

# Day Care Service

2007-04-18 05:46:49



Child day care has always been in high demand, this demand is steadily increasing as it becomes more of a norm for women to seek a career of their own. Running a day care service is a potentially fun and easy to start work at home business. If you have a passion for children and some extra room in your home, you are perfectly positioned to start your own day care service.

## Before The Start-Up Lets Not Get Ahead Of Ourselves

You'll need a few character traits to start a day care service; you'll need to have a passion for children, have plenty of patience and not mind your home being invaded every day. Depending on where you live you might also need a license and insurance before getting started. Contact your local commerce department and find out the specific requirements of operating a day care service in your area.

## The Start-Up

To get started you'll need to prepare your home; it might be necessary to make a few adjustments and modifications. Think of your day care center as having two separate areas, one inside and one outside. For your inside area a spare room is ideal but you can make do with a converted lounge. Equip your inside area with everything children need to keep entertained and also learn. This includes toys, games, books, cushions, music, movies and arts and crafts. For your outside area a patch of grass and a sandpit are essential, also consider getting a jungle gym and other outside orientated toys.

Make sure both areas are safe for small children. Pools and plug sockets will need to be covered, cupboards locked and precious items stored safely away. Getting insurance and a license will usually involve a check of your home. Find out ahead of time what the requirements are to make the process as smooth as possible.

Once you've equipped your home you'll need to equip your business. Develop a name and logo and print these on your business cards, invoices, receipts, and sign for your home. You'll also need to develop a price structure (standard rates average around \$80 per child per week) and a contract for parents to sign before leaving their children with you. Ideally a lawyer should draft a contract for you, if you don't have the budget for this then attempt to re-write a contract from an existing day care service. Keep in mind that most countries place a limit on how many children one adult can supervise, so you'll need to hire staff if you ever want to expand.

## Making It Work

Differentiate yourself from any local competition by providing a safe environment for learning and play. Take a general first aid course and make sure you have easy access to well stocked first aid kit. Of course safety isn't the only way to differentiate yourself, you could consider stocking your play room with the best in educational toys and games or offer snacks for children with special dietary needs; the options are endless.

## Marketing

Once you've filled every space in your day care you won't have a need for marketing. Ideally word of mouth and referrals will ensure you have a waiting list. Until that time you'll need to work hard to get the word out. Advertise in local newspaper classifieds, on community bulletin boards and at your local library.

## **Dont Forget**

Parents might try to take advantage of your services and routinely pick their children up late. Be firm and make sure parents understand that you don't run a baby-sitting service. If parents still continue to do this you might consider charging late pick-up fees, although this is an extreme measure.

Finally, if you do decide to operate your service without insurance you'll need to disclose this to parents before they leave their children with you. Failure to disclose this can be disastrous if any accident should ever occur.