

Inexpensive Marketing Strategies For Family Child Care Providers

To bring in prospective clients:



- Hang a colorful sign in your window, on the lawn or on the front of the house. *(Be sure to check out local regulations and permit requirements.)*
- Drop off flyers and/or business cards to local businesses and offer a finders fee for any referrals.
- Provide current clients with business cards and offer incentives for referrals.
- Make Christmas, Mother's Day gifts etc, something the parents can use or display at work - be sure to have your business information printed on it where it can be seen when co-workers are standing around the parent's desk admiring the gift their child made in child care.
- Give out Halloween or other holiday treats with your business information attached.
- Create a website for your business; there are many sites where you can create a website for free, my favorite is www.officelive.com
- List on your association's website and other free sites that list providers, including Craigslist. *(Note: Though some sites require you to pay to be listed, there are many that don't. Be aware of possible on-line scams, don't give out too much information on-line, and NEVER accept money from, or send money to, someone claiming to be looking for childcare. Don't allow yourself to be pressured into anything; Follow the same screening and enrollment procedures with these prospective clients that you apply to parents who contact you by phone.)*
- Put a magnetic sign on your car.



Once you have a prospective client's interest:



- Be professional and courteous on the phone - you are your best marketing tool.
- Know what your philosophy and beliefs are. When a parent calls to ask about your program, you should be able to articulate what makes your child care program different from the one down the street, and why a parent should entrust their child to you.
- Be able to list the features and benefits of your program. Features describe what your program offers, while benefits tell clients how the program will help them and their children.
- Have pictures of the children, past and current, in your program around for prospective clients to look at. Many providers keep scrapbooks as well.
- Have a monthly or quarterly newsletter for parents and use past editions for marketing.

**The number one, most effective marketing tool is
Referrals, Referrals, Referrals!!!**