aid Society***

Children's Aid Society of the County of Simcoe  
705-726-6587

Children's Aid Societies provide a range of child welfare services in accordance with the Child & Family Services Act including, but not limited to, the following: investigating allegations or evidence where children under the age of sixteen years may be in need of protection; providing guidance, counselling and other services to families for the protection of the children for the prevention of circumstances requiring the protection of children, etc.

*Above information compiled by the Child Care Provider Connection of Barrie, Ontario*



### **INFORMATION REGARDING THE *DAY NURSERIES ACT***

In the Province of Ontario, you may care for up to five children under the age of 10 years, in addition to your own children, at any one time. Any premises that exceeds this number must be licensed as a day nursery and meet all of the requirements as outlined in the *Day Nurseries Act* (R.S.O. 1990, c.D.2, O.Reg 262)

As an informal caregiver, there is no restriction as to the ages of children that you may care for, under the age of 10 years of age (i.e. you may care for any combination of infants, toddlers, preschoolers and school-aged children) as long as you don't exceed five children, in addition to your own, **at any one time.**

#### Examples:

If you provide care for 3 children during the day, you may also provide after-school care for 2 school-age children in addition to your own.

If you provide care for 5 children during the day you are at your maximum number of children and cannot care for any additional school-age children under the age of 10 after school.

If you provide care for 7 children on varying days, you must ensure that the schedules are arranged so that you never exceed 5 children at any one time.

If you are a provider with a licensed Private Home Day Care agency there are some restrictions that must be adhered to, as outlined in the *Day Nurseries Act*. If you have children of your own that are under the age of six years, those children must be counted as part of the five children in care. If the agency places a child in your home that is over the age of 10 years, this child must also be counted as part of the five children in care. Of those five, the following restrictions apply:

- \* two handicapped children
- \* two children who are under two years of age
- \* three children who are under three years of age \* one handicapped child and one child who is under two years of age \* one handicapped child and two children who are over two years of age but under three years of age

The agency will determine the number and ages of children who may be cared for in each home within the above restrictions.

Note: It is the Private Home Day Care agency that is licensed, not the provider or home.

**Since the *Day Nurseries Act* refers to "premises", even if there are two adults present, you are still limited to five children.**

Any person convicted of operating a day nursery without a license is liable to a fine of not more than \$2,000 for each day of illegal operation and/or imprisonment of up to one year.

If you have any questions regarding the *Day Nurseries Act*, contact a Program Adviser of the Ministry of Children and Youth Services at (905) 521-7344 or 1-800-561-0568.

September 2005

## **Additional Information**

- ❖ Sample Contract
- ❖ Sample Forms and Charts
- ❖ Child Development Information

**\*\*Note: the following is a sample contract provided for your convenience, to modify and adapt according to your needs and beliefs**

Home-Based Child Care  
Agreement/Contract

Between:

Caregiver: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Annually Revised: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Welcome to my home child care.

## Let me introduce myself ☺

My Name is

### **My Family**

(Tell about your family...which family members your children will come in contact with...any pets you may have...etc.)

### **My Experience**

(Tell about your previous experience in child care)

### **My Education**

(What educational background do you have; include First Aid/CPR, any other training you have)

### **Other Information**

(What else do you think would be important for families to know about you?)

# Home Child Care Agreement/Contract

The following agreement/contract is made between:

<b>Caregiver's Name:</b>	
<b>Business Name:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Phone Number:</b>	

*AND*

<b>Parent(s)' Name(s):</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Phone Number (Home)</b>	
<b>Phone Number (Work)</b>	

**Regarding the care (as set out in the Policies and Procedures) of:**

<b>Children's Names:</b>	
--------------------------	--

**This agreement/contract covers the following time period:**

<b>Starting Date:</b>		<b>Renewal Date:</b>	
-----------------------	--	----------------------	--

**For the following days and times:**

<b>Monday</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	to	<b>Tuesday</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	to
<b>Wednesday</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	to	<b>Thursday</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	to
<b>Friday</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	to	<b>Saturday</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	to
<b>Sunday</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	to		

**Daily Rates:**

Infants	\$	_____
Toddlers	\$	_____
Preschoolers	\$	_____
School-Age	\$	_____

**The above outlined rates are based on the following # of hours/day:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Fees:**

Regular Fees: \$\_\_\_\_\_ per \_\_\_\_\_ to be paid: \_\_\_\_\_

Late Fees: \$\_\_\_\_\_ per \_\_\_\_\_ for every \_\_\_\_\_ minutes/hours late.

Hours of care are as outlined in this agreement/contract. While I understand that emergencies do happen and parents will need to be late on occasion, late fees will be charged for each occurrence and are due on the day of the occurrence.

A fee of 2% per month will be charged on any outstanding accounts. There will also be a charge of \$25.00 for any NSF cheques.

**Deposit:**

A deposit of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is required to put this agreement/contract into effect and will be applied to the last \_\_\_\_\_ weeks payment upon termination of this agreement/contract or forfeited if the child does not come for care as agreed.

