

Great Plains Child Care Resource & Referral Center



Second Quarter 2021

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REMINDER: OKDHS has covered copayments for families who receive child care subsidies starting in April 2020 and will continue doing so through the end of the year. Any copayments collected during this time must be returned to the families.

You see their smiles, you wipe their tears.
You are the one that's always near.
You hold their hands, you see them grow.
They learn so much from you, you know.
You keep them safe while they explore.
You are the one that they adore.
You know they need the time to play.
You keep them busy every day.
So here is a great big "Thanks" to you.
For all the AMAZING things you do!



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Cache Office Hours
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www.gpcrr.org

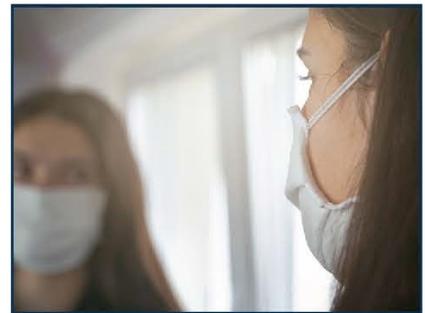




Helping Children Understand Emotions When Wearing Masks

Young children look for emotional cues from caregivers to help interpret the environment and rely on their caregiver’s facial expressions, tone of voice, and body posture to identify and understand emotions. Here are tips and ideas for helping children identify emotions when your face, your most expressive feature, is covered by a mask. Use these strategies to let children know that behind the mask, a kind and warm expression is still there!

1. Practice emotional expressions with a mask on in front of a mirror. Pay attention to facial cues that can be seen, body movements, and hand gestures.
2. Incorporate ASL when teaching emotions (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=91foGHKuWLO>).
3. Direct children to look at your eyebrows, eyes, body movements, and gestures when talking about emotions. For example, “Look, I am happy. You can’t see my mouth smile, but my cheeks lift up, my eyes crinkle, and my shoulders and arms look like this.”
4. Increase the use of gestures throughout the day and when talking about emotions (e.g., shoulders shrugged for sad, arms out to indicate a happy mood).
5. Talk about your feelings as much as possible (e.g., “I am feeling happy that it is almost time to go outside and play.”; “I am feeling sad that it is raining right now.”; “I am feeling excited that we have a new toy in centers today.”).
6. If using an emotion check-in, encourage all adults in the classroom to participate and check-in when the children do (https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/FeelingFaces_chart_template.pdf).
7. When talking about emotions, hold up the corresponding emotion card or visual near your face. Consider wearing a lanyard with a visual of an emotion expressions (e.g., tired, happy, excited, sad, angry, mad, nervous).
8. Be sure to face children and remain nearby when talking to them while wearing a mask. Wearing a mask muffles the speaker’s speech, which can make it more difficult to understand what is said.
9. Provide an activity for children to practice wearing a mask and making different faces while looking in a mirror or at each other. Point out how their face looks (e.g., eyes, eyebrows).
10. Allow children to use masks during play with stuffed animals to help familiarize them with seeing masks in their environment.



If your child care program was selected to participate in a statewide telephone survey to determine market rates, it is not necessary to mail and/or email the survey back to DHS.

You will be contacted by phone beginning October 12th 2020. The calls will continue for approximately 3 to 4 weeks.

The call will take about 5 minutes and all information is confidential.

Please complete the questionnaire received in the mail in preparation for the phone survey.

Thank you for your time in participating in the market rate survey

Pyramid Model State Leadership Team

Progress on the Pyramid Model continues with monthly **Pyramid Model State Leadership Team** (PMSLT) meetings and guidance from the **Pyramid Model Consortium**.

Excitingly, PMSLT has set a target date of November for Pyramid Model implementation in child care settings. Additionally, each workgroup (Communication, Implementation, Professional Development, and Data and Evaluation) will continue to work on their area of expertise with a website, social media and database to look forward to.

The Pyramid Model promotes the skills necessary for young children to understand and manage their emotions. In addition, it addresses disparities in discipline practices; promotes family engagement; and fosters inclusion of children with, and at risk for, developmental delays and disabilities.

