


Special Child Care Reference Guide

Everything you need to know to run your business—and where to find it.

By Matt Alderton



Child care is a business. And like any business, it requires planning, marketing and a healthy bottom line. But more than that, child care is about children. Rambunctious students, playground antics and lunchtime conundrums all add up to a workday that is anything but typical.

Keep the chaos in check with the **SAM'S CLUB® Source™** Child Care Reference Guide. Inside is a collection of important phone numbers and Web sites especially for child care professionals, as well as tips on curriculum development, play area safety and more. After all, you shouldn't be on the computer looking for information; you should be in the classroom, using it.

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Information in this Reference Guide (including dates, phone numbers and Web sites) is current at press time and is subject to change.

Child Care Associations

A classroom can be a lonely place. Make friends and meet peers when you get involved with industry associations. They are the perfect place to network with other business owners, share ideas with fellow educators and enhance your industry learning.



Make the Most of Trade Shows

Trade show attendees spent an average of 2.4 days and 8.6 hours at shows in 2004, according to a 2005 report from show researcher Exhibit Surveys Inc. That's plenty of time to get bored. Stay busy at industry gatherings with these tips for trade show preparation:

- **Set goals.** Don't just go to shows to browse. Decide what you want to get out of them, whether it's learning about new products or meeting new people, and get it.
- **Make a plan.** Read the show's promotional materials and make a list of booths you want to visit before you attend. Research vendors so you can ask useful questions and minimize small talk.
- **Create a schedule.** Decide how much time you want to spend at the show and schedule your time at booths accordingly.
- **Be prepared.** Book a hotel room that is close to the show and wear comfortable shoes, as you'll probably do a lot of walking on the trade show floor. Bring plenty of business cards and paper for taking notes, as well as a light bag for carrying brochures.

*YOUR RESOURCES

Industry associations are your No. 1 resource. They play the role of friend, peer and advocate. Contact these groups with your questions; they're among the best places to find answers:

Association for Childhood Education International.

ACEI supports the education and development of children worldwide, from birth through early adolescence, with a variety of advocacy and volunteer programs especially for educators. Call 1-800-423-3563 or visit www.acei.org.

International Nanny Association. INA provides education and support for those in the in-home child care industry. Call 1-888-878-1477 or visit www.nanny.org.

National AfterSchool Association. NAA is the leading association for professionals who care for and educate children during out-of-school hours. Call 1-800-617-8242 or visit www.naaweb.org.

National Association of Child Care Professionals.

NACCP is dedicated to improving the credibility of leaders in the child care industry and is the only association exclusively dedicated to child care management without regard to a center's tax status or corporate sponsorship. Call 1-800-537-1118 or visit www.naccp.org.

National Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators.

NAECTE serves as a network for the discussion of early childhood research and policy. Visit www.naecte.org.

National Association for the Education of Young Children.

NAEYC seeks to improve the well-being of all young children, focusing on the quality of educational and developmental services for children up to age 8. Call 1-800-424-2460 or visit www.naeyc.org.

National Association for Family Child Care. NAFCC provides technical assistance to family child care associations by promoting leadership, diversity and professionalism within the child care industry. Call 1-801-269-9338 or visit www.nafcc.org.

National Child Care Association. NCCA exclusively addresses the needs of licensed, private childhood care and education programs. Call 1-800-543-7161 or visit www.nccanet.org.

Mark Your Calendar

Check out some of this and next year's most popular early education gatherings, where you can see new products, meet new people and learn new things about the industry.

AUGUST 2006

What: Annual General Services Administration Child Care Conference
Where: Chicago
When: Aug. 1-3
Web site: www.gsa.gov (click on "Child Care" under "For Citizens")

OCTOBER 2006

What: Division for Early Childhood International Conference on Young Children with Special Needs and Their Families
Where: Little Rock, Ark.
When: Oct. 19-22
Web site: www.dec-sped.org/conference_05

NOVEMBER 2006

What: National Association for the Education of Young Children Annual Conference*
Where: Atlanta
When: Nov. 8-11
Web site: www.naeyc.org/conferences

*NAEYC's state affiliates also organize annual conferences, held across the country and throughout the year. For information about an affiliate conference near you, visit www.naeyc.org/conferences/affiliate.asp.