**Vacation:**

This is to advise you that I will be taking \_\_\_\_\_ week’s vacation leave per year where payment of fees is not required.

You are entitled to \_\_\_\_\_ weeks of vacation leave per year where no payment will be required as long as a minimum of two weeks advanced written notice is provided.

I will be taking the following as my vacation \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_. For any additional vacation I take, I will provide a minimum of one month advance written notice.

**Statutory Holidays/Other Absences:**

This is to advise you that the following are paid holidays when they fall on a day regularly scheduled for child care: \_\_\_\_\_.

There will be no charge to the parent(s)/guardian(s) when the home child care provider is unable to provide child care as scheduled due to illness, appointments, etc.

The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be expected to pay for the days the child is absent due to illness and/or appointments, etc. and not in the care of the home child care provider. The only exceptions to the above noted statement will be as follows: *(If the child is absent for more than five consecutive days of care and has a doctor’s note verifying illness/absence).*

**Termination of this contract requires:**

# \_\_\_\_\_ weeks notice by the caregiver or parent, to be provided in verbal and written form to the other party. Payment by the parent/guardian is due for the notice period regardless of whether or not the child(ren) is brought to the home child care provider for care. The home child care provider may immediately terminate the contract without giving any notice if the parent(s)/guardian(s) does not make payment when due. Failure by the home child care provider to enforce one or more terms of the contract does not waive the right of the home child care provider to enforce any other terms of the contract/agreement.

**Probationary Period:** If this agreement/contract is terminated within the first \_\_\_\_\_ weeks of home child care, payment is only required for the days for which child care was provided. Written notice of termination is required.

**Signed**

<b>Parent/Guardian:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Caregiver:</b>		<b>Date</b>	

# Sample Termination of Agreement Letter

Date:

Dear Mr. & Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_:

This is to inform you that I am giving you two weeks notice as required by our written contract that I will no longer be able to provide child care to your son/daughter \_\_\_\_\_  
(*Child's name*).

I regret that I have had to come to this decision (*specify reason you have made this decision*). *Possible reasons you may have – please note these are examples only:*

*But I feel I have no other course of action as you are seriously in arrears regarding your child care payments and continue to disregard the payment plan we mutually arranged and agreed upon.*

*But I feel I must consider the needs of all the children in my care. I feel \_\_\_\_\_ (child's name) participation in my home is no longer in her/his best interest or the best interests and well being of the other children in my care. I feel \_\_\_\_\_ (child's name) may be better suited to a larger group program where he/she will benefit from social interactions with peers his/her age, etc.*

*But due to my continuing poor health, I have come to the difficult decision to close my home child care program.*

Please note that \_\_\_\_\_ (*child's name*) last day in my care will be \_\_\_\_\_  
(*indicate date*). I will expect full payment of any fees outstanding at this time.

If I can be of any assistance in helping you find alternate care arrangements for \_\_\_\_\_  
(*child's name*), please let me know. Please do not hesitate to contact me at \_\_\_\_\_  
(*telephone number*) should you have any concerns or questions regarding this matter.

I have enjoyed having \_\_\_\_\_ (*child's name*) in my care and regret that I have had to come to this decision.

Sincerely,  
(*Home Child Care Provider's Signature*)

**I the caregiver shall...**

1. Provide receipts, upon payment of child care fees
2. Provide quality, stimulation, and age appropriate, supervised care
3. Provide safe, enriching environment
4. Provide snacks and meals based on Canada’s Food Guide
5. Post menus and program plans for the parents information
6. Provide a variety of activities (active and quiet; indoor and outdoor)
7. Organize field trips. The cost of these trips shall be the responsibility of: \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Provide a quiet space for rest time appropriate to the child’s age
9. Use television in an educational manner
10. Provide individual attention to all children
11. Communicate to the parents regarding the child’s day; development issues, etc.
12. Guide children’s development and behaviour through positive interactions
13. Notify parents as soon as possible if I’m unable to provide care
14. Not require payment if I have been unable to provide care

<b>Signed:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	

**I the parent shall,**

1. Arrive on time, or notify caregiver of change as soon as possible regarding arrival and departure
2. Pay extra fees (as stated in the agreement/contract) if I am more than \_\_\_\_\_ minutes late/early
3. Pay for designated statutory holidays, my child’s vacation days, and sick days
4. Provide permission for field trips, or arrange alternate care for those days. I understand the cost of these trips will be the responsibility of: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Be responsible for my child’s care in the event of illness
6. Provide a complete change of clothing for my child as well as seasonal items such as sweaters, boots, mittens, etc. appropriate to weather conditions
7. Provide diapers, infant foods, and formulas as needed for my child
8. Inform caregiver of any events that may affect the child’s health or well-being
9. Arrange alternate care in the event that the caregiver is unable to provide care
10. Complete and keep all forms up-to-date
11. Read all correspondence and plans posted by the caregiver
12. Read and agree to all the policies and procedures outlined

<b>Signed:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	

## Policies and Procedures

### Confidentiality Agreement

It is understood that all discussions between parents of the children in my care and I are confidential. I will not divulge any information that is of a confidential manner to any person without prior written consent from the parent or guardian.

