
The Staff

THE CHILD CARE FACILITY STAFF

Child care facilities can be found everywhere in this country. If you've ever used such facilities, you know firsthand the types of care and instruction available.

The ideal child care facility should have a sufficient number of staff members, all of whom are well trained and knowledgeable (Figure 1). The general atmosphere in the environment should be one of caring. Parents should feel comfortable about leaving children there.

High-quality child care programs don't just happen. They result from careful planning. Only through conscientious selection of qualified staff members, who work together for the good of each child, can such programs exist.

The staff is one of the most important parts of a child care facility. Staff members carry out the philosophy and goals of the program (Figure 2). The director may be the key force, establishing the policies of the program. However, the staff members carry out these policies. They're on the front lines in day-to-day work with children and parents. Staff members can make or break a program, so select your staff with care!



FIGURE 1—Careful selection of competent staff members is needed to develop a high-quality child care facility.

FIGURE 2—Staff cooperation and high morale are necessary for achieving the goals and objectives of any child care program.



Much human energy goes into the operation of a successful child care program, whether the program is small or large. It can be said that child care is a supplementary support system for the family, helping to nurture, care for, and educate the children. Staff should be supportive and responsive to the needs of children and parents.

The director is responsible for hiring the people who are most qualified for the jobs. These people should have the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for their jobs. They should also have positive attitudes and dispositions as well as stamina and enthusiasm. The director should hire staff who will guide young children in their development and provide them with meaningful educational experiences. The director is also responsible for encouraging cooperative efforts among the staff. Finally, the director is responsible for monitoring and evaluating staff performance so that high-quality services will be provided to the children in the facility's care.

Roles and Requirements of Personnel

You've already learned about the two main types of child care: *center-based care* and *family day care*. If you plan to establish a family day care home, your staffing needs will be minimal. In fact, it's likely that you'll be the teacher, director, cook, administrative assistant, and custodian.

However, if you operate a family day care home serving more than six children, you'll probably be required to have an assistant. This is especially true if you serve 12 or more children. It's difficult to care for that many children in a child care setting without some assistance.

Your state regulations will dictate the training required to operate a family day care home. Usually, no special training is required unless you receive federal or state funds. If you do receive such funds, some training hours or in-service training may be required under federal or state funding terms.

In center-based care, state regulations are fairly specific as to the number of teachers needed. Qualifications vary from almost no training at all to a bachelor's degree. You must check the state licensing requirements to determine necessary qualifications. If you plan to participate in a state Quality Rating and Improvement System such as "Keystone Stars" in Pennsylvania or "Bright From the Start" in Georgia you should also make sure that you're familiar with the educational requirements for staff. In most cases, they're aligned with the state licensing requirements

Depending upon size, child care centers will need the following staff members:

- A director
- Teachers
- Teacher assistants/aides
- Administrative assistant-bookkeeper
- Others (including a cook, a custodian, health personnel, and professional consultants)

How do you choose staff members to work in a child care facility? Staff members should be caring and nurturing. They should understand and enjoy working with children. A staff member should be patient and have a good self-image and a sense of humor. These essential characteristics apply to all staff members, including the custodian. In addition, it's important to choose teaching staff who share your philosophy and are well trained.

Since the director is responsible for many staffing needs, this study unit will assume that you're the director as well as the owner/operator of a child care facility. As the director, you must analyze the many jobs required to perform the services you hope to give. As you'll learn later, *job analyses* help you

to define the *job descriptions* of your employees. Job descriptions list all daily and occasional tasks required of each employee. Job descriptions also help you to monitor and evaluate employee performance.

Responsibilities of Personnel

Following is a general description of the responsibilities of each staff member of a child care facility. This description is meant to provide an overall idea of these responsibilities. Your own job descriptions should be more detailed.

Director

The director of a child care program must have had training or course work in child development, child care, and early childhood education. Experience as a teacher or as a family day care provider is also important and may be required. In addition, administration or management know-how is a must, because a child care center is a business.

The director's responsibilities are varied (Figure 3). The director's responsibilities include the hiring, supervision, and evaluation

of staff members. The director must also provide in-service training and enforce policies for personnel and the program.

The responsibility of the director extends beyond staff and personnel. The director must also supervise the maintenance of the equipment, the grounds, and the facility structure. He or she must verify that the facility complies with licensing requirements and regulations.

