

Child Care Experience™ Curriculum



Author



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As a long-time customer and user of the RealCare® Program, Mrs. Sowada has been featured in a RealCare Baby case study, blog, and has been a webinar presenter for Realityworks.

Child Care Experience Curriculum

The Child Care Experience is a set of lessons and activities that teach the foundations of caring for infants in a childcare setting.

Curriculum Structure

The *Child Care Experience Curriculum* is composed of the following lessons. Approximate lesson times are included.

Lesson	Title	Approximate Time
One	Infant Feeding and Nutrition	45-60 minutes
Two	The Developmental Domains in Infancy (PIES)	50-60 minutes
Three	Lesson and Daily Schedule Planning	95-120 minutes
Four	Communication with Parents	70-80 minutes
Five	Entrepreneurship – Opening a Child Care Center	85-105 minutes
Six	Introduction to Emergency Infant CPR	45-60 minutes
Seven	Infant Airway Obstruction	45 minutes
Eight	Child Care Simulation Experience	60-130 minutes
	Total	8-11 hours

Lesson Structure

Each lesson begins with a Lesson Overview, Lesson Objectives and a Lesson at a Glance table that lists the lesson activities, materials required, suggested preparation steps, and approximate class time.

Lesson Sections

The actual lesson follows the overview, which will contain some of the sections described below.

FOCUS

Every lesson begins with a FOCUS activity intended to capture participants' attention. This may be in the form of a small or large class discussion, a game, a review of previous lesson information, or a demonstration. During this activity, participants are introduced to the topic of the lesson.

LEARN

The LEARN activity in each lesson varies in its presentation mode. It may be a slide presentation, group activity, or demonstration.

REVIEW

The majority of lessons end with a REVIEW activity intended to briefly review the lesson's key messages or main points.

Lesson Five – Entrepreneurship: Opening a Childcare Center

Lesson Overview

Childcare as a career can be rewarding, fulfilling, and profitable. Being an owner of a childcare center requires learning about licensing, financing, staffing, and working with families. Detailed planning and hard work can lead to a successful business that serves families and promotes the best care and education for children.

Lesson Objectives

After completing this lesson, participants will be able to:

- Understand the requirements of opening a childcare business
- Understand the planning that is necessary for a successful childcare business
- Understand how the requirements are relevant to both the success of the business and the well-being of the children being cared for.

Lesson at a Glance

Activity	Materials	Preparation	Approximate class time
FOCUS	• <i>Childcare Center Dream Sheet</i>	1. Print/photocopy <i>Childcare Center Dream Sheet</i> (one per participant).	20-30 minutes
LEARN	• <i>Entrepreneurship: Opening a Childcare Center</i> presentation slides • <i>Entrepreneurship: Opening a Childcare Center Notes</i> • <i>Entrepreneurship: Opening a Childcare Center Notes – Answer Key</i>	1. Prepare slides and projector for presentation. 2. Print/photocopy <i>Entrepreneurship: Opening a Childcare Center Notes</i> (one per participant).	30 minutes
REVIEW	• Information from <i>Childcare Center Dream Sheet</i> • Information from <i>Entrepreneurship: Opening a Childcare Center</i> presentation slides • <i>Creating Your Childcare Center Planning Worksheet</i> • <i>Creating Your Childcare Center Planning Worksheet – Answer Key</i> • Internet access or printed materials of local costs and financing options for a childcare center	1. Print/photocopy <i>Creating Your Childcare Center Planning Worksheet</i> (one per participant). 2. Arrange for internet access or print materials of local costs and financing options for a childcare center.	35-45 minutes

Lesson Five – Entrepreneurship: Opening a Childcare Center

FOCUS: Dreaming of a Childcare Center

15-20 minutes

Purpose:

The participants will begin to formulate their ideas for a childcare center.

Materials:

- *Childcare Center Dream Sheet*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Before class, review *Childcare Center Dream Sheet* to think about your personal ideas of planning for a career as a childcare center owner.
2. Distribute the *Childcare Center Dream Sheet* participants.
3. Read the introduction together with participants. Encourage and support the Big Question brainstorming discussion to begin the activity.
4. Direct participants to continue working on the interview questions that follow the brainstorming activity.
5. Allow the participants work time for the activity.
6. Ask for volunteers to share responses from their work.

Name: _____ Class: _____

Childcare Center Dream Sheet

Big Question: Brainstorm with your classmates.

What does it take to open a childcare center?

Interview Questions: This can be done independently or as a partner activity. Imagine that you are thinking about opening your own childcare center. If you are working with a partner, use the questions to interview them. If you are working independently, interview yourself. Read each question and thoughtfully respond.

