

How To  
Start A Home-Based  
DayCare Center



## How To Start A Home Based Day Care Center

*By Karen Childs*

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## Introduction

I wonder if you're like me; you like making money, being able to work at home, and love the thought of spending your time with children. Also, like me, you feel combining both would be your idea career, as it has been mine. Believe me, your own homebased day care service can accomplish that, beautifully.

Sure this business has provided my husband and I with a good monetary income, yet my personal wealth and joy has come from the little tykes that tug at my sleeve, daily.

Child care is a fascinating occupation and the rewards of working with children greatly surpass any of the trials and tribulations you may encounter as you establish your home daycare.

Following all the many rules and regulations can become the most difficult part of any business, even more so when providing child care, especially while operating a home based service.

This book is designed to cover everything from accomplishing a pre-admission interview, with parents to sanitizing food preparation and diapering. Some of these rules may appear to be trivial and time-consuming, but all are necessary as you will be safeguarding life's greatest gift, children.

This book contains ideas for planning your course of activities, from encouraging a child's thinking, as well as helping them develop physical and social skills. In other words providing all around quality child care.

The demand for quality daycares has never been greater as parents seek to find a warm, caring and trust-worthy center to watch their children while they are at work or at play. Entrepreneurs all over the world have been capitalizing on this trend and in doing so, have been providing a solution to the problem.

Day Care has become one of the fastest growing segments of the home business economy, starting your own daycare is a rewarding experience - both personally and financially. It's not uncommon for a successful home day care operation to make \$50,000 plus yearly.

However, always bear in mind, the children must come first and foremost. Children are only children for a *very short* period of time and will remember the greatest part of what goes on in their young lives. As a provider, you will play very big role in that child's life.

So, as you travel through this book, I hope you find the, the confidence, and the support you need to establish your own home daycare.

Whatever path you decide to follow, I wish you every success in your challenge.

*Karen Childs*

PS: All the forms you'll need to operate a quality and efficient Day-Care service are included in the folder "Forms."

# Are You Right For Child Care

## Benefits

True there are many *rewards* in child-care, yet for most providers these three principal inducements stand out:

### Staying at Home with Your Kids

To meet finances these days, often requires double-income families, that means families must bring in two salaries, and this normally means that their children need be placed in child-care while their at work. Running a family child-care means one parent has the opportunity to be at home with the children.

### Amplified Income

Staying home is all well and good, yet it is handy to have food on the table, and a mortgage company that appreciates you because your check arrives on time each month. Operating a family child-care can supply a durable source of income and often be quite lucrative.

### Being Your Own Boss

As said, there are many benefits to owning your own business, not the least of these being the *flexibility* and *personal jurisdiction* that comes with being your own boss. You can structure your own work hours and fees in ways that work best for you.

Still, while people may have many reasons for opening their own business, the desire and quest to be their own boss usually tops that list. Self-employment and the personal freedom it allows is a treasured dream for many. But that dream, that yearning to succeed, that urge to strike out on your own, can become a reality.

### A Basic Truth

It has been said, quite wisely, "Children are our most valuable natural resource," and with the ever-growing pressures, both economical and social, on women to work outside the home, much of what our children are learning about themselves and the world at large is coming from the nurturing and awareness of loving child-care providers.

No matter where you live there are parents who need a *special someone* to provide care for their children.

In this country, it is estimated that over ten million children under 13 are currently in need of some form of child care, also consider that according to experts, the child-care industry is booming and is one of the hot growth sectors.

Taking your from mere hopes to the "*open for business*" spotlight is going to take a lot of planning, training, and sheer determination. In this book, I'll show you how to get there. Before we get started, however, you'll want to be absolutely certain that the business of caring for children is really for you.

## But, Are You Right For Child Care!

Child care is a wonderful opportunity for *many* of us, but not *all* of us. Before you decide, look carefully at your life situation, family needs, your career goals, skills, and talents. No question you may love and worship your own two-year-old, but you may be ready to check yourself into a clinic at the end of a day with three two-year-olds underfoot.

There are many aspects of your own personality to consider when you are evaluating your own fittingness for running a family child-care center. Perhaps the first and most important of which is asking yourself, bluntly, *Do I really like being with kids?*

It may seem an obvious question, but it's a vital one, as almost all of us love our own children and want to be surrounded by them, but not all of us like being with *other* people's children. Don't get me wrong, this is not a character flaw, but it is a quick indication that are not right for family child-care.