To find out more about the Pyramid Model State Leadership Team, contact **Carlye McQuiston**, program director. Or to learn more about the Pyramid Model,

<https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/>

Keys to Rebuilding Enrollment Post COVID-19

by Julie Wassom

John F. Kennedy described the Chinese symbol for crisis as having two brush strokes: one for danger and the other for opportunity. Even though current times are uncertain and even scary for your ECE business, they are ripe with opportunity for ways to build and execute an effective enrollment recovery plan.

Taking essential actions within your control now can help you regain enrollment on the time-to-profit runway you have planned, and to rebuild for business sustainability.

Refocus your Business Model to be More Customer-centric

Though the core business of early care and education will remain the same,



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there will undoubtedly be changes in how families use and choose your services.

Business experts indicate that this recovery will not be V-shaped. Employer models will change, the way parents work will be different, and the economy could struggle for some time. Rules around reopening will change center policies and procedures. That means your customer families will likely require more flexibility, heightened communication, and absolute clarity in the value-exchange they get for the tuition they spend on child care.

Your current families have now become prospects for re-enrollment. You cannot assume they will just come back once you re-open. New prospects will be even more concerned about cleanliness and safety protocols. To fill your centers faster and generate the revenue you need, you must think in terms of the prospect's perspective in every part of your recovery plan rollout.

Prepare Now to Rebuild Enrollment Rapidly

Reach out to existing families. Call a specific number of them daily to find

out how they are doing and to learn more about what their needs will be as they emerge from this quarantine. When do they expect to return to the center? Will the days and times they need child care change? What would they like to know about your new cleanliness protocols? Would they like you to continue to provide take-home learning activities? Consider scheduling a private Zoom call with those who are really hesitant and need more face-to-face reassurance. Use the information you gather to guide your ongoing communication, re-enrollment incentives, and the changes you will make as you re-open.

Communicate through multiple venues, beginning now. The more you can do to be a helpful resource, the better your chances of retaining families. Provide resources your parents need most right now, such as "porch pick-up" bags of learning activities or links for snack ideas, family workouts, virtual children's museum tours, or parenting advice from experts. Keep your social media active and monitored for topics of greatest interest on which you could provide further information in mailings, through your social media and website, and in virtual gatherings that help your parents retain a sense of

community and camaraderie with your program.

Define and market your benefits, not just features. Parents will return or enroll where they feel they get the top value exchange. This means you absolutely must know what I call your “basic competitive advantages,” and how to speak and write them as benefit statements. Start by taking a careful look at what makes you unique and of greatest value to your families. Then, look at the websites of your nearest competitors. Incorporate your unique benefits into your marketing messages. A good visual way to do this is to create “Documentation of Differences” via flyers, posters, and posts. An example might be a large poster of your new health and safety measures. Put these up in the center, add them to your parent packets, and post them on your website and social media.

Update your website. Now is the time to be truly objective and assure your site has the elements needed to be a strong connection for existing families and to generate the highest number of qualified new prospect inquiries. Review your analytics, especially for pages most visited and where visitors take action. Make sure your site has a “Schedule a Visit” button on every page, linked to a complete lead form that drops into a calendar or your CRM. Update the site with multiple recent reviews, new videos, a robust staff recruiting section, a resource library, and a current, comprehensive parent portal.

Sharpen enrollment conversion skills. Every prospect counts as you rebuild, so everyone responsible for converting inquiries into tours and registrations must be proficient in conversion skills, including follow-up. How can you provide that training now, when centers are closed? Use a virtual training program that is easy-access,

user-friendly, and gives your center managers the tools they need to maximize conversions.

Create re-enrollment incentives. Work with your teams now to develop and promote incentives for re-enrollment. For example, could you schedule staggered tuition savings into the first three months after you re-open, offer a “Welcome Back Gift,” thank health care professionals and essential workers with no tuition increase until 2021, or increase sibling discounts for any family who returns within 30 days of re-opening? Many schools will offer re-enrollment incentives, so make sure yours are unique and meaningful to your families.

