

Marketing Your Family Child Care Services

The **best** advertising is free word-of-mouth information about you and your program. When you conduct your child care business in a professional manner and you provide **high quality care** for children, the work will quickly spread. However, to get started you need to do some advertising. Below are some advertising marketing methods that can help you attract parents who need child care services.

- ❖ **LOCATE:** Child Care is a referral line at your local Child Care Resource and Referral Center. Check with LOCATE regularly to update date base information on your family child care home.
- ❖ **Classified Advertisements:** These can be placed in local newsletters and newspapers and Penney Savers.
- ❖ **Flyers and Brochures:** These can be distributed at real estate offices (realtors can distribute to clients who may be moving into your residential area and might have a need for child care), stores, libraries, colleges, temples, mosques, churches, well-baby clinics, recreational centers, personnel offices (human resources) of large companies, local businesses, Laundromats and beauty salons. Use pictures from the computer and internet. Create a name and a logo for your business.
- ❖ **Walk the Neighborhood:** Introduce yourself to families that you see have children and leave a flyer. Tell everyone you know that you are providing child care. Remember to visit area playgrounds.
- ❖ **Create a Name:** Create a business name (Country Munchkins, The Small School) and register it with _____. This prevents other programs from using the same name.
- ❖ **Business Cards:** Have cards made or make them yourself and keep them with you at all times. These can be distributed at public meetings, social events and dining out establishments. Don't forget to give them to the cashier when you check out at the grocery store, cleaners, drugstores, etc. **Be Creative!**
- ❖ **Contact Area Elementary Schools:** Let them know you are a child care provider in the area and if you have opening. Ask if you can leave a flyer or cards for parents.

- ❖ **Join the PTA:** If you have children in the school. Get to know your administrators in your child's school. Leave information for parents who may ask about child care.
- ❖ **A Magnetic Sign:** Consider a sign for your car. It can highlight your child care business. Shop around for the best price.
- ❖ **Referral Discounts:** Give clients a discount for referrals that is redeemable for 3-6 months or more.
- ❖ **Finder's Fee:** Offer a finder's fee (free day of care, free night out, certain percentage off weekly rate) if a parent refers a prospective client whom you end of enrolling.
- ❖ **Child Care Associations:** Providers are encouraged to join their local Family Child Care Association. It offers a great networking relationship among providers. Providers, in general, are usually helpful to one another. Check with your local Resource and Referral Center (R&R), for names and phone numbers of the local presidents.
- ❖ **Make Balloons:** You can have balloons made and also stickers and when you mail a bill you can advertise by mail (depending on where the mail is going).
- ❖ **Local Health Fairs:** If your town has a local health fair, get involved and advertise there.
- ❖ **Yellow Pages:** Consider placing an ad in the yellow pages. Consider combining with another provider to cut cost.
- ❖ **Home Well Kept:** Maintain the outside of your home as well as the inside in order to attract parents.
- ❖ **Make Your Prices Competitive:** Don't try and run the cheapest program around. Someone will always charge less than you. Instead, stress, the benefits and the value of your program. When competing against child care centers focus on your advantages that may include individual attention that helps children learn faster, home environment, etc.

Consider these ideas. Some will work for you and remember as a small business, **marketing is an important key element** – both with the parents who are already a part of your program and with those who could be in the future.

What to Include on Your Marketing Flyer

The Basics

- **Your logo and business name**
- **Your phone number – always answer your phone in a professional manner and/or utilize an answering machine with a message that would impress potential (and current) clients.**
- **Your location – give a school district, family landmark, or nearby major employer.**
- **Include the ages of the children that you care for.**
- **Indicate if you are full-time, part-time, both or drop in care or wrap around care.**
- **List your hours and special hours or services like weekend or 24-hours services. Consider being flexible.**
- **Give your credentials such as “Licensed by the State of Maryland, number of years’ experience, CEU’s or degree in the field of early childhood.**
- **ALWAYS put your OCC registration number on your flyer; remember it’s the Maryland State LAW!**

The Selling Points

- Look at your setting – What are the best features that make it ideal as a child setting?
- Describe your philosophy and approach to developmental learning – use a few key words or phrases to do this.
- Use testimonials from other satisfied clients! Use in your flyer.

Key Phrases

- Warm and loving home environment
- Individual Attention
- Wide Range of Toys and Play Activities
- Mature and Experienced
- Developmentally Appropriate Experiences for Children
- All Ages Welcome!