



Provider News: A Resource for Wisconsin Shares & YoungStar Providers

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Creating Successful Child Care Business Practices



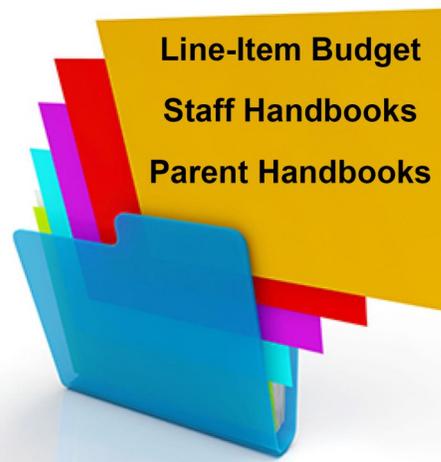
Part of running a child care program, whether it is a small family home program or a large group child care center, includes having solid business policies and procedures in place. YoungStar has a “Business and Professional Practices” section that includes indicators for creating and monitoring a yearly line-item budget, completing and filing accurate taxes, and creating an employee handbook (for group programs) and/or a parent handbook (for group programs and family providers).

Creating a Line-Item Budget

Creating a line-item budget can seem overwhelming, but once in place it can help programs make a profit after fixing areas in which the expenses are greater than the income. Continuing to review income and expenses (at least annually) will help to inform you each year about your budget as your business grows, circumstances or your business changes, or you wish to make changes on how your income is spent. Your YoungStar Technical Consultant can be a great resource for creating a line-item budget. The Department of Children and Families YoungStar web page for providers also has resources available for creating sound business practices (<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/providers/resources>).

Staff Handbooks

Staff handbooks are essential for running a quality child care program. Addressing the rules that are important to the philosophy of your program will be extremely useful as your program grows. High-quality programs understand the necessity of creating staff handbooks that include job descriptions, hiring practices, salary scales, evaluation procedures, staff disciplinary policies, grievance procedures, and program policies. Including these policies and procedures in a staff handbook assures that all employees are treated equally and that they are aware of the expectations and consequences if expectations are not met. Yearly evaluations give staff an opportunity to discuss their strengths and areas of development with their supervisors. A staff handbook can also outline the benefits that are offered to employees. Although it is often difficult for programs to offer employer-sponsored health insurance, other benefits like paid time off, paid planning time, staff meetings, access to professional development resources and funding, and access to retirement funding can make your business more attractive to potential employees.



DCF is on Twitter! Watch @WisDCF for helpful child care information.

Training Corner

Sharpen your professional skills with new training opportunities!

SFTA Training Opportunities

<https://supportingfamilies.together.org/early-care-education-professionals/sharpen-your-professional-skills/>

WECA Training Opportunities

<http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/training/>

The Registry Training Opportunities

<https://www.the-registry.org/myregistry/>

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Business Practices continued from page 1

Parent Handbooks

Parent handbooks not only share information with families about payment schedules, curriculum, children's activities, and expectations; they can also serve as a formal contract between the program and parents, safeguarding a program against potential lawsuits by establishing a professional business agreement between two parties. For family providers, the parent handbook can also be beneficial to launching professional boundaries between your personal home and your child care business.

"Unfortunately, many providers don't understand that there is a business side to child care," says Tom Copeland, trusted author and consultant on family child

care business practices. "They don't realize that failing to pay attention to this will cost them later in time and money." Mr. Copeland also states that one of the biggest mistakes made by child care providers is that they "do not enforce the rules of their signed parent contracts."

Creating policies and procedures for parents and staff, budgeting and keeping track of income and expenses, and filing accurate taxes are extremely important in running a successful business. Your YoungStar Technical Consultant, although not an accountant, can be a great resource for you as you build your business professionally and financially. Read more about Tom Copeland and child care business practices at:

<http://tomcopelandblog.com/> or visit the Child Care Information Center <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/ccic>.

YoungStar Updates

Creating Developmentally Appropriate Environments for All!



It should come as no surprise to see the words "Developmentally Appropriate Environments" (DAE) in the title of a YoungStar newsletter article. However, a recent question surfaced about DAE and children with disabilities, and YoungStar wants to address this important topic.

Does DAE apply or work for children with disabilities?

As you can probably guess, of course it does. In fact, DAE is just one part of a larger approach to learning known as DAP or Developmentally Appropriate Practice. Teaching practices that are developmentally appropriate:

- ✓ Promote optimal learning and development
- ✓ Are individualized and culturally aware;
- ✓ Help each child meet challenging, yet achievable learning goals; and
- ✓ Meets children where THEY are.

These four points not only inform DAE, but they are the building blocks for individualizing learning based on a child's unique interests, abilities, preferences, and development. If you are able to incorporate the above points into your program's interest centers and environments, you will automatically create opportunities that are inclusive and supportive of every child in your care.

DAE promotes optimal learning and development.

DAE Resources

Looking for resources that will put you on the path toward creating developmentally appropriate (and accessible) environments and activities? Visit the links below.

- <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/youngstar/pdf/ys-2019-20/DAE-4All.pdf>
- <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/topics/dap/preschoolers>
- <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/topics/dap/infants-and-toddlers>



Practice-Based Coaching Coming Soon to YoungStar



This spring, YoungStar consultants across the state attended a two-day training on a new support service that will be available to programs through YoungStar. The service, **Practice-Based Coaching (PBC)**, is used nationally in Head Start classrooms, in programs implementing the Pyramid Model and beyond. Providers and consultants work together to build and improve teaching practices and support the quality of what providers do with children throughout the day.