1. What would you name your childcare center? And why?
2. Where would it be located? (City, state, and where within the city)
3. What skills do think are necessary for the successful operation of a childcare center?
4. What skills do you have that would make you a **great** childcare professional?
5. What would your overall goal be for your childcare center?
6. What goals/expectations would you have for yourself?
7. What goals/expectations would you have for your staff?
8. What goals/expectations would you have for the children who will attend your childcare center?

9. What features and materials are most necessary for the children who will be attending your childcare center?

10. What are some features and materials that might not be necessities, but would be nice to have for the children at your childcare center?

11. What will your expectations for the parents of the children be?

12. What do you think will be the most rewarding aspects of owning a childcare center?

13. What do you think some of the biggest challenges will be in owning a childcare center?

Lesson Five – Entrepreneurship: Opening a Childcare Center

LEARN: Opening a Childcare Center

30 minutes

Purpose:

This presentation will introduce and describe the steps that are required of a person who is interested in opening a childcare center.

Materials:

- *Entrepreneurship: Opening a Childcare Center* presentation slides
- *Entrepreneurship: Opening a Childcare Center Notes*
- *Entrepreneurship: Opening a Childcare Center Notes – Answer Key*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the note sheet to participants.
2. Present *Entrepreneurship: Opening a Childcare Center* slides.
3. Participants can take notes or use printed copies of *Entrepreneurship: Opening a Child Care Center Notes*.
4. Encourage participants to discuss why many of the requirements are relevant to the success of the business as well as relevant to the well-being of the children.

Entrepreneurship: Opening a Childcare Center Notes

What does it take to open a childcare center?

You are interested in starting your own childcare business

You have passion for _____

You have the knowledge and traits to provide high quality experiences for children

You want to be in control of your own employment

You are ready for _____

You look forward to the rewards that come with success

Then maybe you are ready to become the owner of a childcare center

Let's look at how to get started

The Steps

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.

1. Education

- Obtain an early childhood education degree

— _____

- Learning about owning and operating a small business

— _____

2. Learn About Licensing

- What are the licensing requirements for your chosen area? Local, state, federal...

3. Create Your Business Plan

- A business plan is like a roadmap

- It includes _____

- Be thorough and detailed
- Online resources will help you know what to include
- Learn about the costs involved
- Do you have your own money, or will you need financing?
- Are there grants available?

Goals

- What kind of _____ will you use?
 - Some childcare centers offer a formal schedule while others are more relaxed
- _____ format
 - Will you provide formal learning opportunities?
 - Child guidance and discipline may be included here

Mission statement

- A mission statement is a summary of the _____ and values of the organization
- Example: *It is the mission of A B C Childcare to provide quality childcare in a warm, nurturing, loving, and educational environment*

4. Location

- Understand the needs of the community
 - Where are families coming from and going to?
- Know the local zoning laws and licensing requirements
- Will you _____ property or _____?
- Will you use an _____ or _____?

5. Financing

- Consider startup costs as well as ongoing operating costs
 - Some estimates range from \$10,000-\$50,000
 - There are many variables to consider
- Are there financing options available?
- Remember to consider _____

6. Policies and Procedures

- Your mission statement and goals will be the basis for your policies and procedures
- _____ to avoid having to create policies after problems arise
- A handbook for parents should be printed and distributed

The Parent Handbook

- What to include:
 -
 -
 -
 -
 -
- Meal and snack policies
 - What is provided and what is supplied from home
- Sick day procedures
- Rules for special activities
- _____ policies
- Health and safety regulations
- Emergency procedures
- _____ communications
- Billing policies
- Acknowledgement and signatures
 - Include a form stating that the parents have read and agree to the policies and procedures
 - This should be kept on file

7. Marketing

- What will make your childcare center different from the others?
- Use your _____
- Know your target market and area
- Be creative
- Create a social media presence
- Advertise in _____
- Contact _____
- Print flyers
- Host an open house

8. Hire Staff

- Use the licensing requirements for staff ratios and qualifications
- Verify _____
- Thoroughly check _____
- Conduct background checks
- The quality of your childcare center depends on the quality of the staff
- Hire qualified people and provide _____ to fit your mission and purpose

9. Accept Applications From Families

- To get started, you may want to offer _____ for new families
 - Be _____ in the terms of the introductory offer
 - Ask happy clients to spread the word

Keep up the Good Work

- Once you are open, keep working at it to provide the best care for the children you serve
 - Ongoing training for yourself and the staff
 - Keep current in _____
 - Know your families and understand their _____

The Rewards

Opening and operating a quality childcare center requires a lot of hard work and attention to detail but owning and operating a high-quality childcare center can be very fun and rewarding.