Implement enrollment growth incentive programs for managers. Develop programs now to launch once you open. Make them results-driven, time-sensitive, and achievable, with rewards meaningful to directors, staff and other managers. An example might be a contest with a team goal of the return of a specific number of existing families within the first three months after you re-open.

Treat re-opening almost like a new school launch. Perhaps you host a “Bring-a-Friend Grand Re-opening” event and waive the registration fee for new families who attend, or host a Zoom gathering with teachers and families the week prior to re-opening to reconnect, build anticipation and answer questions.

Enlist parent, staff, and community partners to help rebuild enrollment. Making partner programs an essential element of your enrollment recovery plan is smart marketing. As states begin to allow businesses to reopen, and you launch your enrollment recovery plan, building strong referral partners is something within your control.

- **Parent Referral Program.** If you do not already have a parent referral program, now is the time to develop and widely promote one. If you have an existing program, consider bumping up the reward for any new family referred who enrolls within the first three months after you are fully open.
- **Staff Referral Program.** Staff who refer either parents for enrollment or other qualified teacher candidates can be a valuable inquiry-generating resource for your center. Clear guidelines and meaningful referral rewards will be an incentive to staff who love your school and want more children and colleagues to experience it.
- **Parent Ambassador Programs.** Partnering with enthusiastic parents to be ambassadors for your center is a cost-free way to help you convert inquiries and retain enrollment.
- **Community Marketing Partners.** Who are the influencers right in your center’s geographical draw radius with whom a partnership with your center could yield mutual benefits? Now is a perfect time to reach out to them, as many are also kick-starting their own businesses in the wake of the shutdown. Ask these community partners to make an in-kind donation to include in the “Welcome Back” gift you are creating for your families or invite them to exhibit at your grand re-opening event.

As you emerge from this unprecedented pandemic, much is still uncertain. However, taking these actions now is within your control and certain to help you reach your enrollment goals faster.



Child Care Subsidy contract renewal 2020 is here!

Contracts are automatically renewed this year and your verification is online.

Dear Child Care Provider:

It's time for Child Care Subsidy contract renewal 2020. This renewal will be effective October 1, 2020, and will expire September 30, 2021. You can access your account in **Section P** of the online Provider Handbook at <https://childcarehandbook.oucpm.org/> to get a copy of your renewal letter. Be sure to save and/or print your copy. You will not receive a copy in the mail.

— Child Care Subsidy
OKDHS Adult and Family Services
ChildCareContracts@okdhs.org

Certificate of Achievement and Stipend Program changes. Please read the following information carefully:

1. Training hours will remain at 30 hours (rather than 40 hours) indefinitely.
2. You can now receive two (2) stipends in a one-year period (not calendar year).
3. Participants no longer need to have their director complete the employment verification form.
4. In lieu of the employment verification form, participants must send a copy of a current pay-stub.
5. There is no longer a child care subsidy requirement to participate in the program.
6. Participants will print their own Certificates of Achievement. You will receive an email when your certificate is awarded. The email will inform you of the area of concentration that was awarded and give you instructions on how to print the certificate.

Should you have any questions, please contact CECPD.

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!!

We are giving away prizes, posting new trainings, and updating information on our Facebook page.

Please like us by following the link: www.facebook.com/gpcrr and click on the LIKE button.

We are excited to utilize this form of social media to keep you informed with the most up-to-date information and to stay in contact.

Toll-Free Child Care Referral Line!

1-800-438-0008

If you are a provider and have received phone calls from families searching for child care but have no openings, please share this number.

The referral line representative can help families narrow their search to other possible providers. If you are a community contact and hear of any friends or co-workers needing child care, please refer them to this number. It is free, completely confidential, and a wonderful service for both providers and families.