First, make no mistake about it, opening a day-care will demand an investment, but it will be an investment *in you* and in your dreams. If you plan to open a *home* daycare, your investment may be more in time than money. Of course, you'll need money to pay for equipment, advertise, and possibly take training courses or refurbish areas of your home.

On the other hand, where you are interested in an *out-of-home* daycare center, your costs will be much greater. There's: rent, repairs, large equipment purchases, staff, and widespread advertising.

While setting up your home to provide care for children can be your road to independence, you can rest assured that at some point it will seem overpowering.

Without question, the hours will be long at times, stress is ever-present, while acknowledgment for this type of work may seem almost nonexistent, and quite often finding the endurance and initiative to entertain children all day long requires your real dedication.

Nevertheless, to anyone who values the wonder, innocence, and unrestricted love of children, this line of work can be a source of pride and pleasure as well as income.

## Why Select Daycare?

The most common reason is that a parent naturally wants to be home with his or her own children while *still* contributing to the family budget. Other daycare providers want playmates for their children or want to enhance their children's social development.

You can also feel good about offering a community service anxiously needed by many parents in your neighborhood who are continually searching for long-lasting quality care for their children. Running your own business and providing a necessary service can give you a feeling of accomplishment and build your self-esteem.

Whatever your reasons, you must fully realize that the service you provide will have a overwhelming impact on the lives of young children at a time in their lives when they are most vulnerable. It is during the first three years of life that a child develops, emotionally.

Young children need to be held, cuddled, played with, and talked to, by fulfilling these emotional needs as well as taking care of the basic physical needs to be fed, dry, and comfortable, you will also build a foundation for "your" children that will add to their later skills and relationships.

### Evaluating Yourself and Circumstances

Before you begin your journey through this book to learn the practical skills of child care, you must evaluate honestly; your personality, your character, and your overall ability to handle a number of children. To do this, use the three-step plan outlined below:

*Step one* is a self-evaluation to help you learn if you have what it takes to work with children on a daily basis.

*Step two* is a family evaluation to help you determine how your decision to provide daycare will effect the lives of your family.

*Step three* will be to address the other concerns that will affect your decision, such as licensing, training, zoning regulations, and even your neighbors.

### Taking Stock Of Yourself

To operate a successful daycare, you'll have to be able to; assert yourself, put an end to conflicts, and negotiate situations in as businesslike a way as possible. You can't let your personal feelings about your clients or the way they raise their children affect your ability to offer a good service.

In the child-care business, exchange of ideas and a positive attitude toward your work are crucial to offering quality care. If you can't get along with parents or value their choices for their children, perhaps you should consider another line of work. Your disposition is another aspect of your personality that plays an key role in your ability to offer quality daycare.

Thing you should ask yourself about and consider before deciding on the child care business.

- Are you in good health and do you have lots of energy.
- Do you enjoy thinking of new games and activities for them to do each day.
- Do you have a genuine love for children and enjoy being around them.
- Are you organized and can you keep good financial records.
- Are you good with people and can get along with most everyone.
- Do you have the ability to work agreeably with parents and to listen to their ideas on how they raise their children, while, not being afraid to to state you point of view.
- Are you willing to give your daycare program at least three years of complete commitment.
- Can you handle the stress of children tugging at you endlessly all day.

- Are you quick and composed even when emergencies arise.
- Can you handle a number of staff related problems.
- Are you willing to learn about child development, health, and nutrition.
- Are you willing to comply with licensing standards and regulations and will aim to provide the best possible care.
- Are you safety conscious.
- Are you willing to invite parents to stay for coffee or tea, also hospitable to their after-hour calls when they have concerns.
- Do you have and maintain a good sense of humor.
- Do you possess and reveal a positive attitude toward life.
- Are you not bothered by messes and welcome a child's play.
- Can you, handle a child's tantrums with understanding.
- Do you enjoy physical contact and am not afraid to hug or touch a child.
- Are you easygoing, pleasant, warm, and friendly.

Understanding that children are as changeable as the weather, consider whether you can handle the obvious stress.

Without doubt, the one thing most successful caregivers have in common is their love for children and their yearning to make a difference in a child's life.

Mixed in with these characteristics is an individual amount of inner calm, strength of character, and a knack to work through a range of problems like loneliness, frustration, and the expected temper tantrums.

### Taking Stock Of Your Family

Keep in mind, that as a child care provider, you will be the *role model* for the children who will look up to you for all their wants and needs.