DECEMBER 2006

What: Zero to Three National Training Institute
Where: Albuquerque, N.M.
When: Dec. 1-3
Web site: www.zerotothree.org/nti

FEBRUARY 2007

What: National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies Annual Policy Symposium
Where: Washington, D.C.
When: Feb. 20-24
Web site: www.naccrra.org/conferences

What: Child Welfare League of America National Conference
Where: Washington, D.C.
When: Feb. 26-28
Web site: www.cwla.org/conferences/conferences.htm

MARCH 2007

What: American Montessori Society Annual Conference
Where: New York
When: March 1-4
Web site: www.amshq.org/nyc/index.php

What: National AfterSchool Association Annual Conference
Where: Phoenix
When: March 21-23
Web site: www.naaconference.org

What: National Child Care Association Annual Conference
Where: Las Vegas
When: March 23-25
Web site: www.nccanet.org/conferences/conferences.asp

What: National Conference on Family Literacy
Where: Orlando, Fla.
When: March 4-6
Web site: www.familit.org/conference

APRIL 2007

What: Parents as Teachers Annual Conference
Where: St. Louis
When: April 2-5
Web site: www.parentsasteachers.org

What: National Head Start Association Annual Training Conference
Where: San Antonio
When: April 16-21
Web site: www.nhsa.org

What: National Association of Child Care Professionals National Conference*
Where: Boston
When: April 25-28
Web site: www.naccp.org/displayconvention.cfm

*NACCP also hosts regional training sessions for directors. To find one near you, visit www.naccp.org/calendar.cfm.

MAY 2007

What: Association for Childhood Education International Annual Conference
Where: Tampa, Fla.
When: May 2-5
Web site: www.acei.org/confex03.htm

What: National Smart Start Conference
Where: Greensboro, N.C.
When: May 8-11
Web site: www.smartstart-nc.org/conference

Curriculum Development

Classrooms are places where children develop mentally, socially and even physically. But most of all, they're places where children grow educationally. Help your child care center succeed with a comprehensive and creative curriculum.



Fresh Curriculum Concepts

Among the most popular approaches to early childhood curricula are Montessori, Reggio Emilia and the High/Scope Educational Approach. Try these others, however, to bring a fresh perspective to your classroom:

- **Bank Street Approach (Developmental-Interaction Approach).** Often referred to as the traditional nursery school approach, the Bank Street Approach recognizes that children learn best when they are actively involved with materials, ideas and people. Learn more at www.bankstreet.edu/sfc.
- **The Creative Curriculum®.** The Creative Curriculum uses materials in four age-specific programs: infant/toddler, preschool, family child care, and primary and school-age. The company behind the program, Teaching Strategies Inc., provides extensive materials designed to guide educators' involvement with children. Learn more at www.teachingstrategies.com.
- **Direct Instruction.** The methods used in Direct Instruction are teacher-driven and consist of scripted lesson plans, rapid-paced interaction with learners, the immediate correction of mistakes, achievement-based grouping and the frequent assessment of skills. Learn more at www.adihome.org.

*YOUR RESOURCES

Quality care requires quality education. Keep your child care center up to speed with inspiration and ideas from these hotbeds for educational materials and theories:

American Montessori Society. AMS is the national headquarters for advocates of the Montessori method of education. Call 1-212-358-1250 or visit www.amshq.org.

Earlychildhood.com. Earlychildhood.com is a professional resource for educators and parents of young children, with information about classroom design and developmentally appropriate curricula. Visit www.earlychildhood.com.

The Educator's Reference Desk. The Educator's Reference Desk houses an archive of lesson plans, frequently asked questions and education information. Visit www.eduref.org.

High/Scope Educational Research Foundation. High/Scope Educational Research Foundation is a nonprofit research, development and training organization for the High/Scope Educational Approach. Call 1-734-485-2000 or visit www.highscope.org.

North American Reggio Emilia Alliance. NAREA is a network of educators and parents who advocate the Reggio Emilia approach to learning. Call 1-770-552-0179 or visit www.reggioalliance.org.

Parents as Teachers National Center. PATNC develops curricula, trains early childhood professionals and certifies parent educators to work with and support families with children from birth to age 5. Call 1-866-PAT4YOU (728-4968) or visit www.parentsaasteachers.org.

Scholastic. Scholastic is the world's largest publisher of children's books, and its Web site features everything from articles about child development to innovative lesson plans for young children. Visit www.scholastic.com.

Sesame Workshop. From the creators of Sesame Street, the Sesame Workshop encourages positive childhood development with the creation of educational materials that are both engaging and entertaining. Visit www.sesameworkshop.org.

Health and Safety

Children get sick, and they're prone to scrapes and scratches, too. It's all part of growing up. Still, protecting children—keeping them safe and sound, happy and healthy—is what you do best.

YOUR RESOURCES

Make children's physical, mental and emotional well-being a priority for your center every day. Arm yourself with information about childhood illness, nutrition and more with these resources:

American Academy of Pediatrics. AAP supports and provides information on the physical, mental and social health of all infants, children, adolescents and young adults. Call 1-847-434-4000 or visit www.aap.org.