I will not discuss any situation that involves other children in my care without their parents being present. It is understood that all discussions will be done in a respecting and caring manner.

I will not participate in discussions that disclose information about children and families in my care. I expect that the families of the children in my care will uphold the same consideration.

It is understood that discussions between parents and I will occur during a time in which confidentiality can be upheld (i.e. not during busy drop off and pick up times or in the presence of the children.) I will make myself available for meetings or phone discussions to ensure they can be conducted in a confidential manner.

---

### Emergency Procedures

All parents/guardians will fill out an emergency consent form prior to starting home child care that includes:

- ❖ Parents home and work numbers
- ❖ Health card number
- ❖ Consent to treat child in care with first aid (i.e. bandages and disinfectant for cuts, ice for bumps and bruises)
- ❖ Names and accessible phone numbers of emergency contacts
- ❖ Family Physician and phone number
- ❖ Any allergies or special medical conditions
- ❖ Signed consent by parent/guardian, which authorizes administration of any medical procedures deemed necessary by an attending doctor. Please note that often this signed consent will not be considered valid by a doctor unless it is a life-threatening situation.

I will have emergency information on all the children in an easily accessible form when an emergency arises. Emergency information will be taken on all off-premise trips (trips, walks, etc.)

I will have a designated emergency shelter (e.g. neighbours home) known to the parents of the children in my care.

The emergency shelter for our home child care is: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Releasing Child to Unknown Person**

I will NOT release your child to anyone unknown to me unless the parent/guardian of the child informs me prior to release. I request that whenever possible I be introduced to any person(s) who might pick up the child. If this is not possible, I request that a picture be shared with me so that I may recognize the person picking up the child and/or I may request the following information:

- ❖ Name of the person
- ❖ Make of the persons car
- ❖ Description of the person
- ❖ A code word
- ❖ Personal photo ID shown (Driver license) upon arrival at my home child care

Please note that these requests are not meant to embarrass or make things difficult for you or the person picking up your child. These are safety measures that are in place to protect your child. It is important that I am aware of any child custody issues so I can respond appropriately.

I grant permission for the following people to pick p my child (*Please specify the relationship to the child*):

---

### **Illness Policy for Home-Based Caregiver**

If I am ill, I will make every attempt to give parents 12 hours notice so they can make decisions on the following:

- ❖ If I am feeling somewhat under the weather but do not really feel ill, I will contact the parents to discuss whether they want to send their child on that day. Dependent on the conditions, I will negotiate payment with the parents for that day
- ❖ In the event that I am unable to provide care due to illness/appointments, it is important for the parent to have an alternate/back-up caregiver that can be called on short notice (i.e.: family member, neighbour, friend, etc.)
- ❖ If I am too ill to provide care and do not have a substitute, the parent does NOT have to pay for that day

*Note: If my child is ill, I will attempt to have alternate care for my child on that day. It must be noted, however, that the child centre is my child's home and there may be times when alternate care is not possible. In this case, I will contact those parents to allow them to decide if they want to send their child on that day. I will negotiate payment for that day with the parent dependent upon the circumstances.*

---

### **Illness Policy for Children in My Care**

If a child is not able to participate in the daily routine of my program due to illness, then the child should be at home or at alternative care until they are well. Please do not bring children to home child care if they have been ill in the previous 12 hours.

If I feel that a child is too ill to participate in the daily routine or may have a communicable virus, then I will notify the parent/guardian to come to the home child care and take the child home. In cases where I cannot locate the parent, I will call the emergency contact to negotiate procedure for alternate care. In all cases, the welfare of all the children in my care is first consideration.

I will ask that children go home if I notice any of the following:

- ❖ Fever of 101 degrees or more
- ❖ Vomiting

- ❖ Abnormal diarrhea
- ❖ Child cannot participate in activities due to lethargy or any of the above
- ❖ Change in behaviour and any of the above
- ❖ Pink eye
- ❖ Impetigo
- ❖ Contagious diseases (i.e. measles/mumps)
- ❖ Colds with any of the above and a green or yellow nasal discharge

*Note: If your child is ill and unable to attend home child care, payment is still required.*

### **Administration of Medication**

If at all possible, I prefer the parent/guardian administer any medication to their child prior to arriving at or following the pick-up of their child from my home child care program.

When it is not possible, I will administer prescription medication only to your child under the following circumstances:

- ❖ The prescription medication is in the original container and is clearly labelled with your child's name, dosage, times to be administered, name of the physician and instructions for administration.
- ❖ When you provide written authorization by completing and signing the Authorization to Administer Medication Form.

Although I will not typically administer non-prescription medication, I will request that parents complete and sign an Authorization to Administer Medication form giving their consent to apply sunscreen or medicated diaper cream to their child as needed. These items need to be labelled with the child's name.

