

# CARE Connection

## Business Practices Grab and Go Lesson

### Responsibilities of the Center Director—A Child Care Professional

Managing a child care center is a big job. It takes someone who loves children, understands people, and can handle the business side of child care.

Whether a center is small or large, it is the center director's responsibility to be sure that each child is receiving the very best care possible. This means that each child is treated with love and respect and helped to fully develop. Doing a good job is not easy, but the rewards are great.

To do the best job as a center director, you need to

- **MANAGE:** Know what needs to be done.
- **LEAD:** Get things done through your staff.
- **USE RESOURCES WISELY:** Make the best use of what you have.

#### Manage

Management in child care is a special mix of caring, understanding your staff, and knowing how you want your center to operate. The following tips on communication and supervision will help you

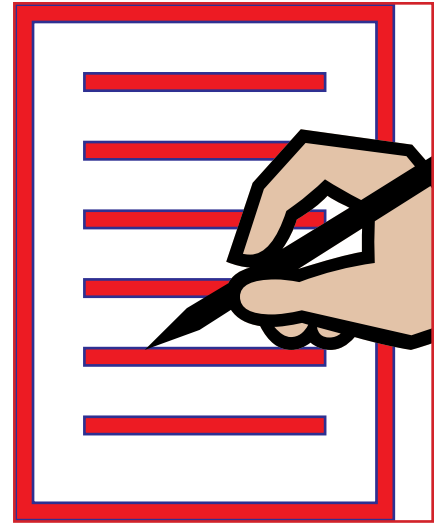
1. Keep the focus on meeting the children's needs by giving quality child care.
2. Have goals for your child care center. Know where you are going so you will know when you get there.



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3. Work with staff to help them learn to provide quality care. Give them feedback when they do things right and when they need to improve.
4. Keep up with what is happening in all areas of the center, including the kitchen.
5. Get organized. Do paperwork correctly and on time.
6. Use what you know about children, and your own common sense, to make sound management decisions.



#### Lead

Center staff members need a good leader to keep them focused on providing quality care. You can show your leadership through the way you communicate and the way you supervise staff.

#### Tips on Communication

- Be honest and clear when talking to your staff.
- Listen carefully to what your staff members tell you.
- Give direct and clear answers.
- Show your staff you respect them.

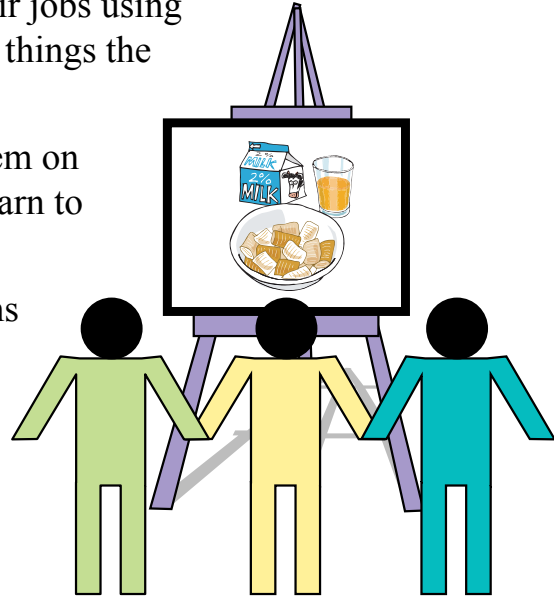
#### Tips on Supervision

- Keep the focus on meeting the children's needs. Help everyone remember that the reason for the job is to care for the children.
- Expect the best from your staff. People tend to get what they expect.

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- Make sure your staff knows how to do their jobs using best practices. Best practices means doing things the right way.
- Give your staff feedback. Congratulate them on what they do that is right and help them learn to correct mistakes.
- Coach the staff to success. Coaching means teaching staff members to do something, then encouraging them to keep doing it.
- Evaluate your staff and hold them responsible for doing their job the right way.



### Use Resources Wisely

Resources include knowledge, time, and common sense. Making the most of the resources that you have helps to make your center the best it can be.

### Knowledge Resources

You and the center staff members have a lifetime of experience and a good deal of training about child care. You also have materials that are good resources to help you make decisions and provide excellent care. Other resources include your sponsoring agency and the state agency.

### Time Resources

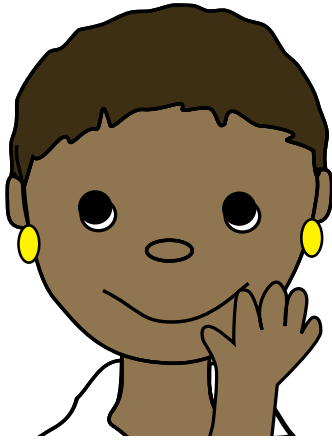
Everyone has the same amount of time. The difference between success and failure in many situations is the wise use of time.

- Plan your work and stick to the plan.
- Think about what's important, and do the most important things first.
- Know when you need to do a task, and when to assign the task to someone else.

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*“Does this decision help provide the best care?”*



#### Common Sense Resources

Every center director, no matter how well-trained, must rely on common sense to make a lot of decisions. Your common sense can help you make good decisions when you think through the CARE Process to decide what to do.

A child care center director has a big job that requires the use of business sense and knowledge about caring for children.

Whether you are making a decision about food to purchase or how to get James to try green vegetables, you can use this advice, “Start with the end in mind.” This means having a goal in mind and making decisions to help you reach that goal. If your goal is to

provide quality CARE for children, then that is the “end in your mind.”

Every decision you make should begin with the question, “Does this decision help provide the best care for the children in my center?”