

# Michigan Child Care Matters

Business Practices Issue 105

## *From the Division Director*

Welcome to our first online only newsletter. I have heard a mixture of responses to this change and I appreciate the variety of voices we have heard. We will try our best to find solutions for providers that are truly unable to print the last page of recalls that are required to be posted.

I want to thank our staff for working through the many changes related to leaving the Department of Health and Human Services and joining the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs. The Child Care Licensing Division has been busy replacing retired managers and staff, increasing the regions from 6 to 8, and interviewing dozens of candidates statewide to hire at least 18 new consultants. When the dust settles, we will have 8 regions with 11 consultants in each region and ratios of about 1 licensing consultant to 110 registrants/licensees. Our final goal is to have licensing consultants with manageable caseloads and time to work with you for better health and safety for our children in care in Michigan. You can find the map of the new regions and a staff directory on the licensing website at [www.michigan.gov/michildcare](http://www.michigan.gov/michildcare).

Next I would like to prepare everyone for the legislative changes that we are working on to ensure compliance with federal law changes. These federal changes were passed on to us through the Child Care and Development Act of 2014 (P.L. 113-186) with an implementation deadline of November 2017. One of the biggest changes for family home providers will likely be the requirement for these types of providers to be licensed instead of registered. With this change, all new licensees will have a pre-service inspection before they can be issued a license and they will have an annual monitoring inspection. This change alone will require our licensing consultants to visit over 3,500 family home providers annually, where in the last few years we have only visited approximately 500 of those providers annually.

Another big change for all provider types is the fingerprinting requirement. All licensees, staff and adult household members will be required to be fingerprinted. The cost of fingerprinting will be the responsibility of the licensee. School-based programs will no longer be able to use fingerprints obtained under the School Code for licensing purposes.

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Bureau of Community and Health Systems  
Child Care Licensing Division  
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All articles within Michigan Child Care Matters include one of the symbols below to identify for which type of provider the content is appropriate.



**All** child care providers.



**Center** child care providers.



**Home** child care providers.

## Balancing Business and Family

Jackie Sharkey, Area Manager  
Oakland County



**R**unning a child care business can be one of the most exciting, rewarding and stressful jobs you will ever have. There are many responsibilities that come with the business, which include caring for the children, managing staff, following licensing rules, and staying within your budget. As a caring and nurturing person, you also want to accommodate the needs of the families as well as your own family. How do you make sure you are doing all of this while also making sure you don't burn yourself out? Child care providers must have a plan to balance all of these needs.

### Take Care of Your Business

Be financially sound:

- Set a healthy budget avoiding financial pitfalls.
- Grow your business from within. Please parents, and they will tell others about your program.
- Manage your finances weekly, utilizing computer technology to record, track and forecast your business progress.
- Fix any building/home issues before they become more costly than needed.

Care for the children:

- Have a daily plan that is consistent and predictable for the children. They respond better when they know what is coming next, and you will be ready for the day.
- Be proactive by preventing problems before they start. Know the children's needs and learn their personalities.
- Look at the family dynamics. Take into consideration the whole child. Sometimes children have a mighty full plate, which will help you understand some of their behaviors.
- 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 for healthy development.

Utilize your staff well:

- 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.
- Involve your staff when making decisions; and they will 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.
- Aim for high standards by role modeling high standards.
- Train your staff on the licensing rules and child care facility policies.
- Provide staff with troubleshooting tips they can use in a situation where a rule must be enforced.



- 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 communicate with parents.

- 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.
- Have your boundaries in place and hold that line. A contract is an extremely useful, necessary tool.

#### Follow licensing rules:

- Keep up with the licensing rules and any changes within licensing. Review the rules and Child Care Organizations Act (1973 PA 116) regularly.
- Join the ListServ to receive updated information in your email.
- Utilize the Technical Assistance and Consultation Manual for further information on the rules and consultation to improve services found on the child care licensing website [www.michigan.gov/michildcare](http://www.michigan.gov/michildcare).
- Contact your licensing consultant when you have questions.

#### Evaluate your business annually:

- Analyze your overall business operations and identify any causes of ongoing frustrations and stress.
- Brainstorm viable solutions to be implemented and evaluated prior to the end of the year.