### **Snack and Lunch Routine**

I offer nutritious snacks and meals each day dependent upon the time of day the child is in my care. It is my practise to offer meals and snacks that are based on the Canada's Food Guide. In all cases, I strive to serve a well-balanced weekly meal plan.

- ❖ Please let me know if your child has any allergies of which I need to be aware of prior to planning my menu for the week. In this case I will offer your child an alternative lunch or snack item.
- ❖ Please let me know if your child has any dietary restrictions due to religious reasons, special needs, etc.
- ❖ If your family is celebrating a religious holiday that involves special foods, please let me know so that we may try some of these foods within the home child care program.

Although there may be minor fluctuations:

- ❖ Morning snack is served at: \_\_\_\_\_
- ❖ Lunch is served at: \_\_\_\_\_
- ❖ Afternoon snack is served at: \_\_\_\_\_
- ❖ Other meals such as breakfast and dinner (when applicable) are served at:  
\_\_\_\_\_

### **Guiding Self-Discipline**

Children need to feel loved and cared for. I will always treat a child in a manner in which I would want to be treated. I discuss behaviour guidance issues with all families during the initial interview. In this way, guidelines are recognized and agreed upon by both parties.

- ❖ I will never strike, hit, or harm in any manner a child that is in my care
- ❖ I always use positive behaviour techniques when working with children in my care based on the age and level of development, for example: redirection, removal of a toy, withdrawal of a privilege
- ❖ I use praise to reassure children that the behaviour they are demonstrating is appropriate
- ❖ I use natural and realistic consequences for actions and behaviours
- ❖ I assist children by teaching them ways to problem solve efficiently
- ❖ I redirect behaviours that are unacceptable. At all times, I reinforce that it is the behaviour that is unacceptable not the child
- ❖ I encourage children to problem solve by giving them choices
- ❖ I recognize that positive behaviour guidance is an ongoing skill that requires patience from the child and me. We are all leaning to work together

### **Toileting & Self Help Skills**

Children will be encouraged and supported to complete self-help skills as independently as possible (i.e.: dressing, undressing, feeding, toileting, etc.) appropriate to their age and level of development.

I will be happy to work with the parents on toilet training his/her child once the child is showing signs of being ready to learn (i.e.: dry diaper after rest time, understands the concept of dry and wet, shows interest in washroom activities, indicates when he/she needs to be changed, etc.) It is recognized that toilet learning is a gradual process and works best when both the parent and child care provider are positive and consistent in their approach with the child.

---

### **Biting Occurrences**

It is my practise when biting occurs to:

- ❖ Observe when and where the behaviour is occurring to determine the possible reasons why the child is biting. This will assist in determining possible reasons or strategies to handle the biting occurrences, such as:
    - Helping the child to identify the issue, brainstorm and choose alternate solutions to the situation
    - Try to prevent the incident by recognizing cues prior to when the biting generally occurs and change the environment
    - Discuss the situation with the parents to identify reasons and strategize possible solutions
- 

### **Outdoor Play Policy**

We have scheduled outdoor playtime everyday as it is an important component of a good home based child care program. It is also fun and healthy for children to exercise outdoors and get fresh air.

- ❖ The children will be supervised at all times during outdoor playtime
- ❖ It is expected that all children will go outdoors each day. If a child is too ill to go outdoors to play, then that child is too ill to come to home child care on that day
- ❖ All parents are to dress their children in appropriate clothing suited to weather conditions
- ❖ In cases where the weather changes drastically, I will take that into account and either offer to lend the child extra clothing for that day or make a change to the program
- ❖ We will not go outdoors if the temperature goes down to \_\_\_\_ degrees Celsius with the wind-chill factor. In this case it is understood that it is too cold for the children to play outdoors safely

- ❖ In the summer, I request that the parents send sunscreen to be left at my home so that I might administer it frequently throughout the day as required. I also request a sun hat and bathing suit be left at my home during the summer months
- ❖ In the case of inclement weather, I will use my judgement to decide if we will go outdoors. We may change the schedule and go outdoors at another time of the day when the weather is nicer
- ❖ In all cases I ask that the parents accept my judgement of the current weather conditions

### **Field Trips and Outings**

Neighbourhood outings such as visits to the Library, Local Park and other points of interest which are within walking distance will be a regular and ongoing aspect of my home child care program.

Field Trips which require the use of a motor vehicle and/or public transportation will be included as an occasional outing within my home child care program. In this case, a separate written field trip form outlining the details will be provided to the parent at least 3 days in advance of the outing. Written permission from the parent is required in order for the child to participate. If the parent chooses not to have their child participate in the scheduled field trip, it is the parent's responsibility to find alternate arrangements and or back up care for their child.

---

### **Rest Time Procedures and Routines**

Rest time or in some cases, quiet time will be based on the child's age, level of development and needs and will be discussed with the parent/guardian. Children will be encouraged to rest and/or play quietly (i.e. books, puzzles, table toys, etc.) if they are unable to sleep.

