



A Good Childcare Health and Safety Policy Inspires Confidence

Do you have a childcare health and safety policy? This can go a long way to assure parents that they made a good decision when they chose your childcare center. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the childcare industry, many parents struggled to find centers that met their expectations and needs. Post-pandemic, there are fewer childcare centers nationwide, which has led to childcare deserts leaving parents with even fewer options.

As businesses welcome their employees back into the office after a year and a half of remote work, parents need reliable childcare options they can trust. And their number one priority is learning about the center's childcare health and safety policy.

Why is health and safety important in childcare and what can you do to build confidence in parents considering your childcare center? Get insights into the most important aspects of operating a childcare center after COVID-19.





Childcare Health and Safety Policy

Parents have always been concerned about their child's well being. But now we know even more about airborne virus transmission and health concerns.

Childcare centers need to review their health and safety policies to decide what to adopt from pandemic plans and processes. In some cases, your center might merge old policies with new ones. And along the way, consider the conveniences that some pandemic processes provided parents, such as contactless mobile check-in apps where they no longer need to wait in line to check their child in for the day.

Setting policies for how quickly parents must pick up a sick child and where to quarantine that child in the meantime is wise. These policies give parents peace of mind knowing that germs and illnesses won't spread rampantly through your childcare center.

But as you write your policies, don't forget to highlight safety precautions. Consider how accessible your center is and how you can lock it down from predators. Include information on how you keep children safe both when they are inside and on the playground.

When creating your policy, look to answer these questions for parents:

- How do you keep your center clean for my child to explore and learn in a safe environment?
- What's expected of me if my child becomes ill during the school day?
- How do you limit the spread of illnesses and viruses throughout your center? Who has access to the center and its classrooms when my child is there?
- Do you do background checks on all teachers and employees at the center? When children play outside, how do you keep them safe?
- In case of an emergency, what's your school's policy on ambulance rides and hospital visits while under your care?



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Outline Communication Channels and Expectations

Today's parents are used to constant connection. When they have a question, they head to Google and get an immediate response. They get regular updates from their bank's mobile app and notification emails when a library book is due.

They'll expect no less from your childcare center. Highlight your parent-teacher communication channels and how often you send updates to parents. Open the following lines of communication to delight parents:

1. Text messaging
2. Email newsletter
3. Online notifications from your childcare app
4. Photo sharing
5. Daily recap text when a child is picked up for the day
6. Notifications for developmental milestone achievements
7. Daily journal notes from classroom teachers detailing a child's day, activities, mood, achievements, etc.

If you notice that parents aren't regularly interacting with their child's childcare experience, reach out directly and see if there is anything you can do to help.

Be Transparent

The pandemic required childcare centers to inform parents about COVID cases in the center, which meant greater transparency about health and safety concerns. Parents are now accustomed to that level of service, which means you'll need to build transparency into everything that you do.

If you plan to change your rates, let parents know far in advance to give them time to plan. Or when a teacher announces their resignation, share that information with parents and where you're at with finding a replacement.

Transparency can be tough sometimes because it means parents get involved in things you might not want their input on. But ultimately, how you run your center impacts them and their family, so keep that in mind when considering how to notify them of changes.



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Transition Care Seamlessly

Allowing parents to share notes about their child at check-in can help your teachers and caregivers respond to the child's needs. Parents might notice that their child is tired today or acting out more often recently.

Provide follow-up notes at the end of the day about your observations as well to aid children going through developmental leaps, changes in sleep or emotional periods.

Small disruptions to a child's environment can result in large changes to their mood and ability to learn. Understanding those disruptions can help your teachers guide these children while in the classroom. And the teachers' tactics for coaching the child can help parents at home.

The more seamless your care transitions are, the easier it will be for the child and parents will notice. They'll have confidence in knowing that they've found a great childcare center.



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IMPLEMENT THE BEST CHILDCARE SOFTWARE

Providing parents with information about their child's experience at your center means having the best childcare software. With a heightened interest in health and safety concerns, your childcare management software must include pandemic protocol management, touchless check-in tools and health screening processes that meet parents' expectations.

Parents can log in and see notes, photos and achievements from their child's day. They can select their notification and communication settings to stay in contact with your center. The more information you provide parents, the clearer it will be to them that they've found a good childcare center. And then they'll tell their friends and family about it.

Schedule a free demo of iCare Software to learn more about our industry-leading software solution.



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