

TIP SHEET

Creating A Home/Child Care Communication Book



Maintaining open communication with a child's family is very important but sometimes difficult to do. A communication book allows child care staff and parents to exchange a few written words about the child's day or night, share information about appointments or special events, and it can also be used as a record-keeping tool.

Starting a communication book between home and daycare can be as simple as using a notebook (purchased at the dollar store). The child can carry the book back and forth from home to daycare in her backpack. Here are some tips to help you get started:

- Before using a home/child care communication book it is a good idea to discuss it with other members of your teaching team and the family. In order for it to be a successful tool, both you

and the child's parent(s) should agree on the purpose of the book as well as the amount of detail and frequency of communication. A few lines can be written by both the teacher and parent either on a daily basis or a few times a week.

- If possible, the child can be an active participant in using the communication book. You can show him the book and explain how it will be used. Adding pictures or drawings can add detail to what is being written. Encourage the child to add his input if he can print.
- Photocopied checklists can also be used in the communication book. They are completed by the parent, the teacher, and sometimes, the child. If the child is completing the checklist, she may circle the words or pictures or use a bingo dabbler.

As mentioned above, the home/child care communication book can serve many different purposes. Here are a few suggestions for both parents and child care teachers to consider:

- Ask parents to write about their child's weekend, evening, or morning in the communication book. Encourage parents to include information on their child's mood, how well (or little) she slept, what she ate, what she did, visitors to the home, or something special she experienced. As a child care teacher you can use this important information to understand a child's mood or actions better.
- In return, you can write about the child's day at daycare and describe