Children's Institute. CI promotes children's social and emotional well-being with programs for training educators to evaluate and work with children's conditions. Call 1-877-888-7647 or visit www.childrensinstitute.net.

Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network. FAAN unites doctors, dieticians, schools, government agencies and others under one network to raise awareness about food allergies. Call 1-800-929-4040 or visit www.foodallergy.org.

National Association for Sick Child Daycare. NASCD is a network of child care providers that advocates for sick child care programs in order to relieve working parents and give sick children quality education. Call 1-205-324-8447 or visit www.nascd.com.

National Program for Playground Safety. NPPS is an online resource with tips for and statistics on safe playground fun. Call 1-800-554-PLAY (7529) or visit www.playgroundsafety.org.

National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care. NRC is home to information on health and safety in out-of-home child care settings nationwide and includes a database of licensure regulations for all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Call 1-800-598-KIDS (5437) or visit <http://nrc.uchsc.edu>.

U.S. Department of Agriculture. The USDA and the National Agriculture Library operate the Child Care Nutrition Resource System, an online resource with information on preparing nutritious meals, with recipes and tips for food safety. Call 1-301-504-5719 or visit www.nal.usda.gov/childcare.

Zero to Three. Zero to Three promotes the healthy development of infants and toddlers by supporting and strengthening the nation's families and communities, as well as those who work on their behalf. Call 1-202-638-1144 or visit www.zerotothree.org.



Information on Special Needs

Whether they have physical disabilities or just face extra challenges in classroom learning, make sure all students are welcome at your facility with these resources:

National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center.

NECTAC supports the implementation of the early childhood provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Call 1-919-962-2001 or visit www.nectac.unc.edu.

National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities.

NICHY is an online library of information and resources about working with and educating children with disabilities. Call 1-800-695-0285 or visit www.nichcy.org.

U.S. Department of Education.

The Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services supports parents, children and educators nationwide in working with disabilities. Call 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) or visit www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers.

Professional Development

Successful educators don't just teach—they learn. Promote continuing education for yourself and your employees in order to keep your child care center at the top of its game.



Nurture New Employees

Employees don't have to go off site to continue their education. They can learn new skills every day at work. New employees, in particular, have a lot to learn, so consider these tips for training them, courtesy of the National Institute of Child Care Management:

- The first three months of employment are crucial for new employees. Providing adequate support and training during this time can reduce turnover and improve job performance.
- Remember to share important information with new employees. A checklist of content will ensure you don't forget anything.
- Put expectations in writing. Include policies, procedures, job descriptions, evaluation forms and routine task checklists.
- Make yourself available to speak with new employees regarding their progress.
- Realize that each new employee is at a different developmental level and needs individual training and support.
- Reward good work and measured progress.

* YOUR RESOURCES

Child care is an ever-evolving field. Stay on top of trends in child development, educator training, certification and more when you explore opportunities with these resources:

ACCESS: American Associate Degree Early Childhood Educators. ACCESS advocates for associate degree programs for those who teach and care for young children. Visit www.accessce.org.

Center for the Child Care Workforce. CCW is a division of the American Federation of Teachers Educational Foundation and is dedicated to improving the quality of early childhood care and education with a workforce that is well-educated and better compensated. Call 1-202-662-8005 or visit www.ccw.org.

Child Care Services Association. CCSA provides information about college scholarships and health insurance assistance for child care providers through the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Project. Call 1-919-967-3272 or visit www.childcareservices.org.

Council for Professional Recognition. The Council for Professional Recognition provides Head Start fellowships and Childhood Development Associate (CDA) credentialing. Call 1-800-424-4310 or visit www.cdacouncil.org.

The McCormick Tribune Center for Early Childhood Leadership. The McCormick Tribune Center is dedicated to enhancing the management skills, professional orientation and leadership capacity of early childhood administrators. Visit <http://cecl.nl.edu>.

The National Institute of Child Care Management. NICCM works to enhance the effectiveness of child care administrators through management education leading to appropriate credentials. Call 1-573-345-4745 or visit www.niccm.com (Web site coming summer 2006).



NACCP recently launched its Professional Education Center, which provides online training for child care professionals nationwide. To learn more, call 1-800-537-1118 or visit www.naccp.org.

Child Care Policy

Child care isn't just a business, oftentimes it's a position, too. Make sure you stay informed when it comes to legislative debates over early childhood education.

