



# Communicating With Your Child Care Provider

Close, trusting relationships with your child's care providers will help you feel more relaxed and assured while you're on the job.

If you've recently hired an in-home provider, arrange for the person to spend time with you and your child before you return to work. Take some time to get to know each other and discuss how you'll keep in touch during the day. Many parents pick a time when they call from work to check in with the caregiver or to receive a call from their child.

If your children attend a day care center, find out if the staff has special routines or schedules for checking in with parents. While it's important to respect the routines of your day care center, never enroll your child in a day care center where you're not welcome to drop in unannounced.

Many professional caregivers look forward to a brief chat when a parent drops off or picks up their

child. This is a good time to explain that your child had a difficult time sleeping the night before or to learn what kind of day your child had. If one parent is responsible for dropping off and picking up the child, the other parent should occasionally do so in order to get to know the caregiver. During these talks, avoid making negative statements about your child in front of him or her.

Day care staff members have many obligations. If you repeatedly stay for extended periods of time when you pick up or drop off your child, you may be preventing the caregiver from watching the other children. Instead, for longer discussions, arrange in advance for a time when you can talk away from your child and be uninterrupted by distractions. Set up a meeting with the day care teacher or suggest having dinner out with the caregiver. This will allow you to discuss issues, such as behavior problems, or to resolve conflicts as they arise.