---

Date of First Registration: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Last Day of Care: \_\_\_\_\_

## Child Information Sheet

*This information will be used to help understand and communicate with the child.*

<b>Child's Name:</b>
<b>Family Structure: (Siblings, etc.)</b>
<b>Previous Child Care Experiences:</b>
<b><i>Child's Routines</i></b>
<b>Eating</b>
<b>Sleeping</b>
<b>Toileting</b>
<b>Other</b>
<b>Child's Favourite Toys/Activities:</b>
<b>Other:</b>

## Child's Medical and Emergency Information

<b>Child's Name</b>		
<b>Birth Date:</b>		
<b>Health Card Number:</b>		
<b>Known Allergies:</b>		
<b>Other Health Information:</b>		
<b>Doctors Name</b>		
<b>Address</b>		
<b>Phone Number</b>		
<b>Parent Name:</b>		
<b>Address</b>		
<b>Home Number</b>		
<b>Work Number</b>		
<b>Work Location</b>		
<b>Parent Name:</b>		
<b>Address</b>		
<b>Home Number</b>		
<b>Work Number</b>		
<b>Work Location</b>		
<b>Emergency Contact Name</b>		
<b>Address</b>		
<b>Home Number</b>		
<b>Work Number</b>		
<b>Work Location</b>		
<b>Relationship to Child</b>		
<b>Emergency Contact Name</b>		
<b>Address</b>		
<b>Home Number</b>		
<b>Work Number</b>		
<b>Work Location</b>		
<b>Relationship to Child</b>		
<b>Child May be released to:</b>	<b>Phone Number:</b>	<b>Relationship</b>
1.		
2.		
3.		

## Child's Medical and Emergency Information

### Emergency Medical Treatment Consent

In the event of a medical emergency when I am not available, I give permission to the emergency physician to administer any medical procedures deemed necessary. I will also take responsibility for the cost of Emergency Transportation.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

### Child's Health Record

General State of Health: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Known Allergies: \_\_\_\_\_

Other Relevant Information: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Has your child had?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Chicken Pox	<input type="checkbox"/>	German Measles
<input type="checkbox"/>	Measles	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mumps
<input type="checkbox"/>	Whooping Cough	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____

Is your child prone to?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Ear Aches	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sore Throats
<input type="checkbox"/>	Headaches	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stomach Upsets
<input type="checkbox"/>	Colds	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____

\*\*Please provide me with a copy of your child's Immunization Records



## Special Events Permission Form

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Community Outings:

I give permission for \_\_\_\_\_ to take my child on outings in the community (walks \_\_, tours \_\_, playgroups \_\_).

I do not require notification of such outings on the following basis:

Neighbourhood Walks: \_\_\_\_\_  
(when notification is required)

Community Field trips: \_\_\_\_\_  
(when notification is required)

Visits to Playgroups: \_\_\_\_\_  
(when notification is required)

\_\_\_\_\_: \_\_\_\_\_  
(other) (When notification is required)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

For time period of:

\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

## Trip Permission Form

**Look what we are doing...**

On \_\_\_\_\_  
(date)

we will be going to \_\_\_\_\_  
(where)

located at \_\_\_\_\_

We will be travelling by \_\_\_\_\_  
(car, bus, walking, etc.)

We will be leaving at: \_\_\_\_\_ and returning at: \_\_\_\_\_

The cost of the trip is: \_\_\_\_\_

The children will need to bring: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please return the attached form prior to \_\_\_\_\_  
(date)

*(We'd love to have you join us – please let me know if you can make it!)*

-----  
I, \_\_\_\_\_, give permission for my child to attend the trip to

\_\_\_\_\_

Parents Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Release Form

**This form may be used for an older school-age child who walks to and from school unescorted by the caregiver.**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby release \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of parent) (Name of caregiver)

from any and all responsibility for my child, \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Child)

on each school day after he/she has left the caregivers home to attend school and until he/she returns the caregiver's home from school. The caregiver should expect my child to return to her/his home after school between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. If my child does not arrive at the caregivers home between the times noted, I expect the caregiver to immediately contact me or my spouse to advise me of the situation.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Caregiver's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## Injury/ Emergency Report Form

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Who was involved? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What happened? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

When did it happen? \_\_\_\_\_

Where did it happen? \_\_\_\_\_

What action was taken? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How are the children now? \_\_\_\_\_

Who was notified? \_\_\_\_\_

What further action is required? \_\_\_\_\_

Caregiver's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_





## Statement of Income and Expenses

**Business Name:**

Your Name:

Social Insurance Number:

