

Michigan Child Care Matters

Department
of Human
Services

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BUSINESS PRACTICES

FROM THE DIRECTOR

I recently read the Fall 2005 issue of Central Focus, the Central Michigan Association for the Education of Young Children. The President's Message, by Mary Fullmer, struck a chord with me. I am pleased that she has allowed me to share her message with you:

"A common theme for those dedicated to the field of child care and education for young children is the importance of making a positive difference in the lives of children and families. Families depend on quality care and education in nurturing environments in order to carry out their day-to-day responsibilities.

Recently I was introduced to a book titled: *The Fred Factor* by Mark Sanborn. The Fred Factor summarizes the ten year relationship the author had with his U.S. Postal carrier named Fred. Fred provided extraordinary service in what could have been a mundane job. Fred chose to make a difference! Here's a summary of the Fred Principles.

Principle 1: Everyone Makes a Difference. Everyday your work is influenced by a number of factors. How you interpret and handle those circumstances is up to you.

How do you add to or take away from the experiences:

- children have in your child care or early childhood education setting?
- parents have when interacting with you about their child?
- staff have during their shift?
- college students have in your class, workshop or assigned lab time?

- members of the community have as they seek information from your public or private agency, program or department?

Setting a higher standard is more challenging than simply achieving the status quo. Do you lighten someone's burden or add to it? Do you build someone up or put someone down?

Principle 2: Success Is Built On Relationships.

Indifferent people deliver impersonal service. Relationships make the difference in our fast paced, stressed society today. Develop and maintain a genuine interest with the "customer" in your work setting. Here's

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Family Support Services
Child Development and Care

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

and

Office of Children and Adult Licensing
Division of Child Day Care Licensing



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This publication provides topical information regarding young children who are cared for in licensed child care settings. We encourage child care providers to make this publication available to parents of children in care, or to provide them with the web address so they may receive their own copy. All issues are available at the **Child Day Care Licensing web page:**

www.michigan.gov/dhs

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START-UP COSTS FOR CHILD CARE HOME PROVIDERS

Erika Bigelow, Licensing Consultant
Jackson County

Starting a family or group day care in your home can be an exciting and rewarding adventure. However, the costs of starting a new day care can seem a bit overwhelming, especially if you are starting new.

The following is a list of some start-up costs for opening a day care. The information in the list is taken from the article "Of Cookie Jars and Budget Plans" by Carole Grates (*Better Homes and Centers*, Winter 1993, Issue 32) and from information provided by Diana Rickman from Child Care Network. It is noted that the prices listed are merely suggested costs, which may change according to location.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Cost</i>
Building Remodeling	\$500 and up, if necessary
Permits	\$25 - \$200, if required by local zoning
Inspections	
Furnace or wood burner	\$40 - \$100
Physical Exams	Cost depends on health or medical insurance carrier
TB Tests	\$14, depending on where it is taken
Safety Equipment	
Fire extinguisher	\$30 - \$50
Smoke detector	\$20 and up
Plug covers, cabinet locks, safety gates, etc.	\$5 and up
Carbon monoxide detector	\$24 - \$50
Play Equipment	
For 6 children	\$500 and up
For 12 children	\$1000 and up
Sleeping/Napping Equipment	
High chairs	\$20 and up
Cribs	\$30 and up
Advertising	
Yellow pages, newspapers, brochures, promotional items	\$150
Insurance	\$100-\$1000/year
Training	
Red Cross Infant/Child CPR	\$35
Red Cross Adult CPR	\$30
Red Cross First Aid	\$25

MORE THAN JUST A HELPING HAND

Lori Brasic, Training Coordinator,
Office for Young Children, Ingham Regional 4C

Thinking back to first days or weeks in a new job, whether you were working in food services, retail business or an office setting. Do you recall the degree to which you felt overwhelmed as you began to perform the duties required by your new position? Do you also remember how helpful it was to have someone nearby to explain procedures, policies and “tricks of the trade”?

In the career world of early childhood, family child care or group day care, a majority of new child care providers are alone as they face the daunting responsibilities of their new job. Peer mentoring programs such as the “*Helping Hands*” program can provide critical support to individuals (protégés) who are the newest recruits entering the child care field.