Creating Goals

During the PBC process, the provider leads the way, choosing what goals they want to focus on first. The consultant/coach provides the tools to put these ideas to work and offers support along the way. For example, through a



needs assessment, a family child care provider may identify that he or she would like to read to children more often. A YoungStar consultant can use the PBC model to help write a specific goal with action steps, provide resources, observe the teaching practice in action, and help think about next steps.

Using New Skills to Promote Learning Experiences

Research shows that Practice-Based Coaching greatly increases the effective use of quality practices by taking what providers learn in traditional training and putting it to use in the learning environment. Even more exciting, after consultation ends, providers can use the skills they learned during the PBC process to identify and achieve more goals that promote positive learning experiences for children.

We are excited to include PBC as an optional service for programs participating in YoungStar and are proud to lead the nation in incorporating this model into our statewide Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS). Staff from the Department of Children Families will continue to work with Supporting Families Together Association and the National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching and Learning to develop further training and supports to bring PBC to interested YoungStar providers. If you have questions about Practice-Based Coaching, please contact your local YoungStar office for more information. <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/program/localoffice>

Policy Alert: Wisconsin Shares and Unauthorized Provider Locations

Many child care providers have changes to their operations during the summer months. Child care providers must be mindful of the unauthorized location policy. Wisconsin Shares authorizations are written for a specific provider location the child is expected to attend for care. Below is a simple breakdown of provider and parent responsibilities related to unauthorized locations.

Provider Responsibilities

- Making sure the child is cared for at the correct location
- Reporting changes to the location (such as transfer, relocation, closures, or change in regulation type)
- Checking the provider portal or provider authorization letter to confirm the correct children are attending the location

ALERT: Providers must contact the local agency or use the Provider Portal (<https://mywchildcare>

providers.wisconsin.gov/login) to report a child receiving Wisconsin Shares has not attended in the last 30 calendar days.

Parent Responsibilities

- Updating the child's authorization to reflect the correct location by using the parent portal or contacting the local agency before the end of the month
- Reviewing your authorization notice to verify that your children are authorized for the correct location
- Making subsidy payments for only the authorized location

You will receive an overpayment if the Department of Children and Families discovers that you are receiving subsidy payments for children at one location when they are authorized to attend another location.



Important Background Check Updates

Background Check Reminders and Updates



Prospective Status

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) reminds providers using the Child Care Provider Portal that once a final hiring decision is made, an individual's employment or residency status in the portal should be updated to match that decision. Individuals who have **Prospective** statuses are marked with red exclamation points next to their names in the portal. It is important this status be updated as individuals with **Prospective** status for more than 180 days will lose eligibility and need another fingerprint check. It is also possible a non-hired individual could be left as prospective, which would incur an annual fee when that individual's background check is due.

Background Check Notices

Child care providers should continue to keep an eye on their mail for notices from DCF regarding employees and residents active at the center prior to October 1, 2018. Providers will receive two notices up to 60 days and up to 30 days before they are required to submit their current staff for background checks. These notices will detail the process for providers to bring their entire staff into compliance with the new federal background check requirements.

DCF Background Check Process Improvements

DCF has successfully been rolling out background checks for individuals active in child care prior to October 1, 2018. We have also been listening and responding to feedback from Wisconsin child care providers. We are excited to remind everyone about the following decisions and improvements we have made in response to your feedback.

Student Observers and Background Checks

After listening to the feedback of providers and higher education entities, DCF has decided not to require background checks on some students who are performing observation in a care program for their education. In order for DCF to not require a background check requirement for a student, the following prerequisites **must** be met:

- The student may not provide any caregiving service, supervise children, or be responsible for meeting any needs of children.
- The student must always be in the direct presence of a caregiver or teacher who has been found eligible to provide child care by a DCF background check.
- The observation period may not be considered part of a practicum, student internship or student teaching requirement for the sake of a student's education.

DCF will continue to not require a background check for any high school students who are participating in a Department of Public Instruction course that requires observation hours in order to obtain certification to work as a child care assistant teacher.

4K Collaboration and Background Checks

Many programs collaborate with local 4K programs to provide service in their centers. If the provider employs the 4K teacher, then they do need a background check as they are considered a caregiver. If the 4K teacher is district-employed, they need a background check unless they meet ALL of the following criteria:

- Contract and/or center policies specify that district-employed teachers are not to have unsupervised access to children in the center.
- District-employed teachers are not used to meet staff-to-child ratios in accordance with requirements under DCF 251.
- District-employed teachers work under the supervision of an individual who has completed a DCF background check and received final eligibility.

See the Background Check FAQ for more information. <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/ccregulation/backgroundcheckfaq>

Website Improvements

Many of the comments DCF received informed us that child care providers were having a hard time navigating the background check pages of our website. In response to this, we have redesigned the web pages with the focus of making it easier to find the specific requirements and tools that an individual is looking for when they use our website. DCF encourages providers to visit our new background check home page at <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/cbgcheck>.

Visit our new Background Check home page: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/cbgcheck>

Child Care Background Check Requirements

On October 1, 2018, the Child Care Development Block Grant changed the background check requirements for individuals in licensed and certified child care centers. The resources below will guide child care providers through the process of learning these new requirements, and ensure background check compliance on individuals associated with their program.

Background Check Presentation	Who Needs a Background Check?
Licensed Child Care Background Checks	Certified Child Care Background Checks
Higher Education Background Checks	Contracting Services
Provider Memos	Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

