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ABSTRACT

This series of leaflets provides information for family day care providers on nine topics. Age differences and developmental stages are emphasized. The first topic concerns ways to help young children get along with others. Self-esteem is emphasized, and methods for helping children develop self-esteem are listed. The second leaflet discusses children's growth through play. A list of simple toys for young children is provided. The third leaflet deals with guidance and discipline. Discussed are discipline guidelines and methods, temper tantrums, and the process of working with parents. Language development is covered in the fourth leaflet, which emphasizes storytelling, books, and language games. The fifth and sixth leaflets discuss toys and games for babies and toddlers. The seventh deals with ways for providers to cope creatively with the stress of their job and of working with parents. Aspects of day care as a professional business are considered in the eighth leaflet. Issues discussed include cost, contracts, recordkeeping, recording and reporting of income, expenses, insurance, and advertising. The last leaflet concerns the responsibility of the provider to provide nutritious meals and snacks and to help children develop healthy attitudes about food and eating. A list of information sources is provided for each leaflet. (GLR)

Caring:

Information for family day-care providers

HELPING YOUNG CHILDREN GET ALONG TOGETHER

First Self Confidence, Then Cooperation

By the time children start kindergarten, they should have learned, more or less, to obey simple rules, follow a few instructions, play with other children, and cooperate with adults. That's all pretty remarkable, considering that five years before they were barely able to recognize their mother's face.

Just how well children learn to get along with others depends, to a large extent, on how they feel about themselves. If the adults who care for them have helped them to feel they are valued and competent, children are likely to be relaxed and friendly with others.

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These are some of the general ways you can help children develop this feeling of security and importance:

- Give them love and attention.
- Encourage them to try new things.
- Give them praise for their achievements.
- Set and enforce reasonable standards of behavior.
- Expect them to be successful and responsible.

Here are some specific ways you can help the children you care for feel appreciated and capable:

- Give each child a special place, shelf, book, or box, with his name on it for his things.
- Plan to have a special day for each child—"Betty's Day," "John's Day"—maybe every week (not just on birthdays). Celebrate with banners showing the child's name, refreshments, games, and stories chosen by the honored child.
- Include your children's names in the stories you read or tell.
- Ask for and use your children's ideas in planning activities.
- Give each child some responsibility for helping with daily activities.

- Plan activities that give each child, even the less able, a chance to lead, help, and give advice.
- Tape photos of your children and their artwork to the wall, refrigerator, or bulletin board.
- Set aside times for each child to describe something he's done or seen.

Age Makes a Difference

Children begin learning how to get along with others at birth and, in a fairly orderly way, continue this learning throughout childhood and adolescence. It will be easier for you to help children in their social development—and will save you some frustration and hassle—if you keep these growth stages in mind.

Remember, these are general guides only. Each child develops at his or her own pace.

Babies spend their first year learning about themselves and others. At 2 months they smile at others. At 3 months they can make happy sounds and can recognize their mothers and others who care for them. By 4 months, they withdraw from strangers, and by 10 months they can respond to their own name and can wave bye-bye.

One-year-olds may prefer being with adults but also like watching and being with children. They know the difference between boys and girls.

Two-year-olds like being around other children but play beside them, not with them.

Three-year-olds like being with both boys and girls, but mostly play alone. They are beginning to share toys. They may choose a special friend and may have imaginary playmates.

Four-year-olds will share things with special friends, want to be around other children most of the time, and play cooperatively with friends. They tend to play in groups of all boys and all girls.

Five-year-olds enjoy playing in groups of up to six children for short periods of time. They can play organized games if an adult is guiding the group. Often, they want to be leaders. They can sometimes work out their own problems and are beginning to realize the needs of others. They can use words instead of fists when they are angry.

Encourage Cooperation

Children copy what they see. If you want children to be caring, sharing, and cooperative with each other:

- Set a good example by being caring and cooperative with them and with their parents.
- Praise children when they are playing well together—don't only give attention to naughty behavior.
- Choose toys that encourage children to play together, such as hand puppets, costume boxes for make-believe, toy telephones, balls, beanbags, and building blocks.
- Avoid aggressive toys, like guns and war toys.
- Read and tell stories and choose TV programs that show cooperation and sharing.
- Plan activities that encourage cooperation, such as party planning, cookie baking, toy making, and holiday decorating.
- Give children a chance to do things for others. Older children can teach younger ones; children can make gifts and cards for each other, their parents, and other family members.

Sharing Isn't Easy

Jimmy wants to play with the bright red ball that Mary has been bouncing around the room. Mary grabs the ball and screams. They fight over it. Sound familiar? What to do?

Realize first of all that sharing is very difficult for young children. By the age of four, most children are able to share their things, but it doesn't happen without your help. Before children can learn to share their own personal things, they need to understand and feel secure in owning them. One way to handle the fight between Jimmy and Mary is to give Mary a chance *not* to share for a while with the understanding that Jimmy will have a turn later. Then help Jimmy find something else to do that he will enjoy.

To help young children feel secure in ownership, you might label each child's box of crayons and other items with his name in large letters, and give each child a special place to keep his own things. Until children learn to share, you can reduce fighting over toys by asking children to leave favorite toys at home.

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PHOTOGRAPHER:
Alfred L. Smith, Agriculture
and Natural Resources Publications.

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HELPING YOUNG CHILDREN GROW THROUGH PLAY

"I'm learning by playing—but I need your help."

Playing is the way children learn about their world, themselves, and others, and the way they develop the skills and knowledge they'll need to succeed in their lives. Your love, encouragement, and praise give children confidence to try new things; the toys and equipment you provide for them give them a chance to enjoy learning. By your example and with your help, you teach them new skills and ways of coping with their world.

Age Makes a Difference

All children grow and learn in their own special way. The following guide—and it is *only* a guide—shows ways you can encourage growth through play for children of different ages.

Babies—by 6 months babies can turn over, reach and bat at things; by 8 months they can sit unaided; by 9 months they can crawl and scoot; and by a year they may be walking with or without support.

During the first 6 months you can help babies by:

- Hanging a colorful mobile over their cribs.
- Placing colorful pictures in the room.
- Moving a rattle or toy slowly in front of their faces, so their eyes can follow the toy.
- Shaking a rattle behind their heads so they will turn and grab the rattle.
- Letting them grab for an object in your hands, grasp it, bang it, and shake it.

After babies are 6 months old you can help by:

- Attaching a toy to a string and letting them pull the toy across the floor or table.
- Providing opportunities on the floor that encourage babies to stretch, turn over, creep, crawl, and pull up.
- Rolling a ball and letting them crawl to it.

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One-year-olds are learning to use their arms and legs. They need opportunites for running, climbing, and throwing; they enjoy doing things with their hands. You can help by:

- Encouraging them to throw beanbags or foam balls.
- Setting up an "obstacle course" for children to crawl and climb through, made of boxes, boards, pillows, etc.
- Teaching them to put smaller cans or boxes into larger ones.
- Giving them containers with loose-fitting lids so they can learn to open and close them.

Two-year-olds enjoy active play and learn to use their fingers. You can help by:

- Supplying pushing and pulling toys.
- Encouraging play with pounding benches and punching bags.
- Giving them things to climb on, jump on, and run through.
- Giving stacking cups or blocks and pop-apart toys.
- Providing large beads or empty spools for stringing.
- Letting them fill and empty containers with sand, water, rice, beads, etc.
- Supplying crayons, chalk, paint, and paper for scribbling and painting.
- Helping them use finger paints and play-doughs.

Three-year-olds are able to use their hands, feet, and bodies well. They need and want opportunities for physical activities. They enjoy learning to use their hands and fingers more precisely. You can help by:

- Providing opportunities for active indoor and outdoor play, including climbing, riding wheel toys, and jumping.
- Encouraging play with blocks of different sizes and shapes.
- Providing a variety of toys that must be operated with the hands, such as peg sets, Tinker Toys, puzzles, clay, crayons, and paints.
- Encouraging them to dress and undress themselves, serve food, set the table, and water plants.

Four-year-olds like to develop physical skills. They are extremely active and aggressive in play. They will dash around corners, race on stairs, kick, hit, and break things. They like opportunities to improve their balance and body coordination. You can help by:

- Encouraging daily, active, free play.
- Providing opportunities for them to walk on curved lines and straight lines, and on balance beams or boards.
- Encouraging them to walk with beanbags on their heads.
- Playing games like "How far can you hop on one foot?" or "How far can you jump?"
- Helping them to throw balls, beanbags, yarn balls, etc. at targets or into containers.
- Encouraging dramatic play with costumes and props.