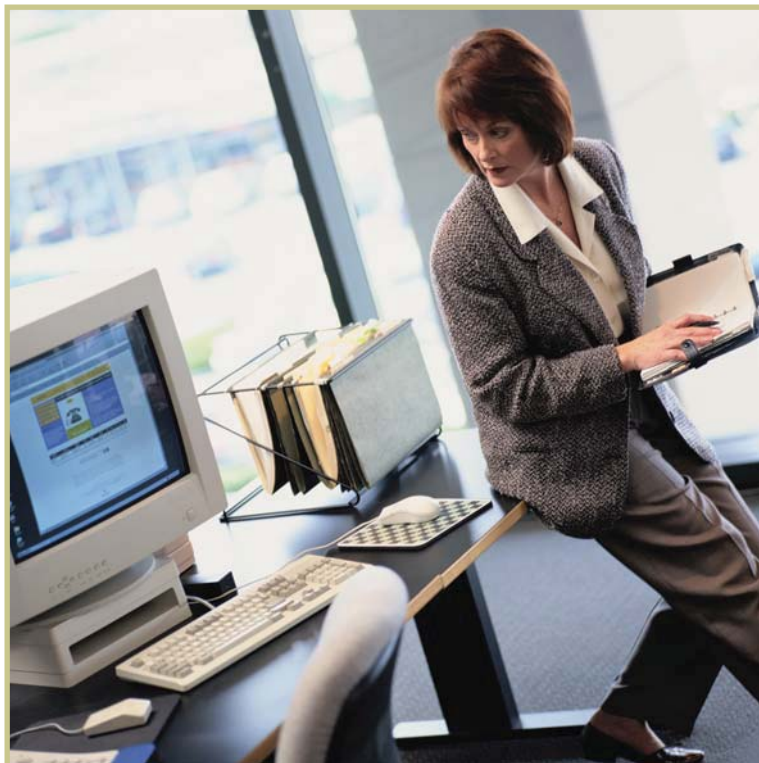


FIGURE 3—The director performs a variety of duties related to the goals and objectives of the program.

The director is also responsible for the financial aspects of the facility (Figure 4). These include budgets, record keeping, correspondence, purchases, and inventory.

The director also has a responsibility to the children and their parents. He or she must provide a safe, healthy environment that fulfills the goals and objectives of the program. The director must also develop an appropriate curriculum and evaluate each child's progress (Figure 5). In addition, the director should encourage participation and involvement of parents and community. The director must provide as many resources as possible to enhance the growth and development of the children in the center's care.

Teacher

The teacher plans the curriculum and implements daily activities designed to meet the goals, objectives, and philosophy of the center. He or she must establish a creative learning environment that will help children grow physically, socially, emotionally, and intellectually. Teachers should continually



FIGURE 4—The director is in charge of all financial aspects of the program.



FIGURE 5—Planning the curriculum is only one of the duties of the caregiver.

be upgrading their skills and keeping abreast of current events in the field through trainings, seminars, and memberships in professional organizations.

The teacher also instructs, maintains records, and evaluates the children's progress.

Through parent conferences and interaction, the teacher can help parents understand the growth and development of their children. The teacher must cooperate with all staff members, assistants, volunteers, and parents.

Teacher's Assistant/Aide

The teacher's assistant/aide helps the teacher provide appropriate activities for each child. He or she assists in the supervision of the children and with the upkeep of the classroom. The teacher's assistant/aide also prepares some of the materials to be used by the children.

Like the teacher, the teacher's assistant/aide must continue to upgrade his or her knowledge and skills. He or she should attend staff meetings and in-service training sessions. The teacher's assistant/aide must also cooperate with the other members of the staff.

Cook

The cook prepares healthy and nutritious meals, shops for food supplies, and coordinates menus. The planning and preparation of food are only part of the cook's job. The cook must also maintain a clean and orderly kitchen. The cook's cooperation and input are very important to the operation of the center.

Custodian/Maintenance Personnel

The responsibility of the custodian and maintenance personnel is to maintain a clean and safe environment, both inside and outside the facility. The maintenance personnel must also repair equipment and the facility as necessary.

Administrative Assistant

The administrative assistant performs most of the typing, filing, and bookkeeping required for the center. He or she also sometimes functions as a receptionist. Therefore, the administrative assistant should be efficient and pleasant (Figure 6).



FIGURE 6—An administrative assistant should be knowledgeable, efficient, pleasant, and be able to interact well with people.

Educational Requirements

As previously stated, educational requirements for staff members may vary. However, staff members should generally have the appropriate qualifications, which are listed on the next page.

Director

The director should possess a bachelor's degree in child development or early childhood education. He or she should also have at least four years of teaching experience.

Teacher

A teacher should possess a bachelor's or associate's degree in child development or early childhood education. Teaching experience is also desirable.

Teacher's Assistant/Aide

A teacher's assistant/aide should possess a high school diploma or the equivalent. In addition, he or she should have completed some college courses in child development or early-childhood education, or possess National CDA Certification. Experience with children is also helpful.

Administrative Assistant

An administrative assistant should have completed courses in accounting, bookkeeping, and the use of office equipment. In addition, he or she should have a general knowledge of office procedures, be able to work with a computer, and know how to greet people. The administrative assistant is often the first person to talk to prospective clients; thus, it's important that he or she makes a positive impression.

