

KID BIZ NEWSLETTER  
APRIL 2007

*A Newsletter For Child Care Professionals  
Bringing You Information and News You Can Use!*

Brought to you by:  
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*If you spend any time searching news stories on child care it is likely you've seen the articles regarding the child care study recently done. Most of the press is very negative, and often doesn't give the whole story. Anyone surprised?! As usual, it will be up to us – the ones who actually work in this industry – to educate the parents with the truth. Our main story today addresses the study, and how to talk to parents about it. If you would like to get in on the discussion about this study, or learn where to see the actual study, please visit my blog at <http://kidbiz.blogspot.com>. I hope you find the article helpful, Patricia*

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TALKING WITH PARENTS ABOUT THE QUALITY OF CARE YOU OFFER  
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The recent child care study released by the National Institute of Child Health & Human Development (NICHD) has set off a flurry of media coverage on the negative aspects of child care. While the study identified many factors leading to a healthy development for young children, focus has been mainly placed on the conclusion that long hours, for many years, in low quality care leads to behavior problems in children. Unfortunately, for parents and providers, most coverage leaves out the details regarding hours, years and quality and the generalization, "child care leads to behavior problems" is all that is left.

It is always important for child care providers to educate parents regarding the level of quality care they provide, to recognize what may hinder healthy development in each individual child, and to work with the parents to overcome these obstacles. With the release of this study making many parents worried and concerned about their child care choices, it becomes imperative. Studies may be helpful, but it is important to remember that they are reporting based on

percentages – in other words – while a *percentage* of children may have a negative experience that number IS NOT 100%! So, how do we let the parents know that their child will not fall into those percentages? The following are ways child care providers and early childhood teachers can work with parents to raise their awareness of quality child care:

Communicate with parents about quality rating systems you participate in. Many states have a quality rating system in place, when your rating is received, post it in a prominent place for parents to see. Refer to it in all of your materials: brochures, parent handbooks, newsletters. Inform all newly enrolled parents of your rating and what it stands for. If you have achieved an accreditation, either local, state or national, again inform the parents of this process and what it stands for. Display all honors received for parents to view. Remind currently enrolled parents of these accomplishments by discussing them at pick up/drop off time, and permanently adding to your heading on your newsletter.

Openly discuss the NICHHD study with parents. Let parents know that the negative behavioral problems were directly related to the level of quality of care. Indicators of quality are: one-to-one time between teacher/child, emphasis on social skills in program, developmentally appropriate activities and child's attachment to provider/teacher. Address each indicator and how this need is met at your program for their child.

One factor from the study most often left out during coverage is that it was found that "a mother's sensitivity was a better indicator of reported problem behaviors than was time in child care." (NICHHD study). Assure parents that as a parent they have the power to make a difference for their child. Give the parent examples on how they can increase their sensitivity to their child such as: stop and get on child's level to listen when they are talking; taking time to ask how their day was; giving praise for work that is brought home; and generally taking time to spend with their child eating meals and playing together.

Children are individuals, not statistics, and it's important to talk with parents about their child's specific child care experience. Create a plan with parents for their child to be successful. Address the possible problems and work together towards solutions. For example, be honest with parents about behavior problems as soon as they appear so you are able to work together to overcome them; for children in care long hours, give parents ideas on how to raise the quality of the time they do get to spend with their child; if there is any aspect of your program that appears difficult for the child, talk with the parent about changes you can make to ease their anxiety.

Be honest with parents regarding your quality. There is always room for improvement. Let parents know you are diligent regarding quality by openly identifying areas that can be improved on in your child care business. Share with parents your plan for improvement and include them in celebrating your accomplishments.

High quality child care was actually shown to have been a benefit to children in the study. It should come as no surprise to parents or providers that the combination of quality parenting and quality child care is the formula for success for any child. Help to teach the parents how to do their best, and let them know what you are doing to do your best, and together you will have the privilege of experiencing watching a child grow to their fullest potential.

*Chapter Eight: Continuing to Grow as a Professional in my book, FROM BABYSITTER TO BUSINESS OWNER offers many ideas on how to improve the quality of your experience as a provider/teacher and improvements to make in order to raise the quality of your child care setting and program. To order visit: [www.patriciadischler.com](http://www.patriciadischler.com).*

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Tips & Tricks  
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- Instead of felt, back your story pieces with Velcro dots (the hook side). They will stick better to your flannel board.
- Color code baby items, giving each child their own color for bottles, pacifiers, chew toys, etc. It's easier than trying to find a place to write their name on small items and quicker to identify.
- Take advantage of spring to work on some math with the kids! Measure the height of the tulips/daffodils/hyacinths growing in your garden on a daily basis and create a chart to show the growth.