Your talent to be compliant, loving, and considerate of each child's individuality will help them develop into well-adjusted human beings. To accomplish this you will undoubtedly need the support of the other members of your family.

Their support and willingness to help out will make a big difference in how you feel about the work you chosen to do and how you care for the children. If your spouse protests about the toys on the floor or your own child insists on your undivided attention, that pressure will affect the type of care you provide.

When all is said and done, your family will have to adjust to a great many things, including;

- Overall, will they react to your decision to welcome children into the home?
- What about your spouse, will they help out during their off hours?
- How will your decision affect your family's going and coming?
- To what degree will it affect your family?
- How will your family react to your rearranging the house in order to offer sufficient play space?
- Concerning your finances, will establishing a home daycare service drain your family's cash reserve?
- Will your monetary reserves maintain your families current lifestyle until you are making a reasonable profit and just how much money is your family willing to allow you to invest? Will it be enough?
- Also, where adjustments need to be made, how willing is the rest of your family to make those changes?
- Will your children join in and help you entertain the other children?
- Should you want to open a daycare center away from home, how will your time away affect your family?

Remember, your family's support and willingness to help out will make a big difference in how you feel about your work and how you care for the children.

### Taking Stock Of Your Circumstances

A concern about this aspect is not intended to put you off from following your dream or to make you hesitant, yet the more you understand about what you are getting involved in, the easier it will be for you to succeed.

### *Ponder These Things*

- Can you find anything in the daycare licensing requirements, for your area, that would make it challenging for you to obtain a local license?
- Do local zoning restrictions in your area make running a business from home difficult or impossible?
- How will your neighbors feel about you operating a daycare service *next door*?
- Are you willing to study toward acquiring a certificate in childhood education and development?
- Is there space in your home to entertain several *full of life* children, both *indoors and out*?
- For safety reasons, do you have a fenced in yard?

- If necessary, are you willing to look after an ill child, and at which point would you prefer the parent take the child home?
- What about the days when school will be closed and your own children will be hanging around? Can you cope with the extra workload?
- What will you do if you become ill?
- If necessary, do you know of someone you can hire to help you through the holiday times and the sick times?

Should zoning or other restrictions absolutely rule out the possibility of running a daycare in your home, your only options would be moving or opening an *out-of-the-home* daycare.

Some things you may need to do to your home:

You will need to *childproof* your home, and you do this; by installing electrical *outlet covers*, locking up all cleaning supplies and medicines, and by keeping *lamp and appliance cords* out of a child's reach.

Now is the time to ask yourself, just how far are you willing to go to meet the requisite safety regulations stipulated by your local and state licensing officials?

Many state daycare licensing officials are beginning to require successful completion of a course of studies in early childhood education. Consider whether you have the time and money to take such a course.

After researching the zoning laws, business restrictions, and possibly even your home-owner's association covenants, if you have one, which may bar home child-care programs, you will want and need to discuss your plans with many of your neighbors. There may be someone in your neighborhood who opposes your plans because of extra noise, traffic' or persons using their parking spaces.

When negotiating with your neighbors, assure them you will honestly work toward steering clear of any unnecessary problems and that you'll always welcome hearing from them about any of their concerns.

You might even consider having an open house for your neighbors to come in and visit with you and the children to see how you operate, and assure them you would welcome their suggestions.

## Determine The Child Care Need In Your Area

Once you've made the decision to open a homebased daycare center, understand that *without a doubt* it's going to take a lot of sacrifice and hard work. After you've fully assured yourself of this, your first act should be to honestly determine the real and tangible need for this service in your area. In other words, do a market research.

It would be futile for you to go to all the trouble and expense of planning and setting up a daycare center only to discover your area wont support your services.

### Outlining Your Goal

Your central purpose will be to identify your potential market needs, such as;

- Determining just how many parents are on waiting lists with other area facilities,
- What age groups are in need of care,
- What type of care their parents need, if any,
- The number of parents working in local businesses that might be intensely interested in your proposed services.

Don't hesitate to be specific in objectives if you want to focus on certain ages in your childcare.

### Create a Targeted Questionnaire

Once your settled on what kind of information you require, you can then create a list of questions calculated to collect that information.

Tailor your new list of questions so as to obtain the information you desire. For example, instead of asking what ages of children might need daycare, find out if the respondent has any children under two in need of daycare, do this where that is the age group you are concentrating on.