Important Dates

October 31st– Halloween
November 1st– All Saint's Day
November 1st– Daylight Savings
November 11th– Veteran's Day
November 26th– Thanksgiving Day

November 27th– President's Day
December 1st– Rosa Parks Day
December 11th– First day of Hanukkah
December 18th– Last day of Chanukah
December 25– Christmas Day

OK Shared Services

Here you will find forms,
handbooks, policies, savings and more.
With just a few clicks you can save time, reduce costs and
improve quality.



Join now for **FREE**

<https://www.oksharingservices.org/default.aspx>

Free Technical Assistance

**Did you know we offer one-on-one
Technical Assistance in your Family Child Care Home or Center
Classroom?**

Topics include, but are not limited to:

- * Room Arrangement
- * Stars Applications
- * Behavior and Guidance
- * Creating Policies/Handbooks
- * Communication with Families
- * Customer Service
- * Marketing Your Child Care Business
 - * Story Time Strategies
 - * Transition Ideas
- * Color Photos of your Interest Centers for Labeling
 - * Equipment Inventory
 - * Die Cut Services
- * Eco Friendly Environment Assessment
 - * Guidance on NAFCC Accreditation
 - * & Much More!

**We also offer consultations over the phone and email.
We are here to help!**

Training Calendar

(Many trainings are being cancelled and some rescheduled, some not. It's changing daily.)

Date	Cost	Training or Conference	Location	Contact
10/27	\$10	Making Math Meaningful Event: 264209	online	For more information go to www.okregistry.org
11/2-11/4	\$20	Quest for Quality: ELG 3-5 Event: 264938	Norman	For more information go to www.okregistry.org
11/3-11/4	\$15	Safe Kid/DHS Child Passenger Safety Event: 265218	online	For more information go to www.okregistry.org
11/3	Free	Train the Trainer: Safe Sleep	online	For more information go to www.okregistry.org
11/10	\$10	Designing a Learning Environment Event: 264216	Online	For more information go to www.okregistry.org
11/10	\$20	How to Create a Safe Sleep Environment for Infants	Online	For more information go to www.okregistry.org
11/14	\$55	Pediatric CPR/First Aid 2- year Certification Event: 260816	Cache, OK	For more information contact Amber Cuyler at 580-695-6999 or www.okregistry.org
12/12	\$55	Pediatric CPR/First Aid 2- year Certification Event: 260817	Cache, OK	For more information contact Amber Cuyler at 580-695-6999 or www.okregistry.org
ongoing	\$37.50	Director Responsibilities, Skills, Responsibilities Event: 223803	Online	For more information go to www.okregistry.org

For a complete training calendar of classes/events
across the state go to www.okregistry.org

Helpful Numbers



Great Plains Child Care Resource & Referral: 1-888-878-4417

Provides parent referrals, provider training, technical assistance, library and more.

Reaching for the Stars: 1-800-522-2564

A child care rating system based on quality and education

Scholars for Excellence: 1-866-343-3881

Provides early childhood educational opportunities through scholarships for child care professionals .

Warmline: 1-888-574-5437

Offers free telephone consultation to child care providers on behavioral, health & safety, and care topics. Consultants can offer ideas and solutions and refer providers to appropriate services and resources with in their communities.

Center for Early Childhood Professional Development: 1-888-446-7608

Provides training and resources for individuals who work in licensed child care in Oklahoma .

OKDHS Child Care Services County Offices:

Beckham 1-800-225-0098, Caddo (405) 247-4000, Custer (580)-331-1900,

Comanche (580) 250-3600, Cotton & Stephens (580) 251-8300,

Grady 1-800-433-7073, Jackson, Kiowa, Greer, Harmon & Tillman 1-800-493-7974,

Jefferson 1-800-493-7981, Roger Mills (580) 885-7546 & Washita (580) 832-3391

We are PROUD of you!!

Congratulations on increasing you star level.

Hazel Cox– 1+ star

Sherry Gregory– 2 star

I Heart Kids Learning Center– 2 star

Joey Stevens– 2 star

If you are interested in increasing your stars and need assistance we are here to help. Call us at 1-888-878-4417