Five-year-olds have learned to skip, perform simple dances, and tricks. They need opportunities for improving their balance and body coordination, for using their tremendous physical energy, for learning to distinguish left from right, and for developing coordination of small muscles in their fingers and hands. You can help by:

- Providing body movement games to dramatize stories, verses, or happenings—for example, a flower opening, an elephant walking.
- Encouraging body movements with records, stories, and rhymes.
- Encouraging skipping to music.
- Providing free play opportunities for running, jumping, balancing, climbing, tumbling on a mat, and tug-of-war.
- Playing games that teach right and left.
- Giving them opportunities to paint, draw, cut, paste, and mold.
- Letting them sew with yarn and a large plastic needle.
- Supplying peg games and other toys that must be hand-operated.

Simple Toys for Young Children

- Boards for sliding, balancing, and bouncing.
- Clay.
- Costume boxes (including purses, hats, gloves, scarves, capes, curtains, and fancy old clothes).
- Large crayons.
- Large sheets of paper.
- Paint—powder paint mixed with water.
- Large paintbrushes.
- Musical and rhythm toys—drums (make out of boxes or cans), wrist bells, gongs, and cymbals.
- Packing boxes large and sturdy enough for a child to climb on.
- Large cartons big enough for dollhouse, playhouse, or fort.
- Blocks and boards for building.
- Stuffed toys, large and small.
- Beanbags—simple to make from scraps.
- Balls of all kinds.
- Rag dolls.
- Nests of boxes or cans.
- Hand puppets.

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Caring:

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GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

"Love me, limit me, and help me to achieve."

You guide and discipline children to help them learn and grow, and to keep them from hurting themselves and others. When you discipline children in the right way, you are showing you love them and want them to be happy, responsible, and caring. Children learn to do things by watching others. They also learn by finding out what makes them feel good or gets them the attention or love they want from others. You want children to learn, but you also want them to feel good about themselves. If, when you discipline or punish, you leave them feeling they are unloved, bad, stupid, or incompetent, they may give up trying to learn.

Age Makes a Difference

Match your guidance to the child's age. Behavior that is naughty for an older child may be normal for one who is younger.

One-year-olds are learning fast. They are curious and explore and get into dangerous situations. They make messes.

Two-year-olds are learning to get what they want. They don't want to share their things, they want to do things the same way over and over, and they say "No" often.

Three-year-olds try to please. They mind fairly well and can accept suggestions and follow orders.

Four-year-olds tend to be bossy and to think they are important. They brag and stretch the truth. They can follow rules.

Five-year-olds are dependable, like praise, want to please, and can cooperate with adults and other children.

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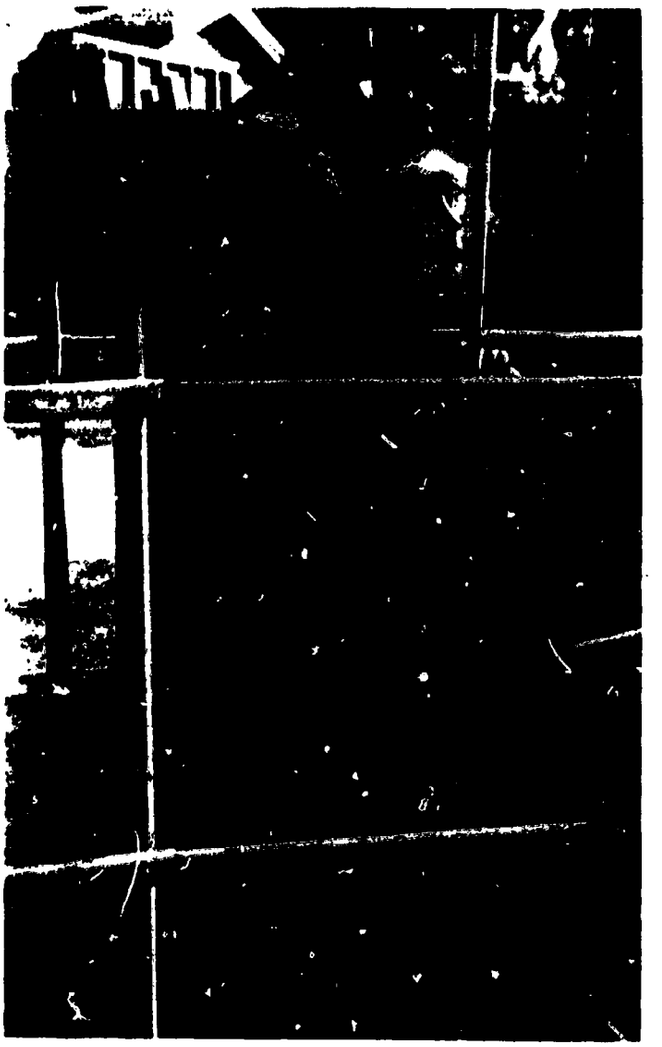
Some Discipline Guidelines:

- When you discipline, explain why you are doing it.
- Tell children what they should do, not what they should not do. "We will hold hands while we walk here" instead of "Don't walk alone."
- Try giving more attention and praise for good behavior and less for naughty behavior. Don't make punishment a reward. Children who like attention may be naughty just to get it.
- Plan ahead. Let your children know when they first come to your home how you want them to behave (the house rules), and what you will do if they misbehave.
- Set things up to encourage good behavior. Have enough space so children can play alone, enough toys to reduce arguments, enough rest periods to minimize crankiness, enough planned activities to keep children from being bored. Put away breakable and dangerous things.
- When children are naughty, talk to them and listen to try to find out why they did what they did. Did they just make a mistake? are they angry at you? are they trying to get attention? are they upset about something else? are they sick or tired?
- Follow through. Be consistent in enforcing rules and behavior standards. If you have a rule, enforce it.
- Teach by example. If you hit children for hitting others, they won't understand why *they* can't hit.
- Focus on the naughty action, not the child. "That was a bad thing to do," not "You are a bad boy."



Three Ways to Discipline:

Time out—call time out when children fight, squabble, or misbehave. Ask each child to go to a separate place for five minutes to play alone. This gives each a chance to calm down and to understand that you will not allow this kind of misbehavior.

Tradeoff—when chidren get into trouble, stop them, explain why you are stopping them, and suggest another activity. When they scribble on the wall, give them paper and crayons. When they race dangerously indoors, take them outside for a game of chase. When they throw books at each other, gather them for a story time or organize a beanbag toss game.

Fix-up—when children cause trouble or hurt, expect them to fix it up—or at least to help. If they spill milk, give them a cloth to clean it up. If they break a toy, ask them to help you fix it. If they make a child cry, have them help with the soothing. If they throw toys around the room, ask them to put them away.

Temper Tantrums

Sometimes children between the ages of 1 and 3 have temper tantrums. They may cry, shout, hit, bite, throw themselves on the floor, and kick. Some hold their breath. You may not know what started the tantrum—you do know you want it to stop.

Some children have tantrums because they have learned it is a way to get attention or to get something else that they want. Others copy parents who have quick tempers. It seems that most tantrums are caused by the frustration and anger children feel if they are too often told what to do and what not to do. Children seem to have temper tantrums most easily when they are over-tired, hungry, or very excited.

There is no magic way to handle tantrums, but here are some suggestions:

- Try to remain calm—often hard to do!
- Keep the child from hurting himself or others.
- Separate him from the other children.
- When she has calmed down, comfort her and try to understand the reason for the tantrum.
- Don't give the child what she wants—she can learn to use tantrums to get her own way.

Working with Parents

You and the child's parents may have different ways of disciplining. That is okay. When you first meet the parents, listen to their ideas, then tell them how you discipline and why. Some of the parents' ideas may be helpful to you. Try to come to an agreement about the discipline that will be used with their children. Remind parents that California State Law forbids you and all licensed family day-care providers to use physical or unusual punishment, humiliation, intimidation, mental abuse, or to punish by interfering with their daily functions of living, such as eating, sleeping, and toilet use.

In the end, you, not the children's parents, must be responsible for setting the rules and discipline patterns that you believe will best help and guide the children in your day-care home. Most parents will understand and appreciate this.