Goals & Benefits of Mentoring Projects:

The overall goals of mentoring projects are to:

- Create increased opportunities for new caregivers by providing information from experienced mentors to improve care-giving practices.
- Increase provider retention by offering a support network to new providers.
- Help experienced, skilled teachers/child care providers stay in the early childhood classrooms and homes by offering opportunities for them to develop skills in communication, leadership and adult education as they share their knowledge and expertise with their protege.
- Recognize the impact the project has made for the community in terms of increasing accessibility; quality and quantity of child care spots by replicating the project in the community when possible.

What Worked:

Mentoring projects can be structured in a variety of different ways, depending on many factors. The *Helping Hands* Project was designed by the Office for Young Children to support the individual project participants by:

- Purposefully pairing mentors and protégés based on location and care type
- Planning monthly topical meetings with mentors
- Planning joint meetings between the mentors/protégés every other month

- Using data collection tools such as journals and activity logs, to record required consultation and technical assistance between mentor and protégé pairs that are independent of 4C scheduled event
- Building relationships of 4C project staff with mentors and protégés which include a strong emphasis participant confidence & team building among the group. ❖

Helping Hands Project- The Ingham Regional 4C, Office for Young Children received an Early Childhood Initiative grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Along with community partners, MSU Outreach & Extension, and Capital Area Youth Alliance they developed a mentoring project to help improve the quality of childcare and increase spaces in underserved areas in Lansing. The project continues to support protégé and mentors in Ingham County.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Michigan Collaborative Early Childhood Conference
Michigan Department of Education
January 25–27, 2006
Hyatt Regency Dearborn
Dearborn, Michigan
(517) 336-9700 or conference@MiAEYC.org
<http://www.MiAEYC.org>

Kent Regional 4C 32nd Annual Early Childhood Conference
February 4, 2006
Reformed Bible College
Grand Rapids, MI
<http://www.4Cchildcare.org>

2nd Annual Michigan 4C Public Policy Conference
Early Childhood Care and Education
March 2, 2006
Radisson Hotel
Lansing, MI
1-800-950-4171, then *846

CONTRACT AND PARENT HANDBOOK: WHY HAVE THEM?

Tama Beeson, Group Home Childcare Provider
St. Louis, Michigan

As a professional child care provider, you are your own boss. You set your own rules. If you want to run a professional home child care, you must think and act like a professional. Being professional will leave more time to focus on the children, which is the reason we are in the business. To be treated as a business owner, you must establish clear rules and communicate them effectively. Having a contract and setting policies can help you do that.

Before developing a contract, you need to consider what kind of benefits and level of pay you expect in return for your professional caregiving.

Here are some simple rules to follow:

- Have all communication in writing! Never rely on verbal communication. People may only hear half of what you are saying.
- Have parents sign or initial important documents you give them.
- Make your expectations clear to parents. They don't know what you expect unless you tell them.
- Save everything!!! Keep copies of all documents, memos, contracts, notes, etc. These may be helpful if needed later.

Use a contract to state your rules about payment and hours. A contract should clarify the expectations that parents and providers have of each other. Every contract should contain these basic items:

- Names of the child and parents
- Payment schedule
 - ♦ Do you require payment in advance?
 - ♦ Do you allow bi-weekly or monthly payments?
 - ♦ Do you require a deposit or registration fee?
 - ♦ Do you charge a fee for late payments and bounced checks? Clearly state when a payment becomes late and the fee for both.
- Days and hours of operation
 - ♦ List the days and hours child care is available.
 - ♦ State the policy on early and late drop off or pick up.
- Holiday, vacation, and sick days
 - ♦ List the name of the holiday, not the date.
 - ♦ Indicate if they are paid holidays or unpaid holidays.

- ♦ Spell out what parents do for your absences and who is expected to pay for those days.
- Penalty fee (late pick-up, overtime, NSF etc.)
- Supplemental fee
 - ♦ These are for extra things that are not included in your regular rates such as story time charges, arts and crafts, music lessons, field trips, etc.
- Termination policy
 - ♦ How much notice is required to terminate services and is there a penalty?
- Trial period, if applicable
- Dated signatures of provider and parents
- Child Absences
 - ♦ Most providers require payment in full even if children are home sick or on vacation.

