



Southgate Medallion Family Day Homes

#209, 11 Fairway Drive
Edmonton, Alberta T6J 2W4
Phone: 780 438-4012
Fax: 780 435-6605
info@southgatemedallion.com
southgatemedallion.com

for the Kids and You!

Volume 29 Issue 1



Then sing, young hearts that are full of cheer,
With never a thought of sorrow;
The old goes out, but the glad young year
Comes merrily in tomorrow."

Emily Miller

ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPCOMING EVENTS.

Holiday Reminder

- New Years Day, Friday, January 1st

SMFDH office is closed

N.B. Attendance Forms are due in the office January 29th.

Emotional Wellness

Emotional Wellness is about yourself and taking care of yourself. Accepting and exploring who you are, and using your inner resources to reduce stress and create a positive outlook on life.

Emotional Wellness means:

- Accepting yourself for who you are
Valuing self-exploration and improvement
Having a generally positive out look
Having personal boundaries
Being able to ask for help
Recognizing and manage different stresses

(The Wellness focus is a recognition of the stresses faced by providers as they balance family and day home responsibilities. Everyone needs to take care of themselves. Think about emotional wellness this month. How can you tell if you are emotionally well? What can you do to improve in emotional wellness?)

Student Health Services at Simon Fraser University

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Cribs

If the crib you are using is a Stork Craft drop side crib, contact the company for replacement parts. They are being recalled.

Reminder:

Keep the Red Door logo posted visibly.

Giving Back-up Care?

It is your responsibility to obtain all the information on the child in order to complete the attendance form and the emergency information should an urgent situation occur while the child is in care.

Handwashing

The Day Care Specialist has visited 80 homes in the region so far this year. She mentioned that hand washing has improved. Thank you for remaining diligent with washing children's hands as requested in all of the H1N1 documents.

Multicultural Calendar

January 2010

- January 1 Ganta-Sai Shinto New Year holiday.
January 5 Gurn Gobind Singh's Birthday Sikh
January 7 Christmas Coptic and Eastern Orthodox Christian
January 14 New Year Christian Coptic and Eastern Orthodox
January 14 Pongol India A three day rice harvest festival in South India
January 18 Martin Luther King Jr. Day USA
January 25 Robert Burns' Night Scotland
January 30 Tu B'Shevat (Arbor Day) Jewish

MARKETING YOUR DAY HOME

Do you have available child care spaces in your day home? Would you like to fill them and keep them filled?

In recent months many providers have been faced with the challenge of unfilled childcare spaces in their day homes. Unfortunately, the current state of our economy has had a role in this. With unemployment on the rise, many parents do not have a need for childcare. With fewer parents interested in childcare, it



TELEPHONE CONTACT

Your first contact with a parent will make an important impression. Be prepared. Be polite, even if you have no available spaces to offer.

- ◆ Write down parent name, day-time phone numbers, email address
- ◆ Write down child's name and birth date
- ◆ Write down days and hours of care required
- ◆ Start date
- ◆ Tell the parent a little about your day home and the ages of the children in care
- ◆ Respond to any questions the parent may have
- ◆ Write down interview date and time

If you are unable to provide the care that the parent requires, encourage them to call the agency for other possible caregivers.

CREATE A PORTFOLIO

One method you can use to promote your day home is by creating a portfolio to share with potential parents during an interview. This portfolio is a visual display that highlights the most important things about you and the childcare you offer. A portfolio should contain clear, concise information and it should be visually appealing. Ensure that your portfolio includes:

- ◆ An introduction of yourself
- ◆ Your educational background
- ◆ Your training certificates and awards
- ◆ Your daily routine and programming evidence
- ◆ Your menu
- ◆ A picture display of various activities or special events held in your day home
- ◆ Your policies (e.g. Child Guidance, Illness, Medication, etc.)
- ◆ Insurance Certificate
- ◆ Your Fee Schedule

CREATE A BROCHURE

Make yourself memorable by offering a day home brochure to the family before they leave the interview. Your Consultant will be bringing an example of a brochure to view during the January visit.