For Time Period Covering: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Gross Income</b>	
Total Income from the care of the children	
<b>Expenses</b>	
Accounting and legal	
Accounting and promotion	
Bank Charges	
Field Trips	
Food	
Home Supplies	
Insurance	
Postage and Stationary	
Program Supplies	
Repairs and Maintenance	
Telephone	
Training	
Office Supplies	
Other	
<b>HOUSEHOLD EXPENSES</b>	
Rent (business portion)	
Utilities	
Mortgage Interest (business portion)	
Property Taxes (business portion)	
Automobile Expenses (business portion)	
Capital Cost Allowance	
Other	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	
<b>Net Income</b>	

# Look What We Are Doing Today!

Activity	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Weekend

# Weekly Menu Plan

Meal	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Breakfast  Grains Fruits/Vegetable Protein Dairy							
Snack							
Lunch  Grains Fruits/Vegetable Protein Dairy							
Snack							
Supper  Grains Fruits/Vegetable Protein Dairy							

# Competency Standards for Family Day Care Providers

Family Day Care Association of Manitoba

203 – 942 St. Mary's Road

Winnipeg, Manitoba, R2M 3R5

204-254-5437

1. Establishes and maintains a safe, healthy learning environment:
  - a. Indoor and outdoor area free from debris, structural hazards and dangerous substances, (poisons, medicines, small objects, etc.)
  - b. Fire extinguisher and smoke detectors operable and know how to use
  - c. Has easily accessible and current list of phone numbers for parents and emergency services
  - d. Monthly fire drills
  - e. Supervises indoor and outdoor play
  - f. Provides safe equipment
  - g. Supervises children near hot stove
  - h. Substitute for emergencies (no more children than licensed \* number)
  - i. Complete first aid and course
  - j. Uses appropriate car seats for children
  - k. Provides infant gates where necessary for infants
  
2. Promotes good health and nutrition:
  - a. Menus should include all food groups and be posted
  - b. Children and provider wash hands after toileting, before and after eating
  - c. Provides affection for all children
  - d. Provides adequate ventilation, lighting, good room temperature and good sanitation
  - e. Establishes procedures for care of sick children
  - f. Provides individual bedding for each child
  - g. Limits sugars, salts, processed foods with additives, chemicals or artificial flavouring
  - h. Recognizes and reports symptoms of suspected abuse and neglect to Child and Family Services (Children's Aid Society)
  - i. Sanitary changing of diapers occurs
  - j. Works with parents to promote toilet training
  
3. Provider uses space, materials and routines to construct an interesting, secure and enjoyable environment that encourages play, exploration and learning:
  - a. Provides easily accessible learning materials (i.e. puzzles, crayons, markers, books, etc.)
  - b. Balances active and quiet, free and structured individual/group, indoor/outdoor play
  - c. Limits T.V. time and chooses programs appropriate for your children
  - d. Supports relationships between family members and children
  - e. Provides consistent routines for meals, naps, clean up, etc.
  
4. Supports physical development:
  - a. Provides for both large muscle activity (i.e. running, jumping, climbing, playing ball – indoors and outdoors) and small muscle activity (i.e. play dough, cutting, colouring, etc.)
  - b. Provides a variety of cultural physical activities
  - c. Supports children in learning self-help skills (i.e. tying shoes, toilet learning, etc.)

5. Provides activities that encourage curiosity, cognitive development, exploration and problem solving:
  - a. Encourages active learning rather than passive listening
  - b. Talks to infants encouraging them and describing what they hear, feel, touch and see
  - c. Play with infants and preschoolers as partner or facilitator
  - d. Talks, sings, and reads to all ages
  - e. Gives children space to explore and play
  - f. Encourages children to ask questions, seek help and respond in ways that extend their thinking
  
6. Encourages communication development:
  - a. Talks often to individual children
  - b. Listens attentively to children
  - c. Uses songs, stories, nursery rhymes to expand language
  - d. Responds to infants' cooing and non-verbal cues (i.e. crying)
  
7. Enhances creative development:
  - a. The process of creating is more important than the end product
  - b. Each creative expression is unique, not uniform
  - c. Regularly provides non-structural materials (i.e. blocks, paints, clay, or musical instruments)
  - d. Provides for messy activities (i.e. sensory activities such as water, sand, finger painting and drawing)
  
8. Supports secure social, emotional development and demonstrates positive guidance techniques:
  - a. Treats each child as an individual
  - b. Talks with each child everyday
  - c. Demonstrates affection with each child each day
  - d. Encourages and helps children develop self help skills
  - e. Gives each child one-on-one attention each day
  - f. Offers children appropriate choices and respects these (i.e. food, activities)
  - g. Helps children recognize and accept feelings
  - h. Responds to infants cry
  
9. Helps children to develop positive social skills:
  - a. Helps children work through separation anxiety, negative behaviour, shyness and making friends
  - b. Serves as social model by building a positive relationship with family members in own home
  - c. Responds quickly and calmly to prevent children from hurting each other
  - d. Helps children share and respect rights and possessions of others
  - e. Encourages children to help each other and make friends
  - f. Talks about feelings with children
  