Other written policies, separate from your contract, can be put together in a parent handbook. Knowing the ground rules is important to a successful parent/provider relationship. Misunderstandings can be avoided if everyone knows who is responsible for what. Your policies are the foundation of your business. They tell parents how you run both the service and financial side of your childcare. Don't implement a policy unless you are willing to enforce it. Your policies should cover these basic items:

- Discipline
- Meal and snack schedule
 - ♦ Who provides the meals and snacks?
 - ♦ If meals are brought from home, do you have specific guidelines for parents to follow?
- Nap and rest schedule
 - ♦ Are all children required to take naps or rest quietly?
 - ♦ What are your nap times?
 - ♦ What do you offer for older children that do not nap?
- Activity schedule
 - ♦ What kinds of activities do you provide?
 - ♦ Do you do preschool or daily projects?
- Toilet training
 - ♦ Do you require pull-ups or training pants?
 - ♦ Do you want rubber pants?

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CHILD CARE PROVIDERS' ASSOCIATION

Lois Harper, Family Child Care provider
Newaygo County

In the early 1990's a group of women had a desire to socialize with anyone over the age of 18. During this time, there were 4-5 ladies who longed for adult conversation. Initially, there wasn't a plan to formalize the support group.

The goals were simple: to talk about situations, common problems, and to help each other. The meetings were more of a casual gathering to share ideas and conversation with other caregivers. At that time Jean Hasse, Newaygo County Career Tech Center Child Care

Instructor, offered a lot of resources. Each year the numbers and needs of the group expanded.

In 1997, with the assistance from Joining Forces Child Care Project the group expanded from a gathering to a non-profit 501(c)3. The result was The Newaygo County Child Care Providers Association (NCCCPA). Monthly meeting replaced gatherings. Formalized trainings were created and offered. The association's goal was to end isolation among child care providers and to offer resources to enhance their child care program. Currently the NCCCPA offers monthly meetings, formalized trainings, a bi-monthly newsletter, CPR and first aid training, a lending library of equipment and toys, a laminating machine, a copy machine, die cuts, mentoring services to providers, and training videos.

We have a wonderful conference each year through a joint effort of the Association and Joining Forces. The conference includes a guest speaker and several choices of workshops. Providers can earn up to five training hours for attending.

Some of the activities the Association has done over the years include the Children's Expo in White Cloud, Gerber Days in Fremont, and decorating a tree in April 2005 for Child Abuse Prevention Month. The blue ribbons that were placed on the tree represented the 192 substantiated child abuse cases in Newaygo County for 2004. This will be a

yearly event put on by the Association to help make the community aware of the abuse that happens to the children.

“The goals were simple: to talk about situations, common problems, and to help each other.”

The training that we have brought to Newaygo County thru 4-C's and others in the community has been well received. This has been an excellent source of education for providers.

The Association has been a true blessing for me. I have made many new and wonderful friends that without the Association I would have never met. I feel that the Association has helped to educate the providers of Newaygo County to do the very best job of taking care of our number one asset, the children. We are no longer viewed as just babysitters. Through NCCCPA and Joining Forces the community has finally realized that we are professionals in the child care business.

We have come a long way in eight years - from a small group of day care home providers tentatively reaching out to one another for help and support to a professional organization. ❖



WHAT ABOUT ME?

Laura Nola, Director
Play and Learn Children's Place, Ann Arbor

Calling all early childcare providers! Are you tired of leaping over “wooden castles” in a single bound? Figuring out what to cook for your family’s dinner after preparing meals for many tiny eaters who will only eat food that comes in the color blue? (Who invented blue food anyway?) What about your role at your child care facility? Are you functioning at your top potential? These are questions every early child care provider must deal with every day. Is something missing in your life? What could it be? Can you figure it out? Hmmmm...Where do you fit into this scenario? **YOU DON'T!**

How can you accomplish being a super teacher, nurturer, cook, friend, fellow employee, and be true to your own needs? Close your eyes and take a minute or two to think about what used to make you happy. Sit down. Flex your ankles. Loosen up your neck. This is the part of the story where you forget about everyone else in the world and focus on yourself. Come on, you can do it if you really try!

When was the last time you were with your friends having fun at a local restaurant, shopping, or just “goofing around?” Remember how it felt to be one of the gang? Call up an old friend and set up a dinner and a movie date. Don't fall back on that “let's do lunch thing.” Make a date **and keep it**. You may have so much fun that you make it a monthly occurrence. Wouldn't that be great?