#### Take Care of Your Child Care Families

##### Build a healthy relationship with the parents:

- Take the time to talk and interact with every family and show them you care.

Many providers find it difficult to enforce policies and set limits with parents. However, this is your business and your livelihood; there are rules and regulations that you must follow in order to keep your registration/license in good standing.

- Have an effective contract that accurately reflects your expectations and philosophies. It is easier to follow rules that are clear and concise.
- Set time limits in your contract with parents and stick firmly by them.
- Create clear, enforceable policies. Let your families know your expectations and what will happen if they are not met.
- Review your policies with every parent when they enroll their children.
- Ensure parents understand the policies and have the opportunity to ask questions.
- Have parents sign a statement acknowledging that they have read and understand all of the policies and agree to abide by them.
- If the policies are not followed, then ensure that any penalties or fees that apply are enforced.

## Take Care of Your Family

- Sit down with your family and discuss your responsibilities for the child care; remember to allow your family to voice their feelings.
- Get your family involved in running the child care; this will allow your family to be more connected with you and the business.
- Protect your personal time. Your days need to have a definite beginning and 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.

## Take Care of Yourself

It is very important to interact with other adults and do things that grown-ups do, otherwise you lose track of yourself and your needs.

- Join a provider group. You can find tremendous support with those who share the same experiences.
- 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. Knowledge is power.
- Eat healthy and exercise regularly. Exercise provides an excellent physical vent for frustrations.
- Call up an old friend and set up a dinner and a movie date. Make a date and **keep it**. You may have so much fun that you make it a monthly occurrence.
- 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 first three things on your list. 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.

Balancing work life and family is very difficult for many providers. What contributes to stress is really loving your job and wanting to do the best you can at it. You also want to do the same for your family. Often times you go above and beyond the call of duty. By being organized and implementing the tips above, you will be better able to accomplish it all while also caring for yourself. ❖

### Want to Receive Credit for Reading Michigan Child Care Matters?

Licensing has developed tests based on the content of this newsletter. You can receive up to one clock hour of annual training for reading three newsletters and passing the associated tests each calendar year. Each article will include a symbol (see page 2) in the title of the article to identify the content as appropriate for center child care providers, home child care providers or all child care providers. For more information on how to access these tests, go to [www.michigan.gov/mccmatters](http://www.michigan.gov/mccmatters).

## How to Market Your Child Care

Catherine Edgar, Licensing Consultant  
Genesee County



One of the biggest challenges for both new child care centers and homes is how to attract families and make the community aware of your program. While word of mouth continues to be one of the most successful means of increasing your enrollment, this can be difficult to obtain, particularly if you are just starting out.

It is important to create a presence in your community. Signs, posters and business cards are all good ways to get the word out about your child care but don't forget to create a digital presence. With more and more people relying on the internet for information, it is important for child care providers to create a positive online presence. This can be achieved through a web site devoted to your child care, a Facebook page or an advertisement through web sites such as craigslist and Angie's List. Also, utilize the Great Start to Quality program ([www.greatstarttoquality.org](http://www.greatstarttoquality.org)) as this is where most agencies refer people looking for child care. If you participate in the STARS (Systematic Tiered Assessment and Rating Solution) program through Great Start to Quality, your child care will show up in the search query before other child care programs that are not participating in the STARS program.



A great way to create a presence in your community is to send out a press release. Community newspapers often publish these for a new business or a business offering a new service. By writing up a summary of your child care program and submitting it to your community newspaper, you will gain valuable free publicity for your program. You can find templates for writing a press release online. Another way to increase your presence in the community is by networking with other child

care providers through trainings, seminars and like-minded groups.

Whether you market your program via flyers, a press release, online or in some other fashion, it is important that you make your program stand out. Do you offer evening or weekend care? Do you provide transportation? Do you offer nutritious meals and snacks? Make sure you highlight the services you offer that set your program apart from other centers and homes in your community. Make sure to find out the needs of parents in your community as well. Do a lot of parents work second shift jobs or not have transportation? Take these factors into account when deciding which services to offer.