If you would like to receive other leaflets in the *Caring* series, contact your county University of California Cooperative Extension Home Economist, whose address is given below.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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Caring:

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LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

"Talk to me, sing to me, read to me. I love to learn."

Language is important, probably the most important skill a child develops. You can help children develop language skills by listening, talking, reading, singing, playing games, and by showing you enjoy your children's language progress

Age Makes a Difference—Learning by Stages

Each child learns at his own pace. The following chart—a rough guide *only*—shows stages of language development and some things you can do to help.

Age	Typical Language Skills	Ways You Can Help
0-6 mos.	Cries different ways for different reasons. Listens to words.	When babies gurgle and coo, respond with the same sounds. Talk and sing to them. Speak clearly; don't use baby talk.
6-12 mos.	Waves goodbye. Plays pat-a-cake. Responds to no-no. Imitates a number of syllables. Responds when called. Understands own name and names of some objects. Can make animal noises.	Teach babies their names and names of objects. Talk to them about what you are doing: "Now I am getting Betty's cookie." Hold babies in your lap, and show and talk to them about pictures in magazines and books. Sing simple songs.

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Age	Typical Language Skills	Ways You Can Help
12-18 mos.	Identifies family members, objects, and a few parts of the body when they are named. Follows simple instructions. Says two or more words. Imitates familiar noises, like cars, planes, birds. Will repeat your words.	Teac' names of people, body parts, and objects. Teach sounds things make. Read simple stories. Make a scrapbook of bright pictures of familiar objects, such as people, flowers, houses, animals, etc., to "read" and discuss with them.

18 mos.-2 yrs.	Can say 15 or more words. Joins two words ("all gone," etc.). Imitates two or three-word sentences. Can point to five body parts. Names three or more pictures of common objects.	Encourage them to repeat short sentences. Teach simple instructions ("Give it to her," "Put the cup here," etc.). Read rhymes with interesting sounds especially those accompanied by actions or pictures. Help them "read" picture books but supervise because they often tear books at this age.
2-3 yrs.	Identifies up to 10 pictures in a book when objects are named. Uses simple phrases and sentences. Responds when called by name. Responds to simple directions. Starts to say plural and past tense words.	Play word games, like "This Little Piggy" or "High as a House" (see instructions, next page). Talk with, not at them. Listen. Help them make scrapbooks. Read to them. Teach simple songs and nursery rhymes.
3-4 yrs.	Can say own first and last name. Understands location words like over, under, on, and in. Can repeat at least one nursery rhyme, poem, or song. Follows at least three directions. Can recognize letters and numbers. Can combine two thoughts into sentences. Is learning to count.	Play games that teach location words. Teach poems, songs, and rhymes. Teach letters and numbers. Let them choose favorite stories. Give them books of their own. Help them put on puppet plays.

Age	Typical Language Skills	Ways You Can Help
4-5 yrs.	Knows 500 to 2,000 words. Wants answers to many questions. Can give own full name and address. Can make up stories. Can read or recognize a few written words. Names all basic colors and counts to 20.	Teach words. Encourage them to tell stories. Play games that encourage counting, color naming. Help them make story books. Teach poems and songs. If you have a tape recorder, use it to tape their talking, singing, and story telling.
5-6 yrs.	Speaks with correct grammar and word form. Expresses self in dramatic play. Can read simple words. Can write first name and some letters and numbers.	Encourage dramatic play, reading, use of letters. Encourage use of the library. Help them put on plays and shows.

Story Telling and Books

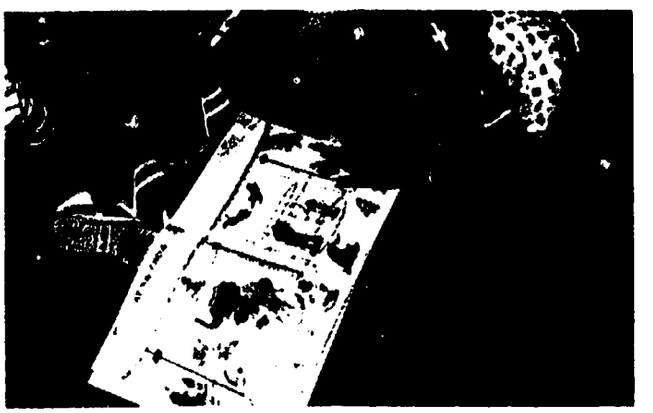
Young children of all ages enjoy stories. Encourage them to be a part of the story. Have them make noises of different characters, guess what will happen next, make up their own ending. Personalize the stories by using the children's names and locating the stories in familiar places. Make story telling a special part of each day.

One-year-olds like stories short and simple.

Two- to three-year-olds like stories about familiar things—children, families, pets, homes, neighborhoods— and short, simple sentences repeated throughout the story. They like books with lots of pictures.

Four-year-olds like realistic stories and pretend stories about real things, ridiculous situations and funny words, ABC and counting books, and books about how and why things are the way they are.

Five-year-olds like stories of children's accomplishments, stories with plots, stories they can act out, and books they can enjoy by themselves.



Language Games for Young Children

Three games to encourage physical activity, and build coordination, as well as language skills are:

- As high as a house (reach high), as small as a mouse (crouch), as wide as a barn, (feet apart, arms sideways), as thin as a pin (stand erect).
- Two little birds sat on a wall (one index finger placed on each knee), one named Peter, one named Paul (raise each finger in turn); fly away Peter, fly away Paul (waggle finger as you raise arm away from knee and behind you in an arc, repeat, then return), come back Peter, come back Paul.
- Here's a bunny (raise two fingers) with ears so funny, and here's a hole in the ground (make hole with fingers in other hand); at the first sound he hears, he pricks up his ears (straighten two fingers on first hand) and pops right into the ground (put into hole).

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TOYS AND GAMES FOR BABIES

Babies grow and learn fast. They continually practice seeing, hearing, and touching. You can help them learn by giving them things to look at, listen to, and grab.

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Age Makes a Difference

Newborn babies, 0 to 3 months— keep their world full of interesting sights and sounds. Make mobiles to hang over their cribs; hang balloons or ribbons to flutter in the wind. Put bright posters on the ceiling; hang safe mirrors and simple drawings of faces where babies can see them. Introduce babies to new sounds—ticking clocks, bells, music, and wind chimes.

You can make simple mobiles to hang above babies' beds by fastening colorful objects to a coathanger—small toys, shiny foil pie tins, balloons, shapes cut out of paper, etc. Remember, these are to look at, not touch or taste. Be sure items are securely out of their reach and tightly fastened so they can't fall into their cribs.

By 8 or 9 weeks, babies can bat at things. For a good rattle, attach a dangling bead or button to a foil pie pan (all firmly tied) to hang at batting distance above babies beds.

Here is a game which can help babies learn to keep their eyes on things. When a baby is lying on his back, put your hand lightly on his stomach. Try to keep your face where he can't see it so he will watch the noise maker, not you. Remove your hand from his stomach if it distracts him. Now hold a rattle or something that makes noise about a foot above the baby's head. Shake the rattle until he looks at it. Then move it slowly in a circle around his head. He will follow it with his eyes. Change the direction of the circle.

Babies 3 to 6 months old are readly to grab things. They enjoy feeling different things, rolling them, hitting them, and balancing them. Help babies learn during these months by giving them different kinds of soft things to touch, squeeze, and shake. Studies show babies spend a lot of time playing with crib toys when they are awake. Toys do not make it difficult for babies to fall asleep. Good crib toys include cuddly toys, teething toys, safe baby mirrors, and safe rattles. Give babies lots of different kinds of toys, toys that are hard and soft, round and square, heavy and light. Be sure toys are safe. All toys should be safely mouthable. They should be unbreakable, have no sharp edges, and no parts (like button eyes on stuffed toys) that can be pulled off and swallowed.

You can make a patchwork "feely" which babies this age will enjoy. Simply make a patchwork strip or square of washable fabric samples, each with a different feel—furry, silky, crispy, soft, lacy. Use fake fur, lace, cotton, velvet, and vinyl. Baby will enjoy feeling the different textures.

Here is a game which helps a baby learn about different objects. Collect different safe objects from around the house (square, round, soft, fuzzy, long, short, sticky). Give them to the baby one at a time to explore by banging, mouthing, dropping, and rubbing. When she is tired of one, give another.

