



Getting the word out about the child care services you offer is an important part of maintaining and sustaining your business. There are many steps you can take to highlight your program. Here are 12 tips to get you started:



Child Care Aware® is committed to helping parents find the best information on locating high-quality child care and child care resources in their community. In partnership with Child Care Resource & Referral agencies (CCR&R), Child Care Aware® builds consumer awareness and supports families in making choices for the care and education of their children.

ChildCareAware®
America's most trusted child care resource.

For additional resources or help finding your local Child Care Resource & Referral agency (CCR&R), call:

1-800-424-2246

TTY Line: 1-866-278-9428

ChildCareAware.org

For local information contact:



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12 Tips to Market Your Child Care Program



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➡🌟 1 Contact your local Child Care Resource & Referral Agency (CCR&Rs)

These agencies are important links to your community. CCR&Rs help families locate licensed and registered child care in the area that best meets the families' needs. CCR&Rs also offer parents financial resources to help offset the cost of child care. They have many resources available to providers which are valuable to you in marketing your program. When starting your child care business, keep in mind that many CCR&Rs:

- » Conduct community needs assessments.
- » Either manage or partner with other organizations that deliver child care subsidy programs.
- » Analyze and report on child care supply and demand.
- » Provide online referral access that includes photographs and summaries of the key components of your program to inform families as they make their child care choice.

➡🌟 2 Decide on a name for your program and register it with your CCR&R.

Your program name represents your business. Ask yourself what you want the first impression of your program to be. Here are some tips for choosing a name for your program:

- » Keep it short and easy to spell.
- » People should be able to visualize something about the name when they hear it.
- » The name should relate to the services you offer, be professional, and generate confidence.
- » Make sure your name is unique to other program names in your area.
- » The name of your program can also be your logo. Make sure to put it on all documents.
- » If you use colors within your name and logo, make sure your documents also look good in black and white. Copies of documents are made frequently; make sure they look crisp and professional in both color and black and white.

➡🌟 3 Develop and distribute flyers

Develop an advertising flyer that:

- » Highlights the specific type of program that you offer such as weekly care, infant care, extended hours or non-traditional care, special programming, etc. You may also want to include that your program is in a highly accessible location.
- » List contact information for you and your program. Briefly describe how parents can visit your program, such as an open house schedule, a phone call to arrange a time for a personal visit, etc)

Distribute flyers to:

- » Public Libraries
- » Local Grocery Stores
- » Public Schools
- » Local Colleges and/or Universities
- » Businesses and/or Corporations
- » Pediatrician Offices

➡🌟 4 First impressions are key!

Much of the interest in child care programs comes from recommendations by satisfied parents and relatives. The messages that parents receive when they call or visit your program the first time have lasting impact. To ensure you are sending the right messages from the start:

>> Always answer the phone in a professional manner and in a positive tone. If a number of people answer the phone, specify how the phone is to be answered to maintain consistent professionalism, such as:

When answering the phone you should:

- » Have a smile on your face. This smile comes through to the person hearing your greeting!
- » Make sure to greet the caller by saying "Good morning, or thank you for calling....".
- » State the program name and your name

>> Make sure program staff or volunteers greet parents when they arrive and depart from your program. This tells them they are valued and that your program is a welcoming place for their family and other families.

>> Open houses or visits are a terrific way of inviting families for a first-hand view of your program. Open houses or parent visits can inform families of the details of your program such as:

- » Program Schedule
 - » Hours of Operation
 - » List of holidays and other days the program will be closed throughout the year

- » Inclement Weather Policy
- » Field Trip Policy
- » Late Policies
- » Program Philosophy Statement
- » Tuition Rates
- » Sample Daily Schedules
- » Sample Activities for the ages
- » Special services that you offer

➡🌟 5 Marketing

- » **Business cards** - Business cards are important marketing tools. The cards should include your program name, logo, address and contact information. One never knows when a marketing opportunity will present itself and ensuring business cards are prepared and readily available ensures your program is professionally presented!
- » Getting the word out about your business through personal relationships with friends and family and other organizations to which you belong also expands your business.

➡🌟 6 Advertising

Purchase advertising space in local newspapers, newsletters and magazines. Purchase advertisements that will reach both parents and businesses in your community. Call local organizations that publish community events and news to learn if there are upcoming special features about child care, summer camps, etc. in which you can advertise.

➡🌟 7 Online directory

Consider adding your business name to an online directory. Your local CCR&R may offer an online search. Make sure your business is listed with them.

➡🌟 8 Distribute marketing items with your business name

- » Tote bags - Give these to parents upon enrollment. Encourage them to use the bags to take things to and from your program.
- » T-shirts - Provide for children to wear on field trips.
- » Pens - These can be terrific and affordable marketing items. Give these out to potential families when they visit your program.

➡🌟 9 Develop your own Web site or Web pages

Web sites and Web pages are very affordable ways to reach busy families. This can seem like a large hurdle, but the advantages significantly outweigh the effort. There are many free resources on the internet to help you develop and launch your website. Search the internet for free website hosting. Many community colleges also offer classes on developing websites.

➡🌟 10 Network

Contact your local CCR&R to find out about organizations in your area for providers and join them. These networking groups connect you with other providers in the community. They also provide you with a group of peers that can offer support as you meet the challenges of owning, operating and growing your own business. There are also state and national organizations you may join that provide excellent support in both the business aspect and providing quality care. Join your local Chamber of Commerce to meet other business owners and learn from them.

➡🌟 11 Volunteer your time in the community

Volunteering at events and joining boards or advisory boards increases your visibility in the community which, in turn, helps your business. While time is a factor with volunteering, many opportunities to give back to your community require minimal time commitment. Your business will gain so much by developing new contacts. Giving a small amount of your time provides a useful return by learning information that helps you as a business owner. You, in effect, are marketing your program indirectly while giving back to the community.

➡🌟 12 Develop a referral process

Referral processes are wonderful for both you and the families you serve. Offer current families a discount or credit or another type of incentive when they refer families that enroll in your program.

To find your local CCR&R, visit www.childcareaware.org
or call **1-800-424-2246**