* YOUR RESOURCES

No one is better qualified to debate child care policies than educators on the front lines. Equip yourself with information from these industry resources:

Child Care Bureau. Operated by the Administration for Children and Families, CCB is dedicated to enhancing the affordability and accessibility of child care for all families. Call 1-202-690-6782 or visit www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccb.

Child Care and Early Education Research Connections. CCEERC promotes high-quality research in the child care industry for the purpose of policymaking. Visit www.childcareresearch.org.

Child Care Information Exchange. CCIE promotes the exchange of ideas between leaders in early childhood programs. Call 1-800-221-2864 or visit www.childcareexchange.com.

Child Care Law Center. CCLC is a national organization dedicated exclusively to the complex legal issues that affect child care. Call 1-415-394-7144 or visit www.childcarelaw.org.

National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. NACCRRA is a national network of child care resource and referral agencies that promotes universal access to quality child care. Call 1-202-393-5501 or visit www.naccrra.net.

National Child Care Information Center. Operated by the Administration for Children and Families, NCCIC links parents and providers to a wealth of child care information from the government and beyond. Call 1-800-616-2242 or visit www.nccic.org.

National Head Start Association. NHSA supports Head Start programs nationwide. Call 1-703-739-0875 or visit www.nhsa.org.

National Network for Child Care. NNCC is home to research gathered from a network of universities, as well as parent, provider and public resources. Visit www.nncc.org.

Pre-K Now. Pre-K Now supports voluntary pre-kindergarten for all 3- and 4-year-olds. Call 1-202-862-9871 or visit www.preknow.org.

USA Child Care. USA Child Care is a network of child care providers that strives to involve members in the national dialogue over child care policies and procedures. Visit www.usachildcare.org.

Tips for Corresponding with Elected Officials

Writing to your elected representatives is one of the most powerful ways to be heard on issues of importance to your industry. Consider these tips when you sit down to write a letter:

- **Be polite.** Be passionate, but remain professional on the page.
- **Be direct.** State up-front the issue that concerns you and your position on it. If you are worried about a particular piece of legislation or policy, cite it by name.
- **Be local.** Include your name, address and e-mail address; anonymous letters are usually tossed, while those from local constituents are taken more seriously.
- **Be real.** Avoid writing about research and statistics. Instead, write about your experience as a parent or educator.
- **Be fair.** Avoid writing a diatribe against your representative; acknowledge both sides of the issue and be willing to dole out praise as well as criticism.

Small Business Needs

Your child care center isn't just a place where children learn. It's also a business. It needs capital with which to grow, customers with which to prosper and partners on whom to rely. You can't do it all alone—and you don't have to.



SBA Loan Tips

A loan from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) can do wonders for your business. In 2005 alone, the SBA approved nearly 100,000 small business loans for \$19 billion. Get in on the action and apply for financing today with these loan application and proposal tips from the SBA:

- Always begin your proposal with a cover letter or executive summary.
- Clearly define who you are and what your business does in your proposal.
- Detail the amount and purpose of the loan in your proposal, including what you will use it for and precisely how you plan to repay it.
- Don't make assumptions about your reader. Include industry information and statistics in your proposal so that the person reading it will better understand your business.

* YOUR RESOURCES

The U.S. Small Business Administration is a federal agency that offers information on starting and running your own business, with resources for financing it, growing it and more. For all the small business assistance and information you could ever want, check out these SBA links to success at www.sba.gov:

Starting Your Business. For training in business startup, with help in everything from feasibility studies to loan proposals and Web site assistance, visit www.sba.gov/starting_business/index.html.

Financing Your Business. Tap into the SBA's government-funded loan programs to take your business to the next level, whether you need to make major fixed-asset purchases or a small amount of working capital. Visit www.sba.gov/financing/index.html.

Manage Your Business. The SBA has a large network of consultants to help you develop your management skills and grow your business. Visit www.sba.gov/managing/index.html.

Grow Your Business. The SBA can help you take advantage of new opportunities with assistance in finding fresh business opportunities, marketing your business and more. Visit www.sba.gov/businessop/index.html.

Globalize Your Business. If you want to take your business or your products to international customers, consult the SBA's Office of International Trade. Visit www.sba.gov/oit.

Defend Your Business. To register complaints about unfair and excessive federal regulatory enforcement, such as excessive fines or repetitive audits, contact the SBA's Office of the National Ombudsman. Visit www.sba.gov/ombudsman.

Inform Your Business. To learn about small business statistics and new federal regulations affecting your business, contact the SBA's Office of Advocacy. Visit www.sba.gov/advo.



Like any business, child care centers must consider capital, employees and risk. For information on running your business, with information on employee training, taxes, marketing and more, consult Redleaf National Institute. Call 1-651-641-6675 or visit www.redleafinstitute.org.