Babies 6 to 12 months old want to reach and touch everything in sight. They begin to crawl. They can put things in special places, such as hoops on pegs or little things into big things. They love to drop things on the floor.

They will enjoy playing with empty toilet paper or paper towel rolls colored brightly or covered with bright paper. These can be pushed and rolled. You can make a pull toy with them by tying several together on a string.

Tie a string securely to light, unbreakable things, like stuffed toys, sponges, colored ribbons, or a wadded-up sock. Fasten these to a baby's crib or high chair for swinging and flinging—or let the baby use them as pull toys.

Empty coffee cans (with dull edges) can be banged with wooden spoons as can overturned pots, cardboard boxes, and plastic containers.

To encourage babies to crawl, knock the ends out of cardboard boxes for a crawl tunnel, or pile large cushions on the floor for them to crawl under, over, and around.

Here is a game which will help babies this age learn about themselves and their reflection. Sit on a chair or on the floor with a baby on your lap in front of a mirror. Gather objects from around the room to show her in the mirror. Show the baby her reflection, saying, "I see Betty" (using the baby's name). Show her toys in the mirror, naming them and asking her to point to them. Other children can be invited to the mirror so the baby can see their reflection.

Toys Are Important, But...

Remember, the best plaything for babies is a loving person who plays, hugs, and carries them and introduces them to many new sights and sounds. Babies need lots of time to explore alone and need toys that will encourage this exploration, but mostly babies need adults who will encourage them in their play, praise their achievements, and help them to discover and explore their world.

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Alfred L. Smith, Agriculture
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Caring:

Information for family day-care providers

TOYS FOR TODDLERS

The toddler years, from 1 to 3, are the years when children learn very quickly about themselves and their world. These are the years when they develop their self-confidence. They will feel secure, confident, and capable if the people who care for them give them love and encouragement and help them to learn.

Every minute they are awake, toddlers are either walking, crawling, pushing themselves along the floor, climbing, looking, feeling, or tasting. This is the way they learn. Toddlers need to have freedom to explore—safely—toys that help them learn, and need adults to teach them new skills and share their enjoyment when they succeed.

Some of the best playthings for toddlers are around the house—pots, pans, rolling pins, plastic containers with lids, spoons, pie tins, empty boxes, wooden spools, and magazines. Here are four simple teaching toys you and your children can make from things you have around the house. They will give toddlers hours of enjoyment and will help them learn important skills.

Egg Carton Fun

You can make dozens of toys and games from egg cartons. Here is one that can be used to teach toddlers to match colors and shapes and learn names and numbers. Children can play this game alone, but it is more fun if played with adults or older children. Make several egg carton games and play match with several toddlers at a time. With your children's help, you can make up more games using egg cartons.

Colors—color each egg carton cup a different color with a crayon or with water color paints. Use bright colors—red, blue, green, yellow. Cut circles out of cardboard small enough to fit into the cups and color the circles in matching colors. Mix the circles up and put them on the egg carton lid, then ask the children to match the circles to the cups of the same color—the red circle in the red cup, the blue circle in the blue cup, and so on.

Objects—children can also learn names of objects with a different egg carton game. Put pictures of things cut out of magazines into each egg carton cup. Choose pictures of things familiar to children, such as dogs, houses, cars, cups, balls, trees, etc. Be sure children know the name of each item, then ask them to find the items as you name them and take them out of the egg carton cup.

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Shapes—to teach shapes, paste or color a triangle, a square, a circle, a diamond, and a star in different cups. Hand the children a set of these shapes, and ask them to match the shapes to those in the cups.

Numbers and letters—print either numbers or letters in each egg carton cup and then hand the children a set of numbers or letters on cards for matching

Touch Toys

Children learn by touching things. They learn that some things are soft and some are hard; some feel cool and others warm. Some things are rough and some smooth; some are light and some heavy. These are important things for children to learn. Two toys to help them learn by touching are:

Touch bag—make a touch bag for each toddler by writing each child's name in large letters on a brown paper bag. Into each bag put 5 to 10 things that feel different—things that are hard, soft, round, flat, heavy, light, etc. You might include a smooth rock, a rough rock, a piece of wood, some sandpaper, some pieces of cloth, some nuts, a feather, and a sponge. Be sure the things you put in the bag are not sharp or dangerous. Close the top of the bag. Leave a hole just big enough for the child's hand.

Now, ask the children to reach into their bags and find something soft or hard. Tell them to find something smooth or rough; something heavy or light. Ask them what they have found. Teach them to say, "I found something hard" or "I found something . . ."

You can turn this into a guessing game. Have each child reach in and find something, and then say, "I found something soft—what is it?" or "I found something hard—what is it?" You and the other children try to guess what it is.

Touch box—use a small cardboard box like a shoe box to make a touch treasure box for each child. Print each child's name on his box in large letters. Help them make their touch box by pasting different things inside the box, like pieces of sandpaper, scraps of wool, small toys, pieces of fur, sticks, feathers, etc. To help children find things to put in their treasure box, you may want to take a backyard or a neighborhood outing, so that children can collect natural things, like leaves, rocks, flowers, and pine needles for their touch box. Be sure these things are not sharp or dangerous.

Let each child keep his own box. Children can take turns telling about their box and what's in it and describing the feel of each thing in the box.

Block Play

Playing with blocks allows preschoolers to experiment with patterns, shapes, and sizes. It gives them a chance to learn how to use their hands, to learn basic arithmetic—"How many blocks does it take to make a square or a rectangle?"—and physics—"How can blocks be stacked so they won't fall down?"

Blending blocks with other toys helps play come alive. Superhighways can be used by cars, and dolls can live in block houses. Lightweight building blocks are popular with children as young as 6 months old.

Collect cardboard milk and cream cartons. Take any two cartons of equal size and cut them to the same height. Turn one over and slip it inside the other. Secure the edges with paper tape or heavy plastic mailing tape—the kind children can't peel off and swallow.

To make the blocks more attractive, you can cover them with adhesive paper or paste letters, numbers, or pictures on the blocks.

Sound Match

As children learn about their world, they will learn to tell one sound from another. This game helps toddlers learn to match and tell the difference between sounds. It requires only simple, no-cost supplies, and is very easy to make. First, collect several small plastic, 35-mm film containers. You can get these free at stores that develop film, or you can save them yourself if you are a photographer. If you would rather, you can substitute paper cups for the film containers. Seal the top of the paper cup by taping on a cover of aluminum foil or paper.

Partly fill two or more containers with something hard and rattly, like dried beans. Be sure each container sounds like the others when you shake them. Then partly fill an equal number of containers with grains of rice. Check to see that they sound the same. Partly fill a third set of containers with coffee grounds. They will make a soft, swishy sound. You will see as you shake the three kinds of containers that they sound different. Now, sit down with your toddlers and give each a set of three film cans, one with each kind of filling. Let them take turns rattling one of their containers and having the other children find in their own set the matching sound.

Another way to play this game is to put all the containers together. Pick them up one at a time and shake them, encouraging your toddlers to do the same. Together, pick up and shake, pick up and shake until you have a sound match for each. Point out when the sounds are alike and when they are different.

Your children will want to see what is making the noise inside the containers. As they discover more about this toy, they will think of other sound-making items around the house to put into pairs of containers.

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Caring:

Information for family day-care providers

COPING CREATIVELY

A Demanding Job

You *know* your job as family day-care provider is tough and demanding. You want to give, and have agreed to give, high quality care and guidance to your children, perhaps 8 to 10 hours a day, 5 to 6 days a week. The way you work with your children strongly influences their future development; the way you work with their parents influences the parent-child relationship. That's a lot of responsibility.

Studies show that good care givers—those most likely to help children become self-confident, well-adjusted, and achieving adults—help in special ways:

- They are warm and loving toward their children.
- They use reasoning or appeal to feelings in their guidance and discipline.
- They use advanced and varied language and teaching methods.
- They actively encourage children's independence.
- They stimulate their children's learning through reading, talking, and playing.

To be a quality care giver takes attention, patience, and endurance; and *it can be stressful!*

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LEAFLET 21313

Handling Stress

Stress is a part of life. In itself it is not harmful. It can promote enjoyment, creativity, and discovery. But too much stress, or stress that is continuous, can make people ill, irritable, and ineffective. Sometimes you can reduce stress by preventing or avoiding the situations that cause it. When you cannot prevent stress, however, you need to handle it so it does not cause problems for you. Remember, if you wear yourself out, you cannot do the job you want to do for your children and their parents—and you will be hurting yourself and your own family.