Cook

A cook should possess a high school diploma or the equivalent. He or she should also have some experience in food preparation aside from household cooking. Knowledge of nutrition and menu planning is essential.

Custodian

A custodian should possess a high school diploma or the equivalent, and should have experience in institutional custodial work.

Job Analysis

To help you analyze jobs and their requirements, we've included the following typical format for a job analysis. This is a model civil service format for obtaining job analysis data, using a step-by-step method to gather information. Use this form when you analyze each job planned for your center.

Identifying Information

Identifying information includes the title of the job and the date that the analysis was written.

Brief Summary of Job

A brief summary of a job includes primary duties of the job.

Job Tasks

A list of job tasks would answer questions like, What does the employee do? How does he or she do it? Why? What output is produced? What tools, procedures, or aids are involved? How much time is required for each task to be performed? How often does the worker perform the task in a day, a week, a month, or a year?

Skills, Knowledge, and Abilities Required

What's required for the performance of each task in terms of the following?

Knowledge Required

- What subject areas are included in the task?
- What facts or principles must the employee understand in these subject areas?
- Describe the level, degree, and depth of knowledge required in these subject areas.

Skills Required

- What activities must the employee perform with ease and precision?
- What manual skills are required for the operation of machines, vehicles, equipment, or tools?

Abilities Required

- What's the nature and level of language ability, written or oral, required of the employee on the job? Are complex oral or written ideas involved in the performance of the task—or simple instructional materials?

- What mathematical ability must the employee have? Will he or she use simple arithmetic or complex algebra?
- What reasoning or problem-solving abilities must the employee have?
- What instructions must the employee follow? Are they simple, complex, or abstract?
- What interpersonal, supervisory, or managerial abilities are required?
- What physical abilities, such as strength or coordination, must the employee have?

Physical Activities

Describe the frequency and degree to which the employee must perform strenuous activities, such as pulling, pushing, throwing, carrying, kneeling, sitting, running, crawling, reaching, or climbing.

Environmental Conditions

Describe the frequency and degree to which the employee will be required to work under conditions such as these: cramped quarters, moving objects, vibration, inadequate ventilation, or exposure to infection.

Typical Work Incidents

Will the employee

- Participate in situations involving the interpretation of feelings, ideas, or facts in terms of personal viewpoint?
- Influence people in their opinions, attitudes, or judgments about ideas or things?
- Work with people beyond giving and receiving instructions?
- Perform repetitive work?
- Perform under stress when confronted with emergency, critical, unusual, or dangerous situations?

- Perform in situations in which work speed and sustained attention are make-and-break aspects of the job?
- Perform a variety of duties, often changing from one task to another without loss of efficiency or composure?
- Work under hazardous conditions that may result in violence, loss of limbs, burns, bruises, cuts, impairment of senses, collapse, fractures, electric shock, or threat of infection?

Work Interest Areas

Identify, from the list below, the preferences for work activities:

- Dealing with things and objects
- Concerning the communication of data
- Involving business contact with people
- Involving work of a scientific and technical nature
- Involving work of a routine, concrete, organized nature
- Involving work of an abstract, creative nature
- Involving work for the presumed good of people
- Relating to process, machine, and technique
- Resulting in prestige or the esteem of others
- Resulting in tangible, productive satisfaction



Self-Check 1

Throughout *The Staff*, you'll be asked to pause and check your understanding of what you have just read by completing a "Self-Check" exercise. Answering these questions will help you review what you've studied so far. Please complete *Self-Check 1* now.

1. The key force in establishing program policies for child care is the
 - a. teacher.
 - b. assistant teacher.
 - c. director.
 - d. administrative assistant.
2. The two main types of child care are _____ and _____.
3. The philosophy of a child care program is carried out by the _____.
4. As a caregiver, you'll serve as part of a supplementary support system for the _____.
5. List four of the seven given characteristics of qualified child care staff members.

6. Operators of family day care homes usually need _____ special training.
 - a. extensive
 - b. some
 - c. little
 - d. no
7. The director of a child care facility should have experience in
 - a. advertising.
 - b. production.
 - c. management.
 - d. computer programming.
8. The _____ is responsible for the financial aspects of the day care center.
 - a. administrative assistant
 - b. director
 - c. teacher
 - d. teacher's assistant/aide

(Continued)



Self-Check 1

Questions 9–14: Match each duty on the left to the correct staff member on the right.

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| _____ 9. Hires, supervises, and evaluates staff | a. Cook |
| _____ 10. Plans the curriculum and instruction | b. Director |
| _____ 11. Prepares meals and coordinates menus | c. Teacher |
| _____ 12. Helps supervise activities and prepares materials to be used by the children | d. Administrative Assistant |
| _____ 13. Maintains environment inside/outside facility | e. Teacher's assistant/aide |
| _____ 14. Performs typing and bookkeeping | f. Custodian |

Check your answers with those on page 35.