Be sure to include a space for them to provide their names and addresses, if they choose, thus giving you a list of potential customers to approach when you open your business.

### Methods Of Acquiring Information

There are a number of ways to collect the facts you need, including;

- (a) Mailed questionnaires,
- Telephone Calls,
- Doing in-person interviews, at centers of activates (Malls, etc.,) or going "door to door."

## Take Note

Whatever advertising line of attack you take, your goal is to inform people of your new service. The reality is, until they truly know about it they can not *accept* nor, in fact, honestly *reject* your service!

Public awareness is the central point and focus of any serious promotion. So, select your advertising method to fit your budget, but get the word out, otherwise, there is absolutely no reason for you to set up shop.

## Using The Mail

While not the most effective medium to acquire information, a mailer can be of good value. You could choose to mail to, say everyone within a certain area such as, everyone within a few miles of your home, or do a random sampling over a wider area.

One of the problems with a mailer is that in this day and age many people will simply toss your inquiry out as "junk mail" when it appears in their mail box. Others with some interest in your questionnaire may forget to do so. Therefore, your response rate will be quite low.

The mail itself has also gotten quite pricey, particularly when you factor in the normal low response rate. To encourage a better response, you might make use of the following tactics:

(a) Keep a record of where you mailed the questionnaires and, after a certain period of time, phone or visit the homes in-person.

(b) Enclose, a self-addressed, stamped envelope to each questionnaire, naturally this adds more cost.

And, you can increase your response *considerably* by taking *costly* steps to personalize the envelope, or create some other activeness to the mailer. But remember, it all adds up!

## Do Telephone interviews

Phone calls have the distinct advantage of establishing a direct contact with your source of information. Without question you'll get a far better rate of response, than you would by doing a mail-out.

Also, telephoning is cheaper. In addition, you get a chance to give a great first impression of your business by coming across as being professional, resourceful, and willing to provide good service. However, don't try to "sell" your business on the phone; for the time being, you simply want to identify yourself as doing some "market research."

The down-side of telephone research for some people is that they feel uncomfortable phoning strangers and asking them to answer questions. Moreover, you may find that many people have become unreceptive due to today's massive telephone solicitations.

On the other hand, your own nervousness will be reduced the more telephone calls you make, and you should be able to handle any of the respondents' unfriendliness by guarantee them that you are not selling anything, but are merely doing research.

One advantage of doing telephone research is it will help you with your diplomacy and people skills, both of which you will definitely need when you open your home daycare!

One of your first calls you make should be to your local daycare resource and referral agency, as this agency can inform you what type of care is needed where you live. Another good idea is to contact your local social services office, elementary schools, or parent advisory council for similar data.

Also, you should phone the personnel departments of large businesses, local industries, or hospitals to inquire about the number of parents who are looking for child care. Additionally, your regional planning agency to see if any surveys have been performed regarding the need for child care in your region.

Intermixing these resources with a call to other child-care facilities should supply you with a pretty good hint of the need for child care in your locale.

### Performing In-Person Interviews

The far superior way to gather data is to get in touch with people in person, either at their door; or on the street, in parking lots, or shopping centers.

As soon as you've come up to someone, you could either hand out a written questionnaire with a request for return by mail, ask the person to complete the feedback form while you wait, or simply ask him or her to answer the questions verbally.

Clearly, in-person interviews involve even more self-confidence than telephoning, however, people are less likely to walk away from you than to hang up the phone.

### Costs Involved

When you've made the decision to actively go about collecting the needed information, you'll want to estimate the costs connected with your assessment. This will be obviously dependant on and determined by the method and scale of your research.

You should have a budget for this market research and adjust your research to fit within that budget. But, whatever you do, you must get the word out!

Let's say, you decide that you can afford to spend \$300 on market research. So, if make your mind up to do a mail-out, you will need to include your cost of printing the form, the envelopes, and required postage.

Added to this total the cost of your time spent:

- Creating the questionnaire,
- Addressing the envelopes, by hand or computer.
- Individually stuffing the envelopes, and applying the postage.

This is just an example of how you approach a cost study of each promotional method used. More on this subject later.



Thanks for reading these brief few pages, of one of the most successful and original career course manuals available on building your own home-based **Day Care business**. Learning from an established professional is the best way to starting your own profitable home business.

If you'd like to consider the complete course, [click here...](#)

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Whatever, your decision may I talk this opportunity to wish you the best of good fortune, and remember, don't leave your future to *the whim of others*.

Your friend;

*Joe Myna*