Here are some effective ways experienced family day-care providers avoid or reduce stress:

- Stay healthy. When you are in good health you are less likely to be harmed by stress. Get plenty of sleep and regular exercise, and eat well. A good breakfast is particularly important.
- Set sensible goals for yourself. Do not take on more than is realistic. Learn to say no to requests you cannot handle. Be reasonable about the number of jobs you accept, the number of children you care for, and the hours you work.
- Set—and enforce—policies for your day-care program that are fair for you as well as for the families you serve.
- Build in "de-stressing" times during your work day. Remember, too, that children need to de-stress and to learn how to relax. You can reduce stress together with 10-minute stretching, exercising, or deep breathing breaks. Schedule quiet times daily for listening to music, storytelling, or just relaxing.
- Find a relief helper. Ask, or hire, someone (a family member, a responsible teenager, a neighbor, a grandmother) to give you a daily breather—someone to come in perhaps 30 minutes to an hour a day to read a story to the children or teach a song or game and give you a chance to relax and rebound.
- Talk about your stress. Talking to others—family members, other day-care providers—can make you feel better and may help you find ways of coping with your stress. When the children drive you crazy with noise, get them into a circle and talk about it. Maybe they can help.
- Take after-work mini-breaks. Daily after-work relaxation breaks, even as short as 10 to 20 minutes, can help you shed the day's tension and prepare to enjoy the evening. Use your breaks to exercise, take a hot bath, meditate, practice deep breathing, take an imaginary trip, or just sit and relax. For information about these and other ways of handling stress, request "Coping With Stress" (Leaflet #21168) from your County U.C. Cooperative Extension Office; the office address is stamped on the back page of this leaflet.
- Get away. Periodically plan to get away for a day, a week, or a month to take a vacation from work and do something you enjoy.
- Organize your time. No one can make time, but here are ways some family day-care providers have found to use their time more effectively:

  Have a written agreement with "your" parents that clearly states your policies, procedures, and responsibilities. Such an agreement cuts down on time (and stress) spent rediscussing arrangements and policies.

  Keep financial records up to date. This saves time trying to unscramble things later.

  Establish specific times to bill parents, clean, shop, and so on. Routines save time.

  Plan ahead. Make lists of jobs that must be done that day or that week. Do the most important jobs first. Maybe some jobs on your list do not *have* to be done, so don't do them if time gets short.
- Flow with it. No matter what you do there will be problems and hassles. Expect them, accept them, and try not to waste much valuable time and energy on them by being angry, frustrated, or upset.

Working With Parents

Do you feel, as many family day-care providers do, that caring for childen is easy compared with working with their parents? Sharing childcare responsibility is *not* easy—for you or for parents. Here are some ways to make your work with parents easier for them and for yourself:

- Tell parents what their child did during the day, so they won't feel left out.
- Find good things to tell parents about their children.
- Include parents when possible in special family day-care activities—a lunch, party, or short outing.
- Arrange your activities so you are available to talk to parents at least briefly when they leave their children or come to pick them up.
- Ask parents for advice on caring for their children.
- Look to parents as resources. They can often suggest ideas for field trips or activities.
- Discuss with parents concerns you have about their children. If there isn't time or privacy during the day, arrange to phone in the evening when children are in bed.
- Share with parents information or sources of information on child rearing.

Your children share too. They share their time, their love, and their learning with you and their parents. You can make that sharing easier for them by:

- Letting children know you accept and respect their parents. Never criticize parents to children or others.
- Encourage children to talk about happy family experiences during day-care and about day-care experiences with their families.
- Help children make gifts or pictures for their parents.
- Let children draw or paint pictures of their home or family to put on your wall, refrigerator, or bulletin board.
- Encourage special contact between children and their parents. If mother or father can receive personal phone calls at work, you and the child might call that parent once a month or on special occasions. You can help older children write notes to their parents, or help younger ones to send picture stories.
- Lend a few toys or books. If a child likes a certain toy or book, let him take it home over the weekend to share with parents.

Your efforts to work cooperatively with parents will probably result in fewer hassles.

Smoothing Out Those Rough Edges

If you have a complaint or problem, bring it to the attention of the parent at a time when neither of you is tired and when you both have a moment free to talk. If that time never seems to be available, set up an appointment. Talk in a polite helpful manner. It will be easier for parents to accept a complaint about their child if they know you see their child's good points too, and you let them know you think they are doing a good job.

When a parent comes to you with a complaint or disagreement, listen carefully not just to the words but for the feelings. Try not to react defensively or in hurt or anger, and never resort to name calling or blaming. That only makes it more difficult to reach an agreement. Hear parents out. Remember, as your customers they have a right to complain. Their comments may even help you improve the quality of your services. Once the parent has finished talking, state your side of the story and try to reach an agreement. The problem may have been caused by a simple misunderstanding.

If, despite your best efforts, things do not work out, do not blame yourself. The problem may be the result of a personality clash, differences in beliefs about child rearing, or unrealistic demands made by the parent on you or the child. In those kinds of situations, it is probably best to help the parent find child-care somewhere else. Coping creatively sometimes means deciding what to *stop* doing.

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Caring:

Information for family day-care providers

DAY-CARE AS A BUSINESS

Being professional in all aspects of your day-care business helps you project a favorable image to parents as well as to organizations and agencies in your community. This leaflet itemizes several aspects of your business and provides suggestions for helping you organize your day-care operation as a business.

Charging for Child Care

How do you figure out how, what, and when to charge for day-care?

As with most other businesses that provide services, the answers will depend on your clientele, established patterns in your community, and your own needs. It may be helpful to sit down with parents to work out a system that satisfies both of you.

But remember, *you* are running the business—the actual decisions are up to you. Even though it inconveniences some parents, it might be easier for you if all parents paid at the same time. Or you may need money coming in at certain times of the month to meet bills for running the day-care center.

The actual amount you charge will depend, in part, on what other day-care providers charge in your community and whether you offer special services and facilities—like field trips, outdoor playground equipment, daily trips to the neighborhood park, or transportation between school and the day-care center.

You can charge parents a flat rate (so much per week, per day, or per hour) or a flat hourly rate with money added for extras such as feeding a child requiring special food.

The only drawback to charging a flat weekly or daily rate is that some parents may take advantage of your services by leaving children well beyond your regular day-care hours. If that happens you might designate hours (such as 7:30 A.M. to 5:30 P.M.) with extra charges for extra time, or you might change to charging by the hour with special overtime rates.

If a parent has more than one child in your day-care establishment, you might charge a lower rate for the second child. Whatever you do, be consistent, so a parent won't hear about you charging lower rates to someone else.

Contracts

It is best to have agreements written out and signed before day-care begins and to require payment in advance. Then, if a parent is consistently late with payment, you can show him/her the mutual agreement form. The formal agreement will be helpful, too, if you ever have to go to small claims court to collect money owed you by a parent.

You also may want to specify ahead of time just how much advance notice you want when children are going to be taken out of day-care on vacations. Such advance notice may allow you to temporarily fill the gap with another child so you won't lose money on those days. In addition, you may want to specify any days when your day-care center will not be open, such as holidays or your vacation time, so your client can make arrangements ahead of time.

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Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources

LEAFLET 21314

Recording Income

You may not enjoy filling out forms and records that go along with your business; but, by falling into a pattern of spending a few minutes with the forms each workday or week, the information will be on hand when you need it.

Such thorough records will give you an accurate picture of whether you are actually earning money in your work. To declare business deductions, you must keep accurate records of all income and expenses and be licensed. For more specific information on running a business out of your home, send for the free government pamphlets listed at the end of this leaflet.

In addition, you will probably find that, with regular record-keeping, you will make notes on many small day-care items which you might otherwise forget to write down.

You will need to keep on-going records of income, expenses, and attendance. The consistent use of forms can make accurate record-keeping much easier. This leaflet contains several sample forms you may want to adapt. You may wish to duplicate the forms as they are and organize them in a three-hole notebook. Or, you may prefer to adapt the ideas to a ledger notebook. The sample forms are itemized below.

Daily attendance sheet—Keep an accurate record of each child's attendance. Such information is especially important if you charge by the day or hour.

