



Steuben and Schuyler's most trusted child care resource.

Provider Newsletter

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Why Does High Quality Matter?

Children learn so much in their first five years. High quality early learning settings, whether child care, preschool or the home environment, set the foundation for success.

Each day, nearly six million children under age three spend some of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents, so the need for high-quality care is more important than ever.

For children, a high-quality program may mean feeling accepted for who they are no matter what their ability or culture. It means having friends and responsive adults, being emotionally and physically comfortable and the possibility of having a variety of fun, interesting and engaging activities.

For most parents, quality child care:

- Safeguards their child's health and safety; the child is happy, and the program is conveniently located and affordable.
- Is key to balancing work and family, so that they have peace of mind while they are at work.
- Incorporates tangible school readiness activities, such as pre- or early reading, learning to count, or highlighting learning

social skills such as cooperation.

- Is an environment in which their families' culture and their child's abilities are respected.
- Is an environment in which their child is happy, makes friends, has interesting and positive experiences, and learns about a wide variety of things.

Or... all of the above...and more.

School Mornings

When a child arrives to your program in the morning and appears cranky, anxious, or easily excitable, have you ever said to yourself "I wonder what happened at home this morning?" You probably figured out early in your career that how things go at home in the morning for a child can set the tone for the day ahead. If that is true for a child coming from home to your program, it is also true for a child who leaves your program and goes on to school. Children who arrive at school feeling calm, relaxed, fed and ready can make the most of the first few hours of the day and maximize that learning time.

Children don't understand time in the same way as adults do, which can make mornings a stressful time of day for families. A child who knows that he needs to hurry up and get ready to go to child care and then later go on to school may feel an added

layer of stress. Time pressures and competing demands can turn mornings into a combat zone at home and in child care.

As tough as it may seem, it now becomes your job to help the child calm down and give him/her a new start to the day.

Here are some ideas to take some of the pressure out of school mornings.

The day before:

- If the child comes to you after school, try to find out if there is something special going on at school the next day.
- Try to read school newsletters and check bags for notes (with parent's permission).
- Encourage the starting of any homework.
- If the child had a good morning, relay that to the parents upon their arrival.

In the morning:

- Be prepared for your day to begin.
- Good moods can be infectious. Tackle the morning as positively and as optimistically as you can.
- Try to cut down on noise and distractions. Try playing some mellow music.
- Focus on the positives. Look for good behavior and try to ensure that positive comments outweigh instructions and reprimands.
- Plan a favorite activity after school.
- Make the separation smooth and leave the child feeling good about himself, with words of encouragement and the message that you will be there for him at the end of the day.

Hopefully when the child leaves you and goes into the classroom, he will be ready to learn leaving the teacher thinking "he must have had a great morning in child care."

Help Parents Help their Children with Homework

Homework time can be a very stressful for working families, especially those who work later in the evenings. Many families would love to just be able to pick up their kids, go home, have dinner, spend a little fun time, and then put them to bed. If providers could get the homework train started while they are still in care it would help parents have more quality time with their kids. Here are a few tips:

- **Set up a homework-friendly area.** Make sure kids have a well-lit place to complete homework. Keep supplies — paper, pencils, glue, scissors — within reach.
- **Schedule a regular study time.** Some kids work best following a snack and play period.
- **Be a motivator and monitor.** Ask about assignments, quizzes, and tests and give encouragement.

Finally, don't feel that the children need to get everything done. Report to parents at pick up time, what was completed and what is left. They will appreciate your efforts.

Source: www2.ed.gov/parents/help/homework

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