Entrepreneurship: Opening a Childcare Center Notes – Answer Key

What does it take to open a childcare center?

You are interested in starting your own childcare business

You have passion for **the care and education of children**

You have the knowledge and traits to provide high-quality experiences for children

You want to be in control of your own employment

You are ready for **hard work and challenges**

You look forward to the rewards that come with success

Then maybe you are ready to become the owner of a childcare center

Let's look at how to get started

The Steps

1. **Get educated**
2. **Learn about licensing**
3. **Create a business plan that includes financial goals**
4. **Think about a location**
5. **Learn about financing**
6. **Develop policies and procedures**
7. **Market your business**
8. **Hire staff**
9. **Accept applications**

1. Education

- Obtain an early childhood education degree
 - **Gaining knowledge and experience in child development is a starting point**
- Learning about owning and operating a small business
 - **This will increase your chances for success**

2. Learn About Licensing

- What are the licensing requirements for your chosen area? Local, state, federal...
 - **Know what is required**
 - **Follow all guidelines to avoid penalties, fines, or the risk of closure**
 - **Licensing protects the children and childcare professionals**

3. Create Your Business Plan

- A business plan is like a roadmap
- It includes **a mission statement, a marketing plan, organizational plan, staffing, operations, budgets, and more**
- Be thorough and detailed
- Online resources will help you know what to include
- Learn about the costs involved
- Do you have your own money, or will you need financing?
- Are there grants available?

Goals

- What kind of **style** will you use?
 - Some childcare centers offer a formal schedule while others are more relaxed
- **Learning** format
 - Will you provide formal learning opportunities?
 - Child guidance and discipline may be included here

Mission Statement

- A mission statement is a summary of the **goals** and values of the organization
- Example: *It is the mission of A B C Childcare to provide quality childcare in a warm, nurturing, loving, and educational environment*

4. Location

- Understand the needs of the community
 - Where are families coming from and going to?
- Know the local zoning laws and licensing requirements
- Will you **buy** property or **lease**?
- Will you use an **existing building** or **new construction**?

5. Financing

- Consider startup costs as well as ongoing operating costs
 - Some estimates range from \$10,000-\$50,000
 - There are many variables to consider
- Are there financing options available?
- Remember to consider **grants**

6. Policies and Procedures

- Your mission statement and goals will be the basis for your policies and procedures
- **Plan** to avoid having to create policies after problems arise
- A handbook for parents should be printed and distributed

The Parent Handbook

- What to include:
 - **A welcome statement**
 - **Philosophies**
 - **Operating information**
 - **Hours of operation, schedules, calendar**
 - **Enrollment policies**
 - **Drop off and pick up procedures**
- Meal and snack policies
 - What is provided and what is supplied from home
- Sick day procedures
- Rules for special activities
- **Discipline policies**
- Health and safety regulations
- Emergency procedures
- **Parent-staff** communications
- Billing policies
- Acknowledgement and signatures
 - Include a form stating that the parents have read and agree to the policies and procedures
 - This should be kept on file

7. Marketing

- What will make your childcare center different from the others?
- Use your **mission statement**
- Know your target market and area
- Be creative
- Marketing
- Create a social media presence
- Advertise in **local publications**
- Contact **parent groups**
- Print flyers
- Host an open house

8. Hire Staff

- Use the licensing requirements for staff ratios and for the qualifications of staff
- Verify **education**
- Thoroughly check **references**
- Conduct background checks
- The quality of your childcare center depends on the quality of the staff
- Hire qualified people and provide **specific training** to fit your mission and purpose

9. Accept Applications From Families

- To get started, you may want to offer **incentives** for new families
 - Be **clear** in the terms of the introductory offer
 - Ask happy clients to spread the word

Keep up the Good Work

- Once you are open, keep working at it to provide the best care for the children you serve
 - Ongoing training for yourself and the staff
 - Keep current in **trends and practices**
 - Know your families and understand their **needs**

The Rewards

Opening and operating a quality childcare center requires a lot of hard work and attention to detail but owning and operating a high-quality childcare center can be very fun and very rewarding.

Lesson Five – Entrepreneurship: Opening a Childcare Center

REVIEW: Creating Your Childcare Center Plan

35-40 minutes

Purpose:

Participants will use the information from the presentation as well as additional research to practice the kind of planning that might be required of someone who wants to own a childcare center.