Customer account sheet—The form helps you to keep up-to-date on each customer's payments. Keep a sheet for each customer. Parents will appreciate receiving a copy at the end of the year to use when deducting child care expenses from their income tax.

Income summary—The form will summarize income received from all parents. One sheet could be used for each month, or you can keep a running account for the entire year.

Business expense record—You need to record expenses to know how much money you are making (or losing). Use one page for each major expenditure, such as food. That information is especially important because it provides valuable facts to use when filing your income tax. The **business expense summary** can be used to itemize and total your yearly expenses.

Mileage record—Put this form in your car and write down your mileage every time you use your car for business. To figure out how much you can deduct for travel expenses, refer to the Internal Revenue Service Form 2106 for Employee Business Expense. Currently you may claim 20¢ per mile or calculate your actual costs. Refer to Form 2106 for information on calculating actual costs.

Reporting Income

Tax laws allowing parents to claim family child care expenses now *require* parents to list the child care provider by name and the provider's social security number. So it is important for you to report all income.

In declaring income for tax purposes, it can either be recorded under "added income" or as a business income. One advantage of reporting your income as a business is that you will be eligible to deduct the costs of running the day-care center, therefore paying taxes on a much smaller amount.

When you are totaling day-care expenses—for income tax deductions or for determining charges to clients—it is easy to overlook some things, because many items used in your business are found in most households as well.

If the materials were purchased or used strictly for your day-care business, they are considered expenses and are tax deductible; whereas indirect expenses for items used in both your family and your business can be claimed only on a percentage basis. The following is a list of many of those expenses. It is not an all-inclusive list. If you have a question about whether some other items are deductible, check with your local Internal Revenue Service (IRS) office. Look in your telephone book under United States Government to find the location of the IRS office near you.

Direct expenses—expenses just for your day-care business:

- Toys or equipment—Depreciate an item costing $100 or more over the life of the item. Items costing less than $100 can be written off in total during the year purchased.
- Groceries—Receipts must be kept separate from your family's groceries or treated as an indirect expense.
- Legal fees and tax preparation.
- Advertising—Business cards, flyers, newspaper ads, and other expenses you incur while publicizing your day-care service.
- License costs.
- Education—Dues, subscriptions, workbooks, conferences, books related to day-care, and so on.

Tear-out section—

Xerox these forms for keeping records of your day-care business.

DAILY ATTENDANCE SHEET

Day Care Provider's Name _____

Address _____

_____

Phone _____ Month _____ Year _____

Children's Names	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	Amt. Due
1.																																
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9.																																
10.																																

INSTRUCTIONS: Use one sheet each month and update daily.

CUSTOMER ACCOUNT SHEET

NAME: _____ CALENDAR YEAR: _____

ADDRESS: _____ TERMS: _____

TELEPHONE: _____ DUE: _____

Date	Description	Date Paid	Amount Paid	Balance
	Balance forwarded			

INSTRUCTIONS: Use one page for each child.

YEARLY INCOME SUMMARY

January 1 to December 31, 19___

Date	Customer Name	Amount

INSTRUCTIONS: Update and subtotal monthly.

BUSINESS EXPENSE RECORD FOR_____

January 1 to December 31, 19___

Date	Check #	Cash (x)	Charge	Item	Amount

INSTRUCTIONS: Use one page for each major expenditure (food, toy purchases, repairs, and so on).

BUSINESS EXPENSE SUMMARY

January 1 to December 31, 19___

Expense Categories	Amount
Food Expense	
Toy Purchase and Toy Repairs	
Spot Labor	
Gener.. Supplies	
Record-keeping Expenses	
Mileage Costs	
Professional Training	
Insurance (itemized below)	
Home Use Expense (itemized below)	
Total Expense	

MILEAGE RECORD

January 1 to December 31, 19____

Date	Beginning Mileage	Final Mileage	Miles Driven	Destination	Purpose of Trip	Cost of Trips

- Maintenance—Repair costs and materials purchased for the upkeep of toys and equipment for the day-care center. General household maintenance is an indirect expense.
- Gifts—Must be directly related to day-care.
- Field trips and entertainment.
- Insurance—Must be purchased just for the day-care center.
- Parking fees, bridge tolls, and so on, paid while on day-care business.
- Telephone—Long distance calls and message units for day-care business. Your basic phone bill is an indirect expense.

Indirect expenses—expenses for items used by both your family and your day-care children. Refer to Schedule C on Federal and State tax returns to determine your allowable deductions for those expenses. For most items, you will apply a percentage formula to determine the amount you can charge to day-care. Check with the IRS to establish the correct formula for figuring the percentage.

- Groceries and household supplies—It may be easier to buy supplies for your family and day-care business at the same time.
- Mileage—Keep accurate records of your business miles using the **mileage record** form.
- General maintenance—Painting and repairs to the whole house.
- Insurance—General insurance not purchased for day-care.
- Rents or taxes and mortgage payment.
- Utilities and telephone (the basic bill).
- Appliances—Items such as your washer, dryer, or dishwasher used for day-care.

Paying Expenses

One of the easiest ways to keep your family and day-care records separate is to open a checking account just for your business. Deposit all payments by parents into the day-care account and pay all your *direct* day-care bills, including your salary, from that account. Pay your *indirect* expenses from your family checking account and "bill" your day-care account either monthly or quarterly for its percentage share of the indirect costs. If you choose to have just one checking account for both your family and day-care business, you must be sure to indicate which deposits are parent fees, and you still must separate direct and indirect expenses. Regardless of the method used, save receipts (not check stubs, *receipts*); if you are ever audited, they will be necessary. Save your tax returns for 5 years, even if you stop operating a day-care business; tax audits are often conducted 2 or 3 years after you file.

Liability Insurance

Even under the most watchful eye, children sometimes get hurt on swing sets, coffee tables, and many other household and play objects. So carry liability insurance for your day-care business.

Talk to your insurance agent to see whether your current tenant or homeowner's policy provides liability coverage—most policies will not because you are earning money by caring for the children. And if you care for other people's children in a home or apartment you rent, make sure your lease allows it.

If you need additional insurance, contact several agencies and compare rates. It is also a good idea to find out about group plans. Often, the insurance is less costly if several day-care homes or agencies join together to purchase it.

Advertising Day-Care Services

Many day-care "mothers" and "fathers" rely on word-of-mouth to recruit parents and children for their services. But an organized attempt at advertising may prove more successful.

Here are some of the ways you can advertise:

- Ask friends and neighbors for names of working mothers with small children, then contact those mothers in person or by telephone.
- Contact the local Social Services or Public Welfare office and local or state day-care associations.
- Place ads in the local newspaper or advertiser.
- Place notices on bulletin boards in laundromats, churches, shopping centers, and social clubs.
- Leave your name with other day-care centers in case they receive more requests than their facilities can handle.
- Leave your name and telephone number with the grade school secretary and principal.

More Information

You can get the following publications about business management and income tax preparation free from the Internal Revenue Service:
"Business Use of Your Home" (Publication 587)
"Child Care and Disabled Dependent Care" (Publication 503)
"Credit for Child Care Expenses" (Form 2441)

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Caring:

Information for family day-care providers

MEALS AND SNACKS

As a day-care provider, you have a special responsibility to feed your children nutritious meals and snacks and help them develop healthy attitudes about food and eating. When you help children learn about food, you help set the foundation for their future food selection and nutrition. And, by helping you prepare food, children learn to work comfortably in the kitchen, a skill they will probably need later in life.

Cooperative Extension **University of California**
Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources

LEAFLET 21315

How Much Should a Child Eat?

Meals and snacks eaten in day-care homes should probably supply young children with about two-thirds of their daily diet requirements. Young children in good health and supplied with energy for growth and learning should receive the following amounts and types of food each day:

- Two to three cups of milk.
- Four servings of bread or cereal (a half slice of bread or a half cup ready-to-eat cereal equals one child-sized serving).
- Two servings of meat or meat alternatives (one serving equals one egg, one ounce of cooked meat, or two tablespoons of peanut butter).
- Four servings of fruit or vegetables (one serving equals one-fourth cup juice, one-fourth cup vegetables, half an apple, or half an orange).

Because children have small stomachs, they should eat these servings divided among three meals and two snacks a day. A good pattern to follow is: breakfast, midmorning snack, lunch, midafternoon snack, and dinner.