Do you enjoy reading books? Not just stories during story time, but real novels! Call your local library and see if they have a book of the month reading club. Don't feel comfortable around strangers? Start your own book club. Think of the stimulating conversations an entire group of friends could have who are all reading the same book; does life get any better?

Have you been putting off going to the gym for a workout? (Yes, we all do, but we all feel better when we are done, don't we?) You don't have to join an expensive gym; go for a walk. The dog has been gaining a few pounds lately too, hasn't he! The best part of walking with the dog is that he will walk as fast or as slow as you want and won't whine that you are walking too far (or not far enough). You get to be with a “buddy” and yet alone with your thoughts at the same time.

Did you finish that degree that you started working on oh so long ago? I bet it has been in the back of your mind for a long time, hasn't it? This is not an unattainable quest! Don't think you can afford it? One option is a T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Michigan Scholarship available through the Michigan 4C Association. This scholarship helps licensed and regulated providers earn an early childhood degree or CDA Credential. Many scholarships include a portion for tuition/fees and books, release time, a travel stipend and a bonus at the completion of the contract. In addition to T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Michigan scholarships, there are other scholarships available through colleges and universities as well as the federal government. Some loans are interest free, and you don't have to pay them back until you complete your degree. It will be good for the children you care for to see that the teacher has to work hard on her homework too.

College can do amazing things to your psyche. You will impress yourself that you are still the vibrant, intelligent person that you once were before changing diapers and cooking dinners. You will also find a new view on the world that you once didn't have time for. Wow, will you impress your guests at your next dinner engagement when you are going toe to toe with the “smart guy” at the table about current events and politics! You may be surprised to find the new you a vibrant person who has energy to enjoy life to its fullest.

Are you feeling inspired? Get a piece of paper and write down ten things that you can do for yourself. Now, narrow the list down to five, and then three. What you really want (and need) are the top three things on your list. **DO IT NOW! THIS MAY BE YOUR LAST CHANCE!** Don't give up! You are on a roll. It takes work to achieve a goal. Today is your day. Get up and call that friend, get that book, go for a walk, or call your local college. These ideas didn't make your list? That is o.k. Whatever it is that made your “for me” list is something that can be achieved. Do something nice for yourself. Don't put it off; you are worth it. You can do it, don't keep the new you waiting! ❖

SUCCESS WITH MANAGED STRESS

Barbara Johnson, Group Child Care Provider,
Genesee County

Having your own child care can be one of the most exciting, rewarding and, yes, stressful businesses you may ever venture into. Give your business a structurally sound base by following some simple guidelines which will ensure its success. Each one of the areas listed below are important within themselves and build upon each other. To discount any one of these areas will eventually stress you and your program. Here are my top six keys to success with managed stress.

1. Be Financially Sound

- Set a healthy budget avoiding financial pitfalls.
- Promote enrollment from within. Please them, and they shall talk.
- Spend time on the phone with families “shopping” for day care, even when you are full. They will remember you and all your kindness.
- Build a wait list.
- Manage your finances weekly utilizing computer technology to record, track and forecast your business progress.

2. Manage the Children

- Coach and guide (opposed to control).
- Be proactive (opposed to reactive) by preventing the fires before they happen.
- Look at the family dynamics. Take into consideration the whole child. Sometimes they have a mighty full plate.
- Avoid the blame game. A punitive frame of mind will only reap misery for the child and yourself.



- Make concrete observations and formulate doable solutions. You can help children develop valuable skills needed to walk down the path that has been laid before them.

3. Build a Healthy Relationship With the Parents

- Communicate. This is your single most important tool. Do not leave them in the dark. Knowledge is security. Utilize daily charts, newsletters, dry erase boards, bulletin boards and any other sources available to you to get the word out.
- Take the time to talk and interact with every family and show them you care about their lives.
- Be a good listener. Avoid offering any unsolicited advice. Parents may ask for your advice, but in reality they may only need a little reassurance that they are doing something right.
- Avoid making judgments that will set your frame of mind thus blocking productive analytical thinking.
- Have your boundaries in place and hold that line! A contract is an extremely useful, necessary tool. Remember to have an effective contract that accurately reflects your expectations and philosophies. It is easier to follow rules that are clear and concise.