You never get a second chance at a first impression, so make sure you make the first one count. Be sure you and your staff answer telephone calls in a pleasant and professional manner as this will most likely be the first contact a potential family has with your child care. Also, make sure your child care environment is safe, clean and child friendly in both photographs and in person. This is important both on the inside as well as on the outside of your facility. A good way to increase visibility of your center or home is to use signs, balloons and inflatables to increase the visibility.

Successful marketing of your child care business doesn't have to cost a lot of money to be effective. Making yourself aware of the child care needs of your community and creating a positive presence there will go a long way in increasing the enrollment in your child care center or home. ❖



# Good Record Keeping for Providers Who Receive CDC Subsidy Payments

Evelyn Oliver, Central Reconciliation Unit  
Michigan Department of Education



The Child Development and Care Program offers payment assistance for child care services when a family is eligible for assistance. If you provide care for children who receive Child Development and Care (CDC) subsidy payments, it is important that you keep good records.

The Central Reconciliation Unit (CRU) is one of the areas within the Office of Great Start, Child Development and Care Division, responsible for CDC program integrity. Ensuring grantee accountability is required under federal guidelines. CRU performs random reviews of provider billings and payments.

Child care providers who receive CDC subsidy who are selected for a review are mailed a written notice requesting copies of their Time and Attendance records for one to two specific pay periods. Upon receipt of the requested information, a CRU Analyst conducts the review. Common review findings include the following:

- Failure to respond to requests for Time & Attendance records.
- Failure to have complete Time & Attendance records.
- Billing for times children are in school.
- Billing for children not in care.
- Billing for more hours than children were actually in care.
- Billing for more than the maximum number of children at one time.

- No parent certification of care.
- No provider certification of care.

If it is determined that the child care provider failed to comply with CDC program guidelines during the initial review, the provider will receive a Program Violation Notice. In addition, CRU may conduct a follow up review. The purpose of the follow up review is to ensure the child care provider is in compliance with CDC program guidelines. If during the follow up review it is determined the provider receiving CDC subsidy continues to be non-compliant with CDC program guidelines, additional technical assistance will be provided to ensure accuracy of billing. If inappropriate billing continues, the provider may be disqualified from receiving CDC subsidy funds for a period of time.

It is important that child care providers who receive CDC subsidy take the following actions:

- Review the CDC Handbook.
- Comply with all CDC program guidelines.
- Respond to all CRU requests for information.
- Review the I-Billing Tutorial.

The CDC Handbook and I-Billing Tutorial are available online at [www.michigan.gov/childcare](http://www.michigan.gov/childcare). If you have any additional questions or billing issues, contact CRU at 866-990-3227. ❖



# Meal Attendance in the Child and Adult Food Program

Stephanie Schenkel, MPA Consultant  
Child and Adult Care Food Program



Child care centers and home providers who participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) are required to take daily meal attendance. The meal can be pre-plated or family style. Pre-plated is defined as the meal already on the plate. Family style is defined as the child having an opportunity to serve him or herself all the components of a reimbursable meal.

## Child Care Centers

Child care centers are required to record meal attendance at Point of Service (POS) during the meal. POS meal attendance is defined as the point of the meal service when the child has received his/her meal but the meal service is not yet complete. If meal attendance is recorded outside of the meal time, meals will be disallowed. Some examples are:

- Prior to the child being at the table with the complete meal in front of him or her.
- After the child has left the table.
- Based on staff memory or usual attendance patterns of the child.
- Anytime other than during the meal service.
- Utilizing daily attendance to reconstruct meal attendance.

For example, ABC Provider gets busy and forgets to take meal attendance when she serves lunch. The next day, she receives an unannounced review. She attempts to complete the meal attendance for lunch for the prior day utilizing the daily attendance form. Those meals will be disallowed because meal attendance was not POS but were recreated later using daily attendance records.

## Child Care Home Providers

Child care home providers are required

to record meal attendance and the menu of each meal/snack served no later than midnight the same day it was served in order to be allowable. *Exception:* Child care home providers who care for more than 12 children in a single day or providers who are found

to be seriously deficient due to compliance issues must record meal attendance and menus at the time the meal/snack is served (POS meal attendance) in order to be reimbursed. However, it is best practice for all child care home providers to complete POS meal attendance.



