Stanislaus County Office of Education

Child/Family Services

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Create Spaces That Say "Welcome"

Resource & Referral Handout

The Outside Entrance

Make the approach to your door and entry to your home appealing for infants, toddlers and their parents. A path or driveway that is free of snagging bushes, a stairway that is free of obstacles, railings that are firmly attached, a fresh coat of paint on the door - all say, "this is a safe and cared for place." A flowering plant to sniff, a pleasant sounding doorbell to ring or a friendly and attractive sign can say, "Welcome, this is a pleasant and fun place to be."

The Inside Entrance

Once over the threshold more delights can attract attention and involvement and help draw in even a reluctant child.

- An aroma of breakfast cooking
- Sounds of children who have already arrived
- A mirror and photos of children and their families (at adult eye-level and at child's eye-level)
- A tank of fish to watch or feed
- A small toy that can be carried into the next room
- Samples of toddlers' "artwork"

Children's Belongings

Children's belongings can be stored in the entry way or closer to the diapering area. Knowing there is a safe place for one's pacifier or other security objects may be very important to an infant or toddler. Having the children's belongings in one place at the end of the day will be appreciated by parents. It will help keep you organized too! Names and photos can personalize the "cubbies," which can be created in a variety of ways:

- Stacking crates or wire mesh cubes
- Stackable drawers
- Shelves with dishpans or shelf separators
- A row of safe hooks to hang backpacks and coats

A Place for Parents

Parents need to sign in and get notices and announcements. A place close to the entry is good for this. It can also be closer to the play area, especially if you want to draw them in to spend a few minutes with their child and check in with you before rushing out the door. Needs for a parent place depend on the size of your program. Some options are:

- A small table or low shelf with sign-in clipboard and flyers to take
- A bulletin, chalk, or dry erase board for general announcements
- A shoe bag or row of envelopes with parents' names to hold personal notices