10. Provides supportive environment for children which guides development of appropriate and acceptable behaviours:
  - a. Uses positive guidance methods (i.e. listening, reinforcement and redirection)
  - b. Avoids negative methods (i.e. spanking, threatening, shouting, isolation, or shaming children)
  - c. Encourages behaviour guidelines that are simple, reasonable, consistent, and promote self control

- d. Gives children clear directions and practises patience
- e. Modifies/redirects play when over stimulated
- f. Builds trusting relationships with children
- g. Anticipates confrontations between children and helps work out problems
- h. Addresses behaviours rather than labelling children
- i. Allows children to express sad or angry feeling and teaches appropriate words for these feelings
- j. Explains rules at children's level of understanding
- k. Says 'no' when necessary and gives simple explanation
- l. Uses positive language (i.e. "walk" rather than "don't run")

11. Establishes positive and productive relationship with families:

- a. Establishes clear understanding with each family regarding hours of care, fees, payments, vacations, emergency procedure, etc.
- b. Respects each families cultural background
- c. Observes strict confidentiality regarding child and family and makes parents aware of this policy
- d. Shares information with parent about their child's experiences
- e. Is able to discuss problems with parents constructively and supportively
- f. Develops attachment with the child without competing with the parent
- g. Respects and tries to understand parents views when they differ from providers

12. Provider is a competent organizer, planner, record keeper, communicator and co-operative partner with parents (program manager):

- a. Maintains up-to-date records on child's growth, health, behaviours and progresses and shares this information with parents
- b. Resolves problems affecting program with providers members and follows up on their resolution
- c. Keep records for Family Day Care up to date (i.e. Emergency phone number, medical information, attendance)
- d. Complies with licensing regulations and standards
- e. Complies with regulations on number of children allowed in Family Day Care; considers individual children's needs when determining number of children in her/his care
- f. Recognizes different relationship with day care children and providers children and gives each child special attention
- g. Coordinates program plans with parents and providers family when appropriate
- h. Makes plans for substitute caregivers for emergencies, which ensures legislative numbers (ratio) are respected: \*parents must be aware of plans.

13. Professionalism is demonstrated by making decisions based on childhood theories and practises, promoting quality child care, improving competence for personal and professional growth and for children and families by taking courses, workshops or attending provider meetings:

- a. Demonstrate positive attitude in her role
- b. Keeps all personal information about children and families confidential
- c. Evaluates performance to identify needs for positive growth
- d. Accepts comments and criticism from parents and others in a positive way
- e. Establishes importance of day care work with providers own family members

- f. Recognizes that fatigue, low morale, and lack of work satisfaction decreases effectiveness and finds ways to meet her own needs and to maintain energy and enthusiasm
- g. Works cooperatively with others and promotes positive atmosphere in the home
- h. Learns about new laws and regulations affecting Family Day Care children and families
- i. Advocates quality services and rights for children and families

**\*Maximum number of children legally allowed at any given time in your home within the province in which you reside.**

## Child Development Chart

*Permission to reprint: Canadian Paediatric Society*

These milestones are only a guide to the approximate ages of achievement. Children, even brothers and sisters, vary individually in their development.

