

### Family Day Care – What about your service do you share with parents?

The Early Years Learning Framework puts children's learning at the core. For families accessing care through Family Day Care the information sharing between the careprovider and the parent is based on what is provided and what the environment in which the child will spend their time. According to the Early Years Learning Framework "children thrive when families and educators work together in partnership to support young children's learning."

Knowing this, the next step is to ascertain what information is relevant and what information is private and does not need to be disclosed.

To assist parents in choosing the Family Day Care Educator, the sharing of information to support acceptance of diversity which in turn creates an environment where children are able to learn, explore and have opportunities to learn about similarities and difference and how to live together.

So what information is relevant? The focus needs to be on what service is being delivered by the Family Day Care Educator and what the outcomes will be for the children through the experiences that they will have within that setting.

Defining the fine line between finding similar child care practices and discrimination can be difficult. As a society, we are all striving to remove the prejudices that we see in our day to day lives. Some are easier to remove; some are based on passed experience and can be harder to move away from.

The following strategies provide food for thought in developing sound guidelines in being able to assist parents choose the care environment for their child, ensure both educator and parent have their privacy respected, enable an open relationship be developed between parent and educator and focus on the child's wellbeing.

#### **As a Family Day Care Educator:**

- Take the time to list and describe who you are in the context of providing quality childcare.
- Think about you child care practices, routines and what is important to you. For example, if you believe that saying a prayer before meals is important and this is what will happen when the children are in care add that to your list. This enables parents the choice if they do or do not want their children involved in this routine.
- Paint a picture of what the environment is like physically. For example, have 1 dog and 1 cat. Educator's teenage male children are home late in the afternoon. Educator's partner is emergency carer on Monday's and Tuesday's.
- Paint a picture what the environment is like socially and emotionally. E.g. educator regards the greeting of partner/children when they come home and allocates small time with them at afternoon tea to see how their day has been. Educator regards this as an important learning experience for the children's social development.
- Describe to parents who the people your child may develop relationships with during the time they are in care e.g. educators own children, partners, and other educators.

- Identify what you regard as not important in the context of providing quality care. For example, if you believe that your religious beliefs, marital status or age do not impact on the delivery of your care then you do not need to include this. Both the educator and the parent are entitled to their privacy and thus be respected.
- Discuss with your coordinator what information you are happy to allow them to share with new potential parents.
- Think about any issues that may cause concern and how you, the educator, will manage this. For example, you as an educator are in a same sex relationship. You are happy for parents to know that and have strategies to assist in managing questions such as when “when my partner comes home. For e I will give her a kiss as any two people in a relationship may do in greeting.”
- Ascertain with the parents what information they are happy for the educator to tell the children. For example, the educator’s partner is pregnant and the subject comes up about where babies come from.
- Clarify with your co-ordinating unit how information is given to new parents and how tricky questions are answered. For example, if a new parent asks how old the educator is, the response may not be in divulging her exact age but saying that the educator’s children are all grown up and left home, or she has three teenage children.
- Discuss with your coordinating unit what strategies they use to overcome issues. For example, the educator’s name sounds culturally different and the parent states they don’t want that educator.
- Develop a brochure/pamphlet that can be given to the parent about you, the type of care you provide and information about yourself that you regard as important in the context of delivery quality child care.
- Be aware of legislation that you need to abide by such as Privacy Act, Sexual Discrimination Act and Disability discrimination Act that protect both the educator and the parent.

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