



Tips for Tots



Tip #1: Finding Support through Resources and Networking

Strategies

Did you know?

Family day care providers who have access to community and educational resources are better equipped to lay a strong foundation for the children in their care. These children are more easily supported in their social-emotional development and with other important skills necessary for success in school and in life. Many family daycare providers face obstacles to acquiring the needed resources or have limited opportunities to interact with other providers.

Time constraints, scheduling conflicts, financial concerns and the lengthy process of licensing a substitute child-care worker add to the challenge. It is important that family daycare providers build supportive networks and have access to resources that support the quality of care necessary to children's healthy development. Some strategies include utilizing Family Resource Centers, park programs, and libraries. Building relationships with community organizations, and other family daycare providers can open the door for providers to expand their understanding of child development and school readiness.

- Connect with a Family Resource Center (FRC). FRC's are located in many public school systems and communities across the state. They provide access to up-to-date information on early childhood & family resources / services and offer support to family daycare providers. Check http://www.ctfrc.org/our_centers.asp to locate an FRC in your area.
- Join a local childcare collaborative. This could have many benefits such as combining resources for outings & activities; holding get-togethers (think ice cream social); and co-sponsoring fund raisers and workshops. Contact a local Family Resource Center or childcare center to find out whether there are any collaboratives in your area.
- Plan coffee get-togethers with other family daycare providers. Get-togethers can decrease feelings of isolation and provide a chance to share information and ideas about the family daycare experience.
- Plan monthly play dates with other providers. Arrange to meet another provider at the park for a play date with the children in your care, the library for story hour or plan an outing to the zoo together.
- Check your library for free passes to community events, plays, museums, parks, etc.
- Join with other local providers to create a small pool of licensed daycare substitutes. Sharing their services can improve the odds that a substitute teacher will be found when needed, as they are more likely to make themselves available if they know that they will have increased opportunities to work.
- The Chamber of Commerce can provide information on local businesses, community events, etc. Local businesses are usually good about offering help to daycare providers – for example, check with a local bakery about a demonstration on cake decorating.
- Look into family daycare websites, chat rooms and Face book pages. On-line support can range from discussion groups to classes on topics related to early childhood education.

Resources:

- http://www.ctfrc.org/our_centers.asp
- <http://childcareaware.org/child-care-providers>
- <http://www.childcare-resource.com/>
- <http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/resources/videos.html>

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