The following best practices can assist you in completing POS meal attendance:

- Ensure all staff have been properly trained on POS meal attendance.
- Keep the meal attendance form easily accessible to staff.
- Look at the child to ensure he/she is present and mark an X on meal attendance accordingly.
- Compare your meal attendance totals during meal service with the number of children eating.
- Have someone else double check your meal attendance total for accuracy.

A provider could keep her meal attendance form on a table near her dining area, and complete the form during meal time, marking children who are present and eating. When she receives an unannounced review, she will be able to provide current POS meal attendance to support meals claimed. Her meals will be allowable.

Please contact the CACFP at 517-373-7391 or [mde-cnap-cacfp@michigan.gov](mailto:mde-cnap-cacfp@michigan.gov) for additional assistance. ❖

# Reducing Liability Risk as a Child Care Provider

Cynthia Jalynski, Licensing Consultant  
Oakland County



All businesses include a degree of risk, but there are steps providers can take to reduce it. The first one is being well versed with the applicable licensing rules and knowledgeable of the Child Care Organizations Act (1973 PA 116). Every time you complete and sign a child care application, you certify your knowledge and willingness to comply with these regulations. It is not okay to say, *I didn't know*.

There are many licensing rules and following them may seem overwhelming at times. Keep in mind that they exist to protect children from harm, so ensuring the environment is a safe place for children is a great place to start. Instead of hoping something bad will not happen, take steps to prevent it. When I look in cabinets and under sinks during inspections, I often find bleach or other cleaning supplies unlocked and accessible to children. When I bring it to the provider's attention, I sometimes receive an eye-rolling gesture or a reply such as, *I've been doing this for 20 years and no one has ever been injured*. Why take the chance? If a child ingests poison in your care, you may lose your license and face civil or even criminal charges for the neglect. What is worse is living with the knowledge that the failure to follow a simple rule contributed to the harm or death of someone else's child. Oftentimes rules do not seem like a big deal until something goes wrong.

Rules address many types of hazards, but not all of them. Organize your home or center in a way that makes it difficult for children to get hurt and makes supervision easy. Eliminate access to items that pose a risk of strangulation, choking, fire or electrocution.

Brainstorm ways to improve supervision. Avoid giving young children access to places indoors or outside that are beyond your line of

vision. In homes, there is no rule that requires the provider to be on the same level with napping children, but doing so makes it easier to provide the frequent monitoring required. Similarly, in homes, there is no rule that prohibits children from sleeping in bedrooms with the doors closed, but it is easier to keep an eye on children when they sleep in an open area or in bedrooms with open doors.

Some activities and populations carry more potential for the risk of harm than others. Transportation is one. Because of all that it entails, many facilities choose not to provide it. Some facilities transfer these risks to other parties. A reputable bus service might be used for field trips. Another option is to have parents assume responsibility for providing or arranging transportation for their own children and by meeting and dismissing at the site of the field trip, rather than at the home or center.

If you choose to provide transportation, do it properly. The Technical Assistance and Consultation Manual offers an in-depth explanation of the rules. Licensing rules for both homes and centers reference additional Michigan laws that apply to transportation. For example, the rules do not specifically indicate anything about the use of booster seats, but both reference statutes that pertain to the need for proper child passenger restraint devices. Unless traveling by bus, every child under the age of eight years or less than four feet and nine inches tall requires a booster seat. Often, providers do not own personal vehicles with sufficient space to meet this need, and buying a bigger vehicle may not be the answer. Keep in mind that the center rules prohibit the use of passenger vans with a seating capacity of 11 or more. For homes, there is a law that prohibits the use of passenger vans with a seating capacity of 11 or more for school transportation.



Some providers are unaware of the fact that standard auto and home insurance policies often do not cover incidents related to operating a child care business. Consult an insurance agent to ensure you have the coverage that is right for you. Transportation is one area where the risk of liability is high. Understanding and following the rules lessens it.

Providing care to infants is another area that requires special attention and knowledge of all applicable rules. Infants are the most fragile of children. In recent years, there have been hundreds of preventable deaths in Michigan, several of which occurred in our licensed facilities due to unsafe infant sleep practices. Training in infant safe sleep and shaken baby syndrome is required for all caregivers in homes and for caregivers who work with infants and toddlers at centers. It is a good idea to provide routine training opportunities concerning infant safe sleep and shaken baby syndrome for all caregivers. It is also a good idea for home providers to share this information with household members who encounter the children in care and is required for household members who are also assistant caregivers.

