Stanislaus County
Office of
Education

Child/Family Services

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Marketing Techniques

Resource & Referral Handout

Some providers are able to find children for their business easily, with very little effort. Others are not quite as fortunate and are in need of some effective marketing techniques.

There are a number of reasons why these differences seem to occur. It could be something as simple as timing. Timing of vacancies with requests for services is not something that can be planned, but we do know that demand for child care is higher at certain times, such as the start of the school year and in January.

Certainly, too, some types of child care are more in demand. There is more of a need for infant and school age child care. The provider that maintains a flexible schedule including part-time services will provide more options to families.

Undoubtedly, the well established, experienced provider that has already given quality care to many satisfied parents, will benefit from a fine reputation. However, new providers need not be discouraged, for those needing help to build a successful child care business there is a whole community of likely helpers. Following are some suggestions that have proven to be helpful:

- Talk to people personally. Call friends, neighbors and ask them to pass word of your family child care.
- Make up posters and flyers to advertise your business. (Do **not** include your address.)
- Have attractive business cards made with information including your hours, and ages of the children. *You must include your license number on all advertisements.*
- Pass out flyers or cards when taking a walk with the children.
- Keep in touch with Child Care Resource and Referral.
- Other possible help in the community could be: churches, synagogues, schools, libraries, pediatricians, dentists, children's clothing, toy or book stores, your local Family Child Care Association, work place lunch rooms, and grocery stores.

Absolutely essential, too, is the impression made by the first phone call from a prospective parent. Think seriously about the messages you want to convey about you and your program. Have your ideas on an index card near the phone so that key thoughts are not forgotten. If the timing of the call is not good, politely ask for a phone number and convenient time to call back. Be enthusiastic in describing your program. Talk about what you offer, the age group you serve, a brief description of your daily schedule, activities, environment, qualifications, experience or training. Welcome the parent to visit your home when the children are there. Offer letters of reference from satisfied customers or personal friends. Suggest that parents could get a better idea of your program by seeing it themselves and follow up by making an appointment.

No matter how successful marketing ideas might be in starting a business, nothing is more important to lasting success than quality care in a clean, safe and loving home.