



CHILD CARE COUNCIL  
Serving Columbia, Greene and Ulster Counties

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## Communication



## PARENT AND PROVIDER

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### What's inside:

- *Effective Communication*
- *Ways to help communication happen*
- *Make Good Communication Happen*



The communication between parent and child care provider is an essential part of the program. They go hand and hand to keep the program running smoothly.

For the parent: Communication is very important to help your child care provider understand your child.

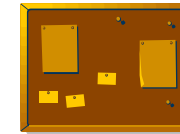
For the Provider: Keeping families informed and up to date is essential.

### Effective Communication

Developing positive relationships with parents is critical to providing the best care possible for their child. A partnership between a child care provider and a parent is crucial, and will support the overall development of the child, and aid in the creation of a consistent and seamless daily routine. The best way for a provider to create a partnership with the parents is by building trust and being honest.

Sometimes a relationship with the child's parents already exists—they may be related, live in your neighborhood, or be friends or acquaintances. This can be both a benefit and a challenge when you are caring for their children. For Example, Naptime and kids getting too dirty . Both sides must discuss what they expect when it comes to certain issues. For example, When you make your contract, be clear about the way your program works and make sure parents understand and are comfortable with your program.

### Reminder of what to put on your bulletin board for parents weekly & monthly :



- Menus of foods served, theme of the week, recalls of child care equipment and toys and food, diaper coupons, your child Care Registration/License, copy of your newsletter.
- Any health notices such as Lice, Chicken Pox, or Flu.
- Upcoming field trips reminders.
- Notice if your program will be closing early on a certain day or if closed for a week vacation. Post well in advance so that parents have time to rearrange their schedules so that they have continuous care for their child/children.

### From Parents to Partners : Building Family– Centered Early Childhood Program by Janis Keyser



Family Child Care Contracts & Policies  
By Tom Copeland

Parent-Friendly Early Learning by Julie Powers  
Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day by Judith Viorst



NAYEC .org

<http://www.extension.org/pages/67875/provider-parent-relationships:-7-keys-to-good-communication>

#### Mission Statement:

To support the community by expanding and promoting high quality Child Care that meets the needs of children & their families.

Visit our website [www.familyofwoodstockinc.org](http://www.familyofwoodstockinc.org)

## Steps You Can Take to Make Good Communication Happen Contracts & Policies

A '**contract**' is a binding legal agreement between two people. When you agree to care for a child and the child's parent agrees to pay you for that care, you have made a verbal contract. When you put the contract in writing, it becomes a written contract. Both parties expect the other to live up to the terms of the agreement.



**Policies** are the rules that state (preferably in writing) how you will care for the children, handle specific kinds of situations, and run your business. Some examples are how the children will be disciplined, what activities will be offered to the children, when meals will be served, how children with special needs will be cared for, and how illnesses and other kinds of emergencies will be handled.



View the ***Contracts and Policies Information Sheet*** for more information about creating contracts and policies and what is required by the New York State Day Care Regulations.

### The Benefits of Good Communication

Research indicates that children benefit when those who are most involved with their everyday well-being and learning have warm, meaningful communication. Those benefits can be seen at many levels. Children notice how we get along with their parents, and they hear how we talk together (or notice that we don't). When providers deepen their conversations with parents to the point when they become true collaborators in children's care and learning, children benefit exponentially. Intentionally establishing good communication with parents from the start will also make it easier to work through difficult conversations that may arise later. (<http://www.extension.org/pages/67875/provider-parent-relationships:-7-keys-to-good-communication>)

The goal of all this communication is for everyone (parents and providers) to know what is going on, how everyone is feels about what is going on and what is available to smooth out the wrinkles.

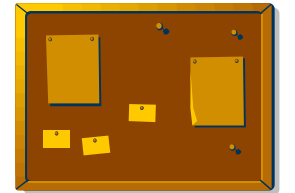
Excellence is possible when everyone; parent, child and provider are on the same page.

The way that you communicate with parents and children plays an important role in how you develop and maintain your relationships with them. The key to partnering with parents is to communicate often with them and share information about their child's experiences and development. Parents who feel valued and respected are more likely to maintain an open dialogue with you.



## Ways to Make Communication Happen

- Give each family a handbook of program policies
- Have each parent sign a contract
- Invite speakers to share topics of interest to parents
- Provide a family lending library of DVD's, books, games, and resource materials that support your programming philosophy
- Have a bulletin board by the entrance to your program filled with lots of helpful information. Include the following : theme of the week, menu of the month , alerts about illnesses, reminder about any upcoming field trips, reminders about holidays and vacations when day care will be closed.
- Leave notes in cubbies, backpacks and/or diaper bags
- Have a place available for parents to leave you notes (mailbox, comment box, etc.)





## Ways to Make Communication Happen On a Daily Basis

Daily conversation with parents allows you to build trust with families. It also allows for an exchange of information about a child.

- A quick conversation at drop off time to remind parent of important things: such as need for more diapers , change of clothes or an upcoming field trip .
- Be available (find a way that works for both of you)! Either in person, telephone, email, or journal.
- Talk to the parent in private when there is a concern such as biting, toileting, or illness to maintain confidentiality.
- Daily check-ins are required and may include:
  - How the child's feeling
  - How the child slept
  - Whether a parent is traveling on business that week
  - Whether or not the child took a nap that day
- Address questions and concerns when they first arise



There are many ways to communicate daily with parents other than the quick check-ins that take place in the morning and afternoon.

Some ideas include:

- Bulletin boards listing daily activities for each age group
- Lunchtime visits
- Open-door visitation policy for parents
- Daily journals or logs on each child
- A weekly or monthly newsletter for each age group
- Notes or phone calls between parents and providers
- Emails to parents at home and/or work
- Volunteer opportunities for parents



### Dealing with Conflicts

Serious problems need to be discussed in a private meeting. A parent-provider conference can be set up if there are significant problems or issues to discuss. Discussions need to take place in private so that children's and family's confidentiality is maintained. When a difference arises between the two parties, begin by having a conversation. Make sure the child isn't around, never talk or discuss any issues or problems in front of them. Some providers prefer to meet in a neutral territory, such as a neighborhood coffeehouse, although it is not necessary.

Establishing ongoing communication is key. When an issue develops, address it immediately. The problem will grow if you put it off and you will let resentment fester.