Serve meals at about the same time every day. Children feel more secure and comfortable when they can depend on eating regularly.

Who decides how much a child should eat? It is really up to the child to decide. A child should eat until satisfied and then stop. The child who is distracted while eating should be reminded that the task at hand is eating, but never pressure a child to eat more if the child has evidently had enough.

What should you do if a child eats very little at meals and then wants to eat soon afterwards? Remind the child that the next meal or snack will be coming up at a certain time, which is when everyone will next get to eat. This will help the child to realize that eating only occurs at established meal and snack times and that panhandling food all day is not allowed.

Happy Eating

With patience and ingenuity, day-care providers can help children develop happy, healthy attitudes towards food. Children can learn to enjoy a variety of foods; initially, however, they may hesitate to try a food they have never had before.

When a food is new, suggest trying it. If the child says "no," simply say, "Maybe next time." When you next serve the food, point out that it isn't new; you've served it before. ("Remember, we had this last Tuesday?") Again, encourage the child to taste it. Children are much more apt to taste a new food the second or third time it has been served. They've seen other children eat it and you eat it, and they may not want to miss out on something good.

Children learn more by example than by words. They will watch and copy your habits and attitudes toward food. They may well copy your food likes and dislikes. Be aware of what your actions teach.

To make mealtime pleasant, remember that children like meals with a variety of color, flavor, texture, and temperature. Brightly colored foods—like orange wedges or cherries—can make meals look special. You can combine foods that crunch (like carrots) in the same meal with smooth foods (like pudding).

Whenever you can, encourage children to do as much as possible for themselves at mealtime. Provide small glasses and utensils that are easy for children's hands to hold. Use other small serving plates so children can

learn to help themselves and to pass food to one another. Dishes with high sides help youngsters learn to gather food on a fork or a spoon.

By supplying finger foods that they can pick up and eat, you can make eating more enjoyable and less tiring for youngsters. This is especially helpful to 1-year-olds who haven't learned to handle a spoon by themselves. Cut meat into bite-sized pieces to make eating easier.

Colorful plates and cups can add enjoyment to meals. If you use disposable ones, show the children how to decorate them with inexpensive stickers or their own drawings and cutouts. Straws are also very popular—offer them now and then, but make sure the children have lots of practice drinking from cups and glasses without them.

Recipes Kids Love

Banana Milk Shake

1 cup	*ripe banana, sliced*
½ tsp	*vanilla*
1 cup	*liquid nonfat dry milk*

Beat banana until creamy. Add vanilla. Mix. Stir in milk. Chill and serve. Makes 1 pint.

Quesadillas

Enriched flour tortillas
Cheese (processed American, Cheddar, or Jack)

Grate cheese. Sprinkle tortilla with cheese and fold in half. Place in ungreased frying pan or on a pancake griddle. Heat over a high flame until cheese melts. Cut in halves or thirds and serve.

To make these in a microwave, wrap the quesadilla in wax paper or a paper towel and heat at medium low for a minute until cheese melts.

For children who like hot flavors, add diced green chilies to cheese.

Strawberry-Yogurt Popsicles

16-oz carton	*frozen, sweetened strawberries, thawed*
1 tbsp or 1 packet	*unflavored gelatin*
16 oz	*yogurt, plain flavor*
12	*paper cups, 3 oz size*
12	*plastic or metal spoons*
12 pieces	*aluminum foil (12" x 10")*

Drain sweetened strawberries and place drained liquid in a saucepan; sprinkle with gelatin. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly, until gelatin dissolves.

Mix strawberries, yogurt, and gelatin mixture in a blender until smooth. Place cups on a tray and fill half way with mixture. Cover cups with foil. Make a slit in the foil over the center of each cup and insert spoon.

Freeze popsicles until firm. When they are ready to eat, tear off paper cup. Leave foil on to catch drips.

Makes 12 popsicles.

Snacking Ideas

- Cheese toast triangles
- Tortilla wedges filled with refried beans
- Banana, date-nut, or carrot bread
- Cheese slices or chunks
- Warm biscuits or muffins
- Dry, assorted unsweetened cereals mixed together
- All kinds of fruit juices
- Fresh fruit slices or chunks
- Raw vegetable sticks with yogurt or cottage cheese dip
- Fruit juice popsicles
- Hard cooked egg halves
- Small pizzas
- Beef jerky
- Dried fruit—raisins, apricots, and apples
- Peanut butter on rice cakes
- Whole wheat crackers
- Yogurt with fresh fruit
- Pudding made with milk

Warning: Choking on food is a real danger for children under 5 years old. They are most likely to choke on: hot dogs, hard candy and caramels, nuts, seeded and seedless grapes, popcorn, chewing gum, and lollipops. To prevent death by choking, young children should not be given any of these foods, and any other foods that may plug the throat should be cut into small pieces.

Food Fun: Activities to Help Children Explore and Enjoy Food

A Make-Myself Salad. . . Kids can design a salad portrait of themselves. They can use a peach half for the body; half a cooked egg for the head; cereal flakes, shredded cheese, or grated carrot for the hair, raisins for eyes and buttons, maraschino cherry for lips; celery for arms and legs; and prunes for shoes.

Let's Take a Trip. . . Take kids on a trip to the dairy farm or bakery. They can learn how cows make and give milk, or where and how bread and rolls are made. Then follow the trip with a "hands-on" project of your own. Children could make baked custard with milk, or bake bread or biscuits. While you work together on the project, talk about the experiences you shared on the trip, what the children learned, what the place smelled like, why that food is good for you, and what kind of products come from a dairy or bakery. While you are waiting for the results of your project to cook in the oven or chill in the refrigerator, read to the children about cows or baking ("Little Red Hen," or "The Gingerbread Boy," etc.). If a trip away from you day-care home is impractical or impossible, you can simply combine the cooking and reading experiences.

Discovering Foods . . . Choose almost any kind of fruit or vegetable to pass around to the children. As the children investigate the fruit or vegetable, guide them with questions like the ones that follow. (For this example, we used apples.)

What color are the apples? Where do they grow? What shape are they? How do they smell? How do they feel? (Then cut the fruit open.) What covers an apple? (Point to the skin.) What color are the insides of an apple? What are these? (Point to the stem, then the seeds.) What is the stem for? What are the seeds for? (Give children pieces of an apple.) How do apples taste?

What kind of sound do they make when you eat them? Why are apples good for us? (They give us energy.) What can we make from apples? (Applesauce, vinegar, cider, jelly, apple crisp, apple butter, and so on.)

Have some of the apple products on hand so children can taste the apple in different forms. You and the children could make applesauce or an apple pie to complete the activity.

Pretzel Dinosaurs . . . Prepare a batch of soft-pretzel dough, then have the children make their own pretzels in shapes of dinosaurs, animals, or storybook characters. To make soft-pretzel dough:

Dissolve 1 package of dry yeast in 1½ cups warm water in a large bowl. Mix 4 cups flour, 1 teaspoon salt, and 1 tablespoon sugar in another bowl. Then, stir 3 cups of the flour mixture into the yeast and water.

Knead the mixture on the counter for a while, then add the remaining flour. Break off pieces of the dough for each child to use in making a pretzel.

Once the pretzels are shaped, have the children place them on a greased pan and brush them with 1 egg slightly beaten with a tablespoon of water. Bake the pretzels about 12 minutes or until brown in a preheated 475°F oven.

Refrigerate any remaining dough for later use rather than making extra pretzels. Soft pretzels do not keep well, so it is better to make them up only when they can be eaten fresh.

Green Eggs and Ham . . . Combine reading and a meal. For example you can read to your children ***Green Eggs and Ham,*** by Dr. Suess, then make a lunch of ham and "green eggs," (eggs scrambled with minced parsley).

My Meal Place . . . Children can learn to set their own place at the table by making an outline drawing of the setting for their plate, glass, napkin, knife, fork, and spoon. They can draw the outline on construction paper, then you can enclose the paper between two layers of self-adhesive plastic. Leave a one-half inch plastic border all the way around the construction paper.

The drawing can be used as a place mat—it's easy to clean. Children can set the table themselves according to the outline, and learn to identify different eating utensils.