Materials:

- Information from *Childcare Center Dream Sheet*
- Information from *Entrepreneurship: Opening a Childcare Center* presentation slides
- *Creating Your Childcare Center Planning Worksheet*
- *Creating Your Childcare Center Planning Worksheet – Answer Key*
- Internet access or printed materials of local costs and financing options for a childcare center

Facilitation Steps:

1. This can be completed by individuals or as partners.
2. Distribute *Creating Your Childcare Center Planning Worksheet* to participants.
3. Allow work time for participants to complete the worksheet.
4. Ask for volunteers or call on participants to share their work.

Name: _____

Class: _____

Creating Your Childcare Center Planning Worksheet

Directions: Use information from the *Childcare Center Dream Sheet*, *Entrepreneurship: Opening a Childcare Center* presentation slides, and internet research for this activity.

Imagine that you want to open a childcare center. Answer the following questions that correspond with the steps for opening a childcare center.

1. Education: Use the internet to search for schools that offer programs that would provide an appropriate education for a professional childcare worker. List the names of 3 schools, the city and state where they are located, and the name of the program.

2. Licensing: Which of the following would have requirements that must be met to legally operate a childcare center:

Federal Government	Yes	No
State Government	Yes	No
Local Government	Yes	No

Why is it necessary to have a license to operate a childcare center?

3. The Business Plan: A mission statement might be included in a business plan for a childcare center. Write a mission statement for your childcare center. Use the name that you chose when you completed the *Childcare Center Dream Sheet*.
4. Location: List 3 things to consider when choosing a location for a childcare center.

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5. Financing: Using the internet, look up the estimated cost range for opening a childcare center. Besides the cost of opening, what are some of the ongoing operational costs for a childcare center? List several.
6. Policies and Procedures: It is recommended that policies and procedures be published and given to parents along with a signed statement from parents saying that they have read and agree to abide by the policies and procedures. Why is this recommended?

Create a policy for each of the following topics that might be included in the parent handbook:

Drop off and pick up procedures

Meal and snack policies

Parent-staff communications

Billing policies

7. Marketing: List 3 ways that you will market your childcare center.
8. Hiring Staff: What qualities or characteristics do you want your staff members to have?

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9. Applicants: How many children will you be able to accommodate in your childcare center? What if you have more than that number apply?
10. What do you think will be the most challenging aspects of owning your own childcare center?
11. What do you think will be the most rewarding aspects of owning your own childcare center?

Creating Your Childcare Center Planning Worksheet – Answer Key

1. Education: Use the internet to search for schools that offer programs that would provide an appropriate education for a professional childcare worker. List the names of 3 schools, the city and state where they are located, and the name of the program.

Student responses will vary

2. Licensing: Which of the following would have requirements that must be met in order to legally operate a childcare center:

Federal Government	Yes	No
State Government	Yes	No
Local Government	Yes	No

Why is it necessary to have a license to operate a childcare center?

Licensure protects the safety of children, and it provides guidelines and protection for staff and owners of the childcare center

3. The Business Plan: A mission statement might be included in a business plan for a childcare center. Write a mission statement for your childcare center. Use the name that you chose when you completed the *Childcare Center Dream Sheet*.

Responses will vary

4. Location: List 3 things to consider when choosing a location for a childcare center.

Responses will vary but should include ideas about safety, space, convenience for families, etc.

5. Financing: Using the internet, look up the estimated cost range for opening a childcare center.

Responses will vary based on location

Besides the cost of opening, what are some of the ongoing operational costs for a childcare center? List several.

Responses will vary but might include rent of space, utilities, supplies, payroll

6. Policies and Procedures: It is recommended that policies and procedures be published and given to parents along with a signed statement from parents saying that they have read and agree to abide by the policies and procedures. Why is this recommended?

To keep families accountable in following the rules and expectations of the childcare center

Create a policy for each of the following topics that might be included in the parent handbook:

Drop off and pick up procedures

All responses will vary

Meal and snack policies

Parent-staff communications

Billing policies

7. Marketing: List 3 ways that you will market your childcare center.

Responses will vary but may include social media, flyers, advertisements, word of mouth...

8. Hiring Staff: What qualities or characteristics do you want your staff members to have?

Responses will vary

9. Applicants: How many children will you be able to accommodate in your childcare center? What if you have more than that number apply?

Responses will vary

10. What do you think will be the most challenging aspects of owning your own childcare center?

Responses will vary

11. What do you think will be the most rewarding aspects of owning your own childcare center?

Responses will vary

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