Age	❖ Physical	❖ Intellectual/Language	❖ Emotional Social
0 – 3 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Begins to hold up head.</li> <li>❖ Kicks feet actively.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Looks at interesting things i.e. faces, toys</li> <li>❖ Makes sounds when spoken to.</li> <li>❖ Startled by sounds.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Recognizes and begins to smile at familiar faces.</li> <li>❖ Cries to make needs known, i.e. for comfort, food, diapering.</li> </ul>
3 – 6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Keeps head up when held in sitting position.</li> <li>❖ Reaches for and grasps toys.</li> <li>❖ Rolls over.</li> <li>❖ Puts hands together.</li> <li>❖ Begins to finger feed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Imitates sounds.</li> <li>❖ Coos, uses voice.</li> <li>❖ May laugh.</li> <li>❖ Watches moving objects.</li> <li>❖ Repeats actions which cause an object to move or make a sounds.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Becomes aware of strangers.</li> <li>❖ Enjoys being near people.</li> <li>❖ Uses different cries for different needs.</li> <li>❖ Plays peek-a-boo.</li> <li>❖ Excited at sight of food.</li> </ul>
6 – 9 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ May creep.</li> <li>❖ May sit unsupported.</li> <li>❖ Holds a bottle.</li> <li>❖ Drinks from a cup when cup is held.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Imitates sounds (ba-ba-ba).</li> <li>❖ Attracts attentions by coughing or shouting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Likes being picked up.</li> <li>❖ Has close relationship with parents and may have difficulty separating from them.</li> <li>❖ Often shy with strangers.</li> <li>❖ Pushes things away if not wanted</li> <li>❖ Begins to show food likes and dislikes</li> </ul>
9 – 12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Sits up without support</li> <li>❖ Creeps and crawls</li> <li>❖ May walk holding furniture</li> <li>❖ Uses finger and thumb to pickup and hold objects</li> <li>❖ Helps with feeding and dressing</li> <li>❖ Holds spoon (awkwardly)</li> <li>❖ Uses cup, but has difficulty releasing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Sounds words with meaning (i.e. mamma, dada, bye)</li> <li>❖ Knows own coat, shoes, toys</li> <li>❖ Loves to explore</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Smiles at self in the mirror</li> <li>❖ Waves good bye</li> <li>❖ Enjoys pat a cake</li> <li>❖ Responds to own name</li> <li>❖ May fight for toys</li> <li>❖ Shows moods</li> </ul>
18 – 24 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Goes up and down stairs</li> <li>❖ Scribbles</li> <li>❖ Can seat self in chair</li> <li>❖ Can kick and throw balls</li> <li>❖ Likes riding toys</li> <li>❖ Likes experimenting with food textures</li> <li>❖ Feeds self well</li> <li>❖ Enjoys eating with hands</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Is able to follow simple directions</li> <li>❖ Ability to understand is stronger than speech development</li> <li>❖ Joins words together “mom go car”</li> <li>❖ Points to body parts</li> <li>❖ Is very curious</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Shows affection</li> <li>❖ Has difficulty sharing toys</li> <li>❖ Likes playing house</li> <li>❖ May slap, hit or bite</li> <li>❖ Shows more independence in activities</li> <li>❖ Displays food preference</li> </ul>
2 – 3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ May ride a tricycle</li> <li>❖ Walks up and down stairs</li> <li>❖ Begins to use scissors</li> <li>❖ Builds towers with blocks</li> <li>❖ Draws circular scribbles and lines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Uses short sentences (3 – 4 words)</li> <li>❖ Recognizes some shapes and colours</li> <li>❖ Understands, in, on, under</li> <li>❖ Loves to listen to stories</li> <li>❖ Knows full name and sex</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Likes to do things for self</li> <li>❖ Likes to please and earn praise</li> <li>❖ Tests parents limits</li> <li>❖ Enjoys parallel play</li> <li>❖ Has definite like and dislikes</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Runs and kicks</li> <li>❖ Turns one page at a time</li> <li>❖ Puts on own clothes, undoes buttons</li> <li>❖ Able to hold a glass</li> <li>❖ Spills a lot</li> <li>❖ Places spoon right into mouth</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Dawdles</li> <li>❖ May only eat 1 food for a period of time (called food jags)</li> </ul>
3 – 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Threads big beads</li> <li>❖ Can do up buttons</li> <li>❖ Can put clothes on (except for tying laces)</li> <li>❖ Copies circles</li> <li>❖ Cuts using scissors</li> <li>❖ Stands on one foot</li> <li>❖ Jumps off step</li> <li>❖ Runs fast, may hop</li> <li>❖ Uses form</li> <li>❖ Holds handle on cup</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Knows own age</li> <li>❖ Begins to count</li> <li>❖ Asks a lot of why questions</li> <li>❖ Tell stories, nursery rhymes</li> <li>❖ Understands big/little, tall short</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Shares</li> <li>❖ Takes Turns</li> <li>❖ Plays with other children</li> <li>❖ Begins to have a sense of right and wrong</li> <li>❖ Influenced by television commercials</li> <li>❖ Requests favourite foods</li> </ul>
4 – 6 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Bounces ball</li> <li>❖ Walks backwards</li> <li>❖ Jumps over rope</li> <li>❖ Draws “house”</li> <li>❖ Skips, marches, hops</li> <li>❖ Uses knife and fork</li> <li>❖ Good self feeding skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Likes acting and telling stories</li> <li>❖ Begins to distinguish between what is real and what is imaginary</li> <li>❖ Tries to solve problems</li> <li>❖ Able to count</li> <li>❖ Recalls events in order</li> <li>❖ Asks how many, what and why questions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Likes to help (i.e. sets table)</li> <li>❖ Understands and follows rules</li> <li>❖ Takes pride in accomplishments</li> <li>❖ Makes demands for attention</li> <li>❖ May have fantasy fears (i.e. monsters)</li> <li>❖ Plays more complex games</li> <li>❖ May have an imaginary friend</li> <li>❖ Would rather talk than eat</li> <li>❖ May only eat 1 food for a period of time (call food jags)</li> </ul>
6 – 12 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Rides bicycle</li> <li>❖ Ties shoe laces</li> <li>❖ Develops printing, writing and drawing skills</li> <li>❖ Athletic abilities and coordination activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Begins and develops reading skills</li> <li>❖ Has vocabulary to express thoughts and feelings more clearly</li> <li>❖ Has knowledge of cultures, art, music, history, etc.</li> <li>❖ Broadens ability to organize information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Has reality-based fears (i.e. death, illness, divorce)</li> <li>❖ Wants to please</li> <li>❖ Accepts more responsibilities</li> <li>❖ Enjoys team activities and competition</li> <li>❖ Is leaning to control emotions; may try to hide feelings</li> <li>❖ Peer group becoming more important.</li> </ul>