4. Share Ownership With Your Staff

- Respect your staff; you need to be respectful in order to be respected.
- Look to your staff as a resource for ideas and solutions. They have a wealth of knowledge and experience to draw upon.
- Include (opposed to exclude). Involve them when making decisions, and they shall share in the implementation of the solutions.
- Identify staff strengths and build upon them.
- Share all you know. A true sign of an outstanding manager is the consistency of operations, even in your absence.
- Learn to let go of control. You cannot effectively control every action and detail. You hired your staff for a reason. Learn to trust their judgment.

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WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A PROFESSIONAL?

Carole M. Grates, Consultant
 Primary Directions, Frankenmuth
Reprinted from Issue 48, Winter 1999

What does it mean to be a professional? What sets a professional apart from others who do the same work?

First Impressions

First impressions count in any business. And that starts with how you answer the telephone. All staff should be trained to answer with your business name. Keep the important information regarding your hours and fees next to the phone. No one should be put on hold for a long time. If the staff person cannot answer the question, she should take the person's name and phone number and promise a return call within a reasonable amount of time. And then...be sure to return the call!

Secondly, consider your answering message. It also should be professional. Save the cute little comments or children making noise in the background for other arenas. Remember each call is a potential paying customer.

Chaos is very evident over the phone lines. If possible, locate your phone in a place that is away from the daily busy noise of the program. What may be the good sounds of children playing can sound like a program out of control to a stranger.

The second "first impression" you make is when the parent comes to your door. A doctor's office feels professional as soon as you walk in. The waiting room is not cluttered. It is quiet. A receptionist greets you. You are acknowledged and your questions are answered.

Is this realistic in a childcare setting? To a degree, yes. You can arrange your home or center so that there is a small area to greet parents. Keep the area clear of toys and other equipment. Have some parent materials available such as books or magazines on parenting issues. No parent should go unacknowledged when she comes into the setting. Again all staff should be trained to greet parents. The best thing is if you can be the one to greet them. This gives parents a sense of who is in control. It is very disconcerting to come into a program and have the staff act like they are not sure who is in charge.

Lasting Impressions

A parent handbook is a testimony to your professionalism. It shows parents you are serious about your work and have thought through the policies that will govern how you operate. This should be readily available for prospective families. And staff should be familiar with it also.

Staff should also dress in a professional manner. This does not mean suits and high heels. However, there should be an expectation that staff will be neat and clean. Providing smocks or aprons that are uniform will enhance your staff's appearance. It gives a sense that there is a commitment and continuity among the caregivers. Another way of professionalizing your staff is to provide name tags. This will help parents to know the names of all the caregivers.

If you are a home child care provider, you should be up and dressed when the first parent arrives. It does not instill much confidence if you meet a parent at the door with rollers in your hair and your bathrobe on. You would think twice before going into a doctor's office where the receptionist was still putting on her make-up when you arrived.

The most important lasting impression is the way you and the staff talk to and interact with the children. Voices should be kept soft. Staff should get down to the children's eye level.

When talking with parents, sound assertive and secure. Never let a parent push you over the edge in front of the children or other parents. Go with an angry parent to another area and settle your differences.

A Trained Staff is A Professional Staff

Take the time to orient new staff to all procedures and policies. Review these at staff meetings on a regular basis so that all caregivers are well versed in what you expect. This is a basic requirement.

However, staff also need to be trained regularly on child development and programming. They should be able to

explain what they are doing to parents who ask. Their lesson plans should reflect the best knowledge we have in preparing a children's program.

Personal Professionalism

What does it take to be personally professional? A major indicator of a professional is membership in a professional organization or support group. This shows you see yourself as part of a larger field and want to improve the services you provide. It tells your families you are seeking to be the best you can be.

Take the Professionalism Test

- Do I have a handbook for parents?
- Do I have my hours and fees next to the telephone?
- Have all staff been trained to answer the phone?
- Have all staff been trained to greet parents when they enter the building?
- Do I do an orientation for all new staff?
- Do I review program policies and procedures at regular staff meetings?
- Do my staff have opportunities for training in child development and programming?
- Do I have some dress code expectations?
- Have I provided my staff with smocks or aprons that identify them as staff members?
- Do all staff interact in a positive way with children and parents?
- Do all staff get on the eye level of the children when talking with them?
- Would my program seem professional to *me* if I were the new parent coming in the door?
- Am I a member of at least one professional organization or support group?
- Have I attended at least one workshop or conference during the last year?