INTERVIEWS

- ⇒ Meet with the parent more than once. The first visit should be in the evening or on a weekend when you can give the family your full attention. The second visit should occur when all the children are in care, to see how the group interacts with one another. Offer to have the child visit before care is to begin.
- ⇒ The first interview should involve all family members so introductions can be made.
- ⇒ Present yourself in a friendly and professional manner. Make the family fee welcome.
- ⇒ Offer a tour of your home. Include indoor and outdoor play areas, sleeping area, eating area, and washrooms. Show the family your bulletin board and storage areas for the child's belongings. Point out artwork and displayed projects.
- ⇒ Offer the child/ren toys or activities to keep them occupied and happy. Interact with the child in a pleasant manner that shows respect for the child's feelings.
- ⇒ Tell the family about your day home in detail. Present your portfolio and go through it page by page.
- ⇒ Answer questions and ask your own questions.
- ⇒ Be warm and responsive to a parent's anxiety about placing their child in care.
- ⇒ Offer references if you have permission in advance to do so.
- ⇒ Offer a day home brochure so that parents have your contact information and something to remember you by.
- ⇒ Set a date for a follow-up conversation with the parent to address both your decision and the parents decision about placement. It is important to ask the parent to inform you of their intentions before calling the agency to contract. Remember, the final decision about placement is yours to make.



KEEPING YOUR SPACES FILLED

Ask yourself:

- * What can I do to improve my skills and knowledge?
- * Have I completed the requirements for Accreditation?
- * Have I completed my Family Child Care Training?
- * Have I attended the annual Provider Conference or any workshops recently?



Winter Outdoor Play

Children need to play outside every day, even in winter. Going outside to run, jump, yell, and wiggle gives children the chance to use their large muscles and work off extra energy. Moving out into the fresh air is healthier for children than keeping them inside a closed building where germs can easily spread.

Let the parents know you will be taking the children outside each day, ask them to bring snow pants, warm hats, mitts, etc. The body stays warmer if you're active than if you're standing still so plan some fun activities.

Ice Blocks

Fill containers such as clean milk cartons with water and leave them outside to freeze. When they are frozen solid, peel away the carton. Let the children stack and build with the ice blocks.

Sledding

Pile up the snow from your sidewalks into a hill. Give the children squares of cardboard to slide down the hill.



Snowball Target Throw

Lay a hula hoop in the snow. Let the children throw snowballs into the 'target.'

Snow Maze

Walk through the snow to make a pattern for the children to follow. You may want to make the maze very straight or add lots of twists and turns.

Snow Pies

You'll need sandbox toys, clean aluminium pie pans or Frisbees, natural materials. Give each child a clean aluminium pie pan to fill with snow and top with pebbles or dirt, leaves, etc. Add some bird seed or stale bread crumbs to top some of the pies. Set the finished pies near a window to watch the birds come to enjoy the pie treats.



Advertising Your Day Home

Calls come to the agency from parents looking for child care but finding a good match can take time. We thoughtfully refer providers who can meet the needs of the family inquiring.

Be proactive and promote yourself to boost your chances of finding the right families. Be competitive in your field and offer high quality care at a fair price so parents will choose you over another. Here are a few ideas to increase your presence in the community.

Word of mouth is the best advertising. Do your best daily and others will notice the quality of your work. People may refer family, friends, co-workers if you inform them that you have openings.

Be seen in your community. Go for walks, community events and to the library and play groups, attend school assemblies, play at the park. Realize you are being observed. Interested individuals may approach you to ask if you have openings.

Create a business card to hand out. The agency can order business cards at your expense.

Volunteer. Meet more people and spread the word about your business. Meet your neighbours.

Create a flyer that reflects your style or ask your consultant to provide one for you.

Advertise in your community newsletter or website. Contact your community league to find out how. Place an advertisement on an appropriate website.

Self-Referral. Keep a list of all the parent referral calls you receive and when you have a space make a friendly call to those who were previously interested.

Child Care Provider— Tax Information Night

Thursday, January 7, 2010 7 to 9 p.m.
Strathcona County Family and Child Services 276
2755 Broadmoor Blvd. Free Session