This training does not require any cost. Videos and brochures on the *Training* and *Resource* links on the child care website provide a starting point. All training must also include some interactive component to assess the caregiver's knowledge, such as a quiz or the opportunity to discuss the material.

The job of knowing and implementing all of the rules might seem a bit daunting, but there are plenty of resources available to help you master them and reduce liability.

**1. Child Care Website** (available at [www.michigan.gov/michildcare](http://www.michigan.gov/michildcare)): If you are unable to locate a rule book, you can find it online. Click on the on the *Rules and Statutes* link.

Click on the *Technical Assistance Manual* link for the manual that provides rationale for the rules and explains what is required to demonstrate compliance with them.

Click on the *Training* link to find various training opportunities, including the Rules Training (Orientation). Take a refresher course. Most local licensing offices where your licensing consultant is based offer training monthly for family and group homes and quarterly for centers. Each requires advance registration and participants earn up to six clock hours of training credit. For child care homes, the licensee or registrant is eligible to attend. For centers, licensees, designees and program directors may participate. The materials used at these orientation sessions are available on this page and may be used to provide your own staff training.

- 2. Strength in Numbers:** Don't be the only one in your home or center who knows the rules. Train your caregivers. Empower everyone to help ensure compliance and use this training to satisfy annual training requirements.
- 3. Licensing Consultants:** Contact your licensing consultant to assist with rule compliance and quality improvement. Sometimes there is an easy solution to what appears like a difficult or costly problem.
- 4. Other Professional Consultation:** Consider legal consultation and input from insurance agents to assess and reduce risks.

Not all accidents or injuries are foreseeable or preventable, but creating a safe environment that promotes good supervision and compliance with the rules go a long way toward protecting children from harm and reducing the provider's liability. ❖

## Record Keeping

Beth Goding and Julia Majka, Licensing Consultants  
Kalamazoo County



Operating a child care home or center requires a lot of paperwork. Licensing rules require that all records be accessible and available at any time for review by your licensing consultant. This includes documents for staff and children as well as required policies and procedures. A licensing consultant will review all of these records during on-site inspections. It is a challenge when records are unorganized, incomplete or unavailable. Having the documents accessible and well-organized makes the inspection easier for both the provider and the licensing consultant.

### Children's Records

All homes and centers are required to have specific records for each child in care. It is beneficial to store these documents in a binder or folder divided by each child or family. This makes it easier to determine if all required documents have been obtained and provides for easier access.

Additional records may include medication and transportation permission forms. It may be helpful to keep current medication forms together in a separate folder near the medication making them readily accessible when dispensing medication to children. Transportation permission forms can also be kept in a separate folder so that the forms for each field trip can be kept together instead of separate in each child's file.

Daily attendance records for all children in care are also required. Keeping these records in a binder ensures that all attendance records are kept together and allows for easy review during an inspection.

### Caregiver and Assistant Caregiver Records

Caregiver and assistant caregiver records can be kept in separate folders for each person. You may also want to have a separate folder for each volunteer.

Documents that are not required by licensing, such as tax forms or written reprimands should be clipped together and placed to one side of the folder since these will not be reviewed during the on-site inspection.

### Policies and Inspections

Keep copies required policies such as emergency plans, tornado and fire drills together in a binder or folder. Remember some of these policies and plans are required to be posted. If staff or parent handbooks contain required policies and procedures, they can also be filed in this binder. Ensure that these documents are replaced as they are updated.

Center and home providers are required to maintain a licensing notebook. The notebook must include all licensing inspections and special investigation reports and related corrective action plans since May of 2010. You must notify parents of the notebook and that it is available for review during regular business hours. This notebook should not be included with other center policies and procedures or any other documents.

### Getting Organized

Learning how to become organized is a unique challenge but being prepared may eliminate some of the anxiety providers often feel when they know an inspection is pending. You may find it helpful to review the Child Care Home Record Requirements (BCAL-5040) checklist or the Child Care Center Record Requirements (BCAL-5041) checklist (available at [www.michigan.gov/michildcare-forms](http://www.michigan.gov/michildcare-forms) >Checklists - Homes and Centers ) to ensure you have all the documents required by licensing. The checklist allows you to note when all required documents have been received and are completed.