Ground Rules for Food Fun

- Keep activities simple. Choose things children can accomplish easily with little chance of failure.
- Choose projects with quick results because children may lose interest quickly.
- Talk over the steps with the children.
- Emphasize the need to cook with clean hands, and remind children of other rules for cleanliness, for example, no sneezing or coughing into the food.
- Use food projects as a basis for other learning experiences, such as reading, counting, or drawing pictures.
- Let children do as much as possible by themselves (measuring, beating, mixing, setting the table, and so on). This encourages their independence. They will also learn more by ***doing*** than by watching something being done.
- Never leave a preschooler alone in the kitchen. If you are using hazardous items (such as knives), and you must interrupt your project to answer the phone, ***take those items with you***.

Children in the Kitchen

Encourage children to help with meals. While they help you, they can learn about new words, relationships, and locations. Also, children are more likely to accept new foods if they have had a hand in preparing them.

Children can learn about size and quantity as they count cookies, measure cupfuls of water, and compare large and small fruits. They will learn about colors, shapes, and temperatures as they handle oranges and bananas, hot muffins, and cold fruit juice. Steps in recipes teach lessons about order. Waiting for bread or cake to come out of the oven teaches about time, and setting a table exercises memory skills.

Remember, children develop at different rates. Younger children can do tasks that require the use of the whole hand and arm—like tasting foods, scrubbing vegetables, and tearing lettuce. In time, children progress to jobs requiring more hand and eye coordination, such as pouring milk, mixing ingredients, and spreading peanut butter on toast. Even more complex skills are required for kneading dough or

peeling hard-cooked eggs. By the time children are 3 years old, most of them can be helped to use a table knife to cut cheese, bananas, apples, and other solid foods. In addition to the skills already mentioned, young children can learn to:

- Set, clear, and wipe the table
- Serve themselves
- Pour juice and milk
- Place toppings on pizzas and snacks
- Decorate cookies
- Grease baking pans
- Wash silverware
- Spread butter on bread
- Shape cookie dough into balls
- Arrange cookies or fruits on a plate
- Measure bulk ingredients for recipes
- Stir ingredients by hand
- Shell peanuts

Be sure you encourage boys as well as girls in kitchen activities. Both boys and girls will need to know these skills to feel comfortable in kitchens when they are adults.

Children and Eating

As a day-care provider, you know that children differ from each other. This also holds true for eating. Some children, indifferent to food, eat slowly and are easily distracted. Other children are always ready to eat and enjoy every bite. Be patient—let each child eat in his or her own style. The young child who is easily distracted from eating can be placed in a high chair to promote concentration on eating.

Ask the children or their parents to name their favorite foods and then include them on the menu. You might even name a certain meal after a child when it features that child's favorite food. For example, a lunch featuring macaroni and cheese might be called "Jenny's favorite lunch" because it features Jenny's favorite dish. Name a meal after every child if you're going to do this, so no one will feel left out.

Sometimes children go through fussy periods when they only want to eat a favorite food. They have the right to refuse the food you've prepared, but this does not mean that you must prepare their favorite food or make separate meals just for them. The same menu should be served to everyone; otherwise, you'll become a short-order cook.

Children learn by watching others. Sit and eat with them. They will try to do what you do. You will be pleasantly surprised to see many of them learning table manners from you. They may also be tempted to try foods new to them because they've watched you eat them.

As you eat together talk to the children. Talk about the colors of the foods at the meal. Count the number of different foods. Discuss the qualities of the food: crisp, crunchy, smooth, lumpy, soft, or hard. Ask them that wonderful question: Does the food come from a plant or animal?

Be aware of your example; children mimic adults. Do you eat standing up? Do you only eat desserts with the children because you ate the other foods while preparing them? Do you eat the same food the children are eating? Are you showing the children what to do by doing it yourself?

When children do something you'd like them to do again, praise them for it. ("Johnny, you did a great job pouring the cereal into your bowl!") But don't reward children with food, especially sweet food. Don't tell them, "You've all been such good children today; I'm

going to give each of you a piece of candy." They will believe that candy is desirable while other foods never used as rewards are not as desirable. Instead, reward good behavior with a hug or words of praise.

Along the same lines, don't withhold dessert from a child who hasn't cleaned the plate. No child should have to eat everything. Instead, a child should eat until full and then feel free to stop. If dessert is requested, it should be given. Dessert should contribute to nutritional well being such as popsicles made from full-strength fruit juice, fresh fruit or fruit canned in natural juices, flan, custard, pudding made with milk, or the like.

Saving Time

Time is precious to day-care providers who must balance their business of caring for children with caring for their own families. You may find you can save time, at least time in the kitchen, if you:

- Plan menus a week at a time, then pick up a week's supply of foods in just one trip to the store. This will also make it easier to keep track of costs for business record-keeping.

- Cook soups, spaghetti sauce, and stews in large amounts, then freeze them in small portions for later use. Mix up a double batch of a meat loaf or casserole recipe. As you prepare it, place part in a smaller pan with milder seasonings for the children.

- Complete as much meal preparation as possible outside of day-care hours so you do not detract from supervising the children. However, be sure to save some jobs that the children can help you with.

- A main dish, vegetables, and dessert that you can cook all at once in the oven will save energy as well as time.

- Choose foods that can be cooked, served, and even stored in the same containers to save on clean-up time.

- Plan for versatile leftovers that can be served hot or cold or frozen for later use. Meat loaf, for instance, can be used in sandwiches or chopped up and heated with potatoes for hash.

Should you give children soda pop, candy, potato chips, cookies, crackers, and other foods low in nutrients? Nutritionists are only opposed to these foods if children fill up on them and have no appetite left for more nutritious choices. Offer them once in a while, but don't present them as special treats or the children will clamor to have them.

Should you limit the amount of food eaten by children who are chubby? The answer is definitely no. Permit all children to eat as much as they want. Restricting food intake can backfire by causing overeating. If children don't get enough to eat at meals and snacks, they begin to worry about food; then, they start overeating when enough food is available.

Many youngsters who were chubby as preschoolers grow up to be normal weight teenagers. Some normal weight preschoolers grow up to be chubby teenagers. There is no way to tell who will be of normal weight and who will be overweight. All children should learn to eat until their bodies tell them they are satisfied. Problems sometimes crop up when children are stimulated to eat by other than hunger pangs: by seeing television commercials or by seeing food left in eye view.

Cutting Food Costs

To get the most nutrition for your food dollar in your family day-care operation, follow these ideas for reducing costs while still providing a nutritious diet.

- Mix half reconstituted instant nonfat dry milk with half fresh milk to stretch your milk budget. Powdered milk has all the nutrients of fresh milk and costs less.
- Offer water to children who ask for a drink between snacks and meals. Water satisfies thirst and is actually required by the human body. Serve milk at meals and juices at snack time.

- Dilute frozen fruit juice with an extra can of water. Most children prefer the diluted flavor, and the nutritional value is not that much less.
- Fruit drinks, punches, and ades are expensive, considering that most of them contain 10 percent fruit juice or less. Full-strength fruit juice is a much better value economically and nutritionally. You can always dilute it by adding water, and it will still have more fruit juice than most fruit drinks do.
- Cook macaroni, rice, or noodles combined with eggs, cheese, or meat to stretch the main dish and still provide necessary protein. If you are serving a packaged macaroni and cheese dish, serve hard-cooked eggs as finger foods for extra protein.
- Buy fresh fruits and vegetables in season.
- When you plan menus, check newspaper ads for "specials" at the local supermarket.
- Buy just enough perishable items, fresh fruits and vegetables, to use in a short time. You don't want to throw out food because it has spoiled or has gotten too old.
- Buy store brands instead of name brands. These products often cost less than more widely advertised items and are just as good.
- Stock up on nonperishable items when they are on sale.
- Use coupons cut from the newspaper or magazines for "money back" at the supermarket.
- Shop when you aren't hungry and be sure to use a list. This will reduce "impulse purchases."
- Avoid as many "convenience" foods as possible unless you can afford the built-in labor charge. For example, homemade orange juice popsicles will cost less than store-bought and take just a few minutes to make.

To simplify information, trade names of products have been used. No endorsement of named products is intended, nor is criticism implied of similar products which are not mentioned.

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This leaflet in the Caring Series was written by Joanne Ikeda, Extension Nutritionist, University of California; parts were adapted with permission from Family Day Care Exchange: **Meals and Snacks,** Dorothy Pinsky and Kay Munsen, Iowa State University Extension, Ames, Iowa, 1980.

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