Hope you passed with flying colors!

Secondly, a professional seeks continuing education. Attendance at conferences and workshops to learn new ideas and hone old skills is a hallmark of every professional.

Thirdly, professionals mentor other child care providers as they enter the field. Sharing your knowledge with new providers enhances the entire profession of childcare.



Success With Managed Stress (*Cont'd from pg. 7*)

- Pay your employees well. You get what you pay for.
- Aim for high standards by role modeling high standards.

5. Care For Yourself

- Protect your personal time. Your days need to have a definite beginning and an end.
- Ensure your family's boundaries will be respected. Resentment will build quickly if you allow those boundaries to be compromised.
- Treat your family to a vacation. Make time to strengthen those stressed family bonds.
- Join a support group. You can find tremendous support with those who share the same experiences.
- Knowledge is power. Educate yourself on an ongoing basis. Every child is a unique individual and through ongoing professional development you can empower yourself with the appropriate tools needed to help that child succeed.
- Healthy mind, healthy body. Eat healthy and exercise regularly. Exercise provides an excellent physical vent for frustrations.

6. Evaluate Self

There is one final step that I added after my first year of business... my annual evaluatory period. I analyze my overall business operation and identify any causes of ongoing frustrations and stress. I then brainstorm viable solutions to be implemented and evaluated prior to the end of the year. It is my New Year's resolution to myself. After all, the person who holds the most power over the direction my business will go is "*myself.*" ❖



RULES FOR BILLING DHS FOR CHILD CARE SERVICES

If you are billing the State of Michigan for the care of DHS recipients through the Child Development and Care Program, you must follow the rules outlined in DHS Publication 230 (Provider Handbook and Reporting Instructions for Child Care Providers).

You must keep complete and accurate records of **daily** attendance for all DHS-funded children you care for. For each child, the records must show the daily care begin time (when the child was placed in your care) and daily care end time (when the child left your care). **You and the parent must certify that the daily attendance records are true and correct.** These attendance records support the hours of care you report when you request childcare payment from DHS. You must keep these records for four years from the date of care for DHS auditing purposes.

You may only bill for actual hours of childcare provided. State of Michigan Holidays and absences due to the **child's** illness (not to exceed two consecutive weeks) can be reported if you charge the general public (all of your customers) for the holiday or absences due to illness and the child normally would be in your care for that day.

You may not report to DHS or bill hours for absences including:

- The hours a child is in school.
- Absences for “no shows,” such as when children simply fails to attend, leaves, or is taken out of childcare without notice.
- Vacation periods of the parent/substitute parent, child, or yourself.
- “Holding a spot” for a child.
- State of Michigan holidays, when a child is not in your care for any other day during the biweekly (two-week) reporting period.
- Continuous absences – due to the child’s illness – which exceed two consecutive weeks.
- Non-approved daycare activities.

DHS pays a portion of the cost of childcare for income eligible families. This portion is known as the Department Pay Percent (DP%). It is your responsibility to collect the difference between what DHS pays and what the family owes you, including fees for a private childcare service contract you have with the family. DHS will not pay the family’s share (the co-payment) of the childcare payment or any unauthorized daycare expense, including daycare for non-approved activities.

The parent is responsible for any childcare charges not paid by DHS, including the cost of childcare activities that are not approved for payment by DHS.

Notice: Providing false information to DHS, or reporting (billing) hours of care not provided, may constitute fraud. This could result in:

- **Referral to the Office of Inspector General for investigation.**
- **Civil action or criminal prosecution, fines, and/or imprisonment, which could lead to license revocation.**

For more information or to review the Provider Handbook (DHS Publication 230), go to: www.michigan.gov/dhs or contact your local DHS office. ❖

Contract and Parent Handbook (*Cont'd from pg. 4*)

- Toys & treats from home
 - ♦ Are children allowed to bring toys or treats from home?
 - ♦ Are there limits? If so, list them.
- Emergency procedures
 - ♦ What do you do in case of an emergency (fire, tornado, serious injury)?
- Substitute care
 - ♦ Do you provide substitute caregivers or is the parent responsible for maintaining a backup plan?
- Illness
 - ♦ List illness's that require a child to stay home, such as chicken pox, scarlet fever, high fever, etc.
- Supplies
 - ♦ Are there items that parents are required to provide and if so, how often.
- Birthday and holiday routine
 - ♦ Are birthdays celebrated?
 - ♦ Do you provide the snack or do you expect the parent to provide it?

Review the terms in your contract and policies with your parents yearly at renewal to make sure everyone understands them. An annual contract will keep everything up to date and all vacation and holiday dates current.

Any change to your written contract should always be in writing. You can attach a signed note to the current contract or rewrite it and have parents sign a new one. You are the one that sets the limits.

You may need to set consequences if policies are not followed. This may include additional fees or termination of care. Enforcing your policies may feel awkward. However, you are better off in the long run as parents are less likely to take advantage of you.

A well written contract and clear policies can help your childcare business run smoothly, as well as avoid frustration and burnout. ❖

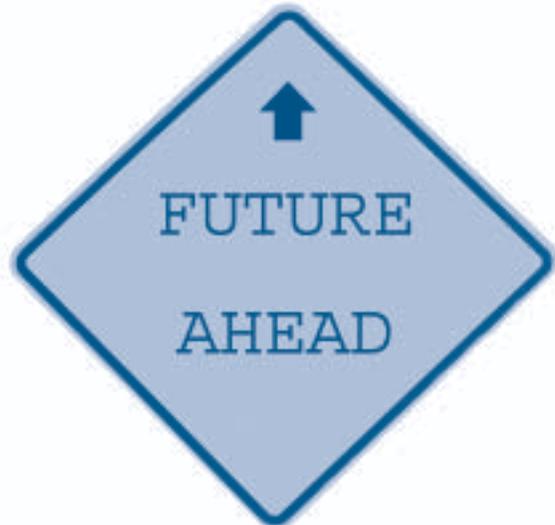
From The Director (*Cont'd from pg. 1*)

the seven “B’s” of building relationships. Be real; Be interested (not interesting – leads to the next “B”); Be a better listener; Be empathic; Be honest, clear and follow-through; Be helpful; Be prompt.

Principle 3: You Must Continually Create Value For (Yourself and) Others And It Doesn't Have To Cost a Penny. How can you use your imagination and creativity to solve everyday problems? We compete against our own potential everyday. And most of us fall short of what we are capable of doing or being. At the end of the day do you say, “I wish I had”, or “I’m glad I did?” Fight the competitor of mediocrity, a willingness to do just enough and nothing more to get by. Get involved! Add the “good stuff” and subtract the “bad stuff.”

Principle 4: You Can Reinvent Yourself Regularly. Every morning you wake up with an opportunity for a fresh start. This reminds me of the principles offered in the video about the Seattle Fish Company. Those principles are: Choose your attitude; Make their day; Be present; and Have fun! What can you do to apply originality, creativity, enthusiasm, but most importantly commitment to your work?

Nobody can prevent you from choosing to be exceptional. You make the difference!” ❖



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CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION INFANT/CHILD PRODUCT RECALLS (not including toys)

The recalls below have been added since the last issue:

- **Child Craft Industries, Inc. Recall of Cribs**
- **Kelty Recall of Speedster Jogging Stroller**
- **Bradshaw International Inc. Recall of Bottle Sipper Caps**
- **Pottery Barn Kids Recall of Spindle Cribs**
- **Atico International USA, Inc. Recall of Children's Arm Band Pool Floats Sold at CVS Stores**
- **Target Recall of Back Trails Jr. Bicycle Helmets**
- **ZoloWear Recall of Infant Carriers/Slings**
- **Fourstar Group Recall to Repair Kid's Folding Chairs**
- **Idea Nuova Inc. Recall to Repair Children's Folding Chairs**
- **Meco Corp. Recall of Children's Folding Chairs**
- **Radio Flyer Inc. Recall of Toddler Walker Wagon**
- **Sycamore Kids Inc. Recall of Mountain Buggy Jogging Strollers**

Details on these product recalls may be obtained on the Consumer Product Safety Commission's website: www.cpsc.gov. To review the complete list see the Child Care Licensing Division website at: www.michigan.gov/dhs (licensing/child day care)

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