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# Great Start to Quality

Start Here for Quality Early Childhood Education  
Sheri Butters, Director of Great Start to Quality



As many of us know, and research has proven, the first years of a child's life are critical to their later success in school and life. Michigan has a system that helps to ensure that our investments in child care and preschool are well spent. Great Start to Quality is Michigan's tiered quality rating and improvement system for licensed and registered child care and preschool programs.

All licensed and registered programs and providers that are in good standing with Child Care Licensing participate in Great Start to Quality at its foundational level, an Empty Star. Movement beyond an Empty Star is voluntary and requires the program or provider to submit a completed Great Start to Quality Self-Assessment Survey. Programs and providers are awarded between one and five stars based on the number of standards they meet, with five being the highest rating. Programs and providers are rated in five categories: 1) Staff Qualifications and Professional Development, 2) Family and Community Partnerships, 3) Administration and Management, 4) Environment, and 5) Curriculum and Instruction.

Great Start to Quality is designed to make sure all types of programs and providers get the tools they need to succeed in Michigan's tiered quality rating and improvement system. The benefits to programs and providers participating in Great Start to Quality are substantial and customized to meet the needs of different providers. Great Start to Quality was designed with recognition that home-based and center-based providers are different. A variety of services and supports are available to all providers through their Great Start to Quality Resource Center.

All providers have access to quality improvement resources through lending libraries that are hosted by Great Start to Quality Resource Centers throughout the state. Through these lending libraries, providers can borrow a variety of resources to support their quality improvement efforts, including: infant equipment, curriculum, themed learning kits, books, and other materials that can be critical to providing a high quality environment at absolutely no cost to the provider.



In addition to the resources available through lending libraries, all providers also have access to professional development opportunities

offered by Great Start to Quality Resource Centers. Each Resource Center uses input from programs and providers, as well as data generated through the quality rating and improvement process, to ensure the trainings and other offerings meet the unique needs of providers in their service area. To see what trainings and other professional development opportunities are available in your area go to the Great Start to Quality website and click on Professional Development in the lower right hand corner.

Other benefits to participating in Great Start to Quality include:

- Public recognition of the essential work of providing high quality care to Michigan's next generation of leaders.
- Recognition as a professional in the early childhood field.
- A customized Quality Improvement Plan designed to assist providers to achieve their quality improvement goals.
- Individualized consultation with a Quality Improvement Consultant for qualifying providers.

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# Creating a Successful Home Child Care Parent Contract

Kate DeKoning, Retired Licensing Consultant  
Grand Traverse County



A quick internet search brings up dozens of sample contracts for home child care providers to use; but how do you know which one best meets your needs? Do you go for the longest, most comprehensive, or should it be one that is very short and simple? And what is the difference between a contract and your policies?

In its simplest form, a contract is an agreement between you, the child care provider, and a parent saying that you will care for a child (or children) and what the parent will pay in return for this care. Your policies describe your expectations, child care practices and household information that is not likely to change significantly over time. Most home providers combine policy and contractual agreements, but it is good practice to keep them as separate documents so you can update the contract on a regular basis.

When parents choose you to care for their child(ren), they need to know what you expect of them and what type of services you provide for the children in your care. Here are some topics your policies might include:

- Hours of operation and holidays and vacation days when you are closed.
- Required records, such as, Child Information Card (BCAL-3731), Child-In-Care Statement/Receipt (BCAL-3900), information on any special needs.
- Discipline policy – keep in mind parents want to know how you will help their child learn positive self-control, and licensing requires you tell parents what type of discipline you are not allowed to use.
- Your curriculum or activities you and the children will be doing during the day.
- A sample daily schedule.
- Your policy on children's personal toys or equipment from home.
- What meals you serve and if parents need

to provide any portion of their child's meal. What you will do if there are any allergies or special meal requirements.

- When a child should stay home due to illness.
- What parents need to know if you are ill and can't watch the children.
- What supplies the parents need to provide (diapers, wipes, extra clothing, blanket, pillow, etc.)
- If you plan to do field trips, include information on how children will be transported, and let parents know their child cannot be transported without their prior written permission. (You may get a signed permission for walking field trips at time of enrollment, but all other field trip or routine transportation permission needs to be done separately.)
- If you are willing to administer medication, you may want to include information in your policies describing the parent responsibility and necessary permission.
- Your social media policy. Will you be sharing pictures or stories about the children on social media? Who will have access to this information? How can a parent opt-out or opt-in?

All of the above are things that may not change very much over the years, although you do want to review them on a regular basis and make changes as necessary. Parents only need a new handout on policies when you make changes.

Your contract with the parent will include a statement that the parent has read and agrees to your policies; the contract should be done no less than annually unless there is a policy change.

The contract will include:

- Name of child(ren) and birthdate(s).



- Parent Name(s), address and contact information.
- Attendance and notification of schedule change requirements.
- Payment information:
  - Deposit requirement and how it will be returned or used.
  - Hourly/daily/weekly charges.
  - Late pick-up fee.
  - When payment is due.
  - Penalty for late payment.
  - If there is a charge for the child being scheduled but not present.
  - If you grant children holiday, vacation, sick days with or without payment from the parent.
  - If you require payment from parent if you are closed for any reason.
  - Your collection procedures if an account is overdue.
- Termination of contract:
  - Conditions for a parent to withdraw (how much notice do you require, if notice is not given are they still responsible for payment?)
  - Conditions when you may ask a family to leave with or without prior notice and how payment will be handled.
  - Right to terminate without notice for lack of payment (how long will you continue to watch a child if the account is in arrears?).

The contract should be signed and dated by both you and the parent. The original should be kept in your records and the parent should get a copy of the signed contract.

Remember to take some time thinking about your policies and contract, and don't commit to actions you don't think you can follow. Your policies and contract set the stage for a successful working relationship between you and your parents. It moves you from just "watching children" to being a professional child care provider. Parents will know from the beginning how you operate and that you consider child care as your business. ❖

Remember, as the registrant or licensee, you are responsible for ensuring that all documents are complete and accessible on-site. You must ensure that when you are away from the facility that a responsible person is aware of and has access to these documents.

Finding a system that helps make the licensing process flow smoothly will benefit all child care providers. Well organized, labeled records help a child care business operate more efficiently. They also help make the inspection process easier for everyone involved. ❖

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### Great Start to Quality, from page 11

- Tiered reimbursement for families who receive subsidy payments from the Michigan Department of Education, Office of Great Start when their children attend a 3 Star or higher rated program.
- A free personal profile on Great Start to Quality's parent portal; a tool families can use to find licensed and registered child care and preschool providers.
- Opportunities to connect and learn from your peers.

It is never too early or too late to get started. Go to Great Start to Quality website at [www.GreatStartToQuality.org](http://www.GreatStartToQuality.org) and click on Providers & Educators at the bottom of the homepage to take the first step. Need help getting started? Every Great Start to Quality Resource Center has friendly staff ready to help any provider get started on the path to quality. Contact your local Great Start to Quality Resource Center by calling, toll free: 877-614-7328.

Funding from the Office of Great Start within the Michigan Department of Education supports the implementation of Great Start. ❖

# Consumer Product Safety Commission Infant/Child Product Recalls (not including toys)

These recalls have been added since Issue 104 (Winter 2015):

- Nuna baby essentials recalls high chairs due to fall hazard.
- CPSC, NHTSA and Britax announce recall of infant car seats due to fall hazard.
- Britax recalls strollers and replacement top seats due to choking hazard.
- Skip hop recalls crib mobiles due to injury hazard.

Details on these product recalls may be obtained on the CPSC's website ([www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov)). Post this page in your facility to be in compliance with the Children's Product Safety Act (2000 PA 219).

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From the Director, from page 1

A few of the other issues we are proposing to address are: clarify licensure restrictions if there has been serious injury or death at the child care facility, add restrictions for growth and use of medical marijuana in a child care home, clarify that provision of therapeutic services such as autistic behavior analysis do not fall under the purview of child care licensing, revise definitions and update terminology throughout the act, and require a valid CPR/first aid card instead of requiring first aid every three years and CPR every year.

I want to thank you for your patience as we work through these changes in 2016. Ultimately these changes will make us a better and safer state for our children in care. ❖

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