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DELAWARE COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
Child Care Information Services (CCIS)
20 SOUTH 69TH STREET
UPPER DARBY, PENNSYLVANIA 19082
1-800-831-3117
Fax: 610-713-2189

October 17, 2006

TO: IRRC

RE: Regulation #14-506 (#2539)

This letter is in support of passage of the child care facility regulations in Chapters 3270, 3280, 3290, and 3300. These facility regulations provide standards for all facilities to safeguard the health and safety of the children in care. Children and their families have the right to expect minimum health and safety standards which protect all children and the adults who care for them in these facilities. Such policy issues as the supervision of the children, the release of children to adults other than the parent, and emergency plans are incorporated into the regulations. Health issues such as SIDS prevention and playground safety are addressed also.

Child care providers have operated under regulations originally published in 1992. These updated regulations reflect not only the clarifications that have been made to the 1992 regulations, but upgrades based on research which impact issues such as vehicle safety, childhood immunizations and children with special needs.

The new semi-annual progress checklist for all infants, toddlers, and preschoolers is a tremendous enhancement. This opportunity to review a child's progress with his/her family is an excellent opportunity to bring together parents and caretakers to participate in the child's educational process. This is great parent education also. Elementary school teachers often complain that parents do not participate in the child's education. Child care practitioners have a special role with parents and the time to help parents understand the importance of their involvement in the child's education from the earliest experience. Child care practitioners spend extensive quality time with these children, see them as individuals and in how they function in a group, and are uniquely qualified to help the children and their families deal with typical issues of child-raising. However, when children seem unable to meet developmental milestones within the norms, these bi-annual progress reports can be a valuable tool for parents to use to document needs for their children. Parents often need encouragement to become involved in their children's education. The benefit to the child is immeasurable. This opportunity creates a winning situation for the child, the parent, and the child care practitioner. The goal is to identify the needs, develop a needs-based plan, and involve all the principals in the process to help the child with the special needs move toward the ultimate goal of inclusion.

As a former child care facility administrator, it was my experience that good practitioners want to know the baseline regulations. Most practitioners pride themselves on exceeding those minimum standards. Our children deserve the best we can give them. These regulations do not regulate education issues. This is the province of the child care facility. These regulations do incorporate current practice and research to set standards that are fair for all providers. The importance of a safe, healthy, quality early care environment cannot be overestimated.

Please accept this as my letter of support for passage of these regulations.

Sincerely,

Ellen Brenner

Ellen Brenner
Administrator, Child Care Information Services of Delaware County

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