*Got a great tip to share? Send me an email and I'll put yours in the newsletter, giving you full credit!*

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Calling All Professionals!  
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*Can you help this provider?*

I received an email from Bonnie who has a situation where the families she provides care for don't seem to want to move on! (GREAT sign of quality!) Recently she told a couple of families that it was time for them to move on. One family understood, but the other was hurt and shocked. The family will no longer speak to her. The children are 8 and 11 years old and had been coming during the summer, Bonnie can no longer offer this to them. She is looking for advice on how to mend the relationship. Anyone got ideas?

Please send your suggestions to me at [sdischler@shopstop.net](mailto:sdischler@shopstop.net) with "Help For Bonnie" in the subject area to be included in the next newsletter. Let's let Bonnie know she's not alone!

Do you have a problem you'd like some help to solve? Are you looking for some information and just can't seem to track it down? Send me your questions and I'll post them here for others to weigh in on. We're in a business that loves to help others, so let's help each other out! I'll post your question or request for information, then in the following newsletter I'll post the suggestions I've received so we can all learn together.

Send your question or request to: [sdischler@shopstop.net](mailto:sdischler@shopstop.net), put "Calling All Professionals" in the subject area.

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Birthmother's Day/Mother's Day  
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May will be a month to celebrate Mother's. While most are aware of Mother's Day, many are unaware of that the day before is Birthmother's Day. I realize this is a child care newsletter, but as I've found in every audience I've talked to, whenever you gather many people together inevitably many are touched by adoption. If you know of an adoptive mother, or a birthmother, you may want to check out my book, BECAUSE I LOVED YOU, on my website [www.patriciadischler.com](http://www.patriciadischler.com). It can be a wonderful gift for these women on these special days. In the book, I share my story of placing my son for adoption in 1985. While it was the most painful experience of my life, it has also been full of blessings. I have a beautiful relationship with his wonderful adoptive mother and our respect for each other is limitless. The book has been endorsed by numerous national adoption agencies as "a roadmap to adoption for all members." I hope you will take a time to give it a look, there is a full sample chapter on the website – but don't start reading it without a box of tissues nearby!

I will be speaking at a Birthmother's Day Celebration event in Milwaukee on May 12<sup>th</sup>. To attend the event contact: Lauree Madson, Birthparent Services for Bethany at [LMadson@bethany.org](mailto:LMadson@bethany.org).

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Announcements  
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The following are my speaking engagements for March:

Provider Appreciation Event  
April 14, 8-12:00  
LaCrosse, WI

Keynotes: Turn The Job You Love Into The Career You'll Keep & Are We In Child Care Because We're Crazy Or Are We Crazy Because We're In Child Care?

Contact: Family Resources, Nancy Meyers at [nlmeyers@centurytel.net](mailto:nlmeyers@centurytel.net)

Wisconsin Right To Life Conference

April 21

Wisconsin Rapids, WI

*Because I Loved You* Book signing and booth.

Contact: Wisconsin Right To Life, [www.wrtl.org](http://www.wrtl.org).

UW Stout Early Childhood Conference

April 28

Menominee, WI

10:45-11:45 Your Space/Their Space

1:30-2:30 Communicating With Parents

Contact: [www.uwstout.edu/outreach/conf/ece](http://www.uwstout.edu/outreach/conf/ece)

*Coming in May...*

May 5

Ho Chunk Casino, Baraboo, WI

Wisconsin Family Child Care Association State Conference

Workshops: Parents Can't Hear Me and Tips & Tricks

Contact: WFCCA [www.wisconsinfamilychildcare.org](http://www.wisconsinfamilychildcare.org)

*To see my complete schedule, visit the Lecture Page on my website at:*

[www.patriciadischler.com](http://www.patriciadischler.com)

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Patricia Dischler

*Author, "From Babysitter To Business Owner: Getting The Most Out Of Your Home Child Care Business" and "Because I Loved You: A Birthmother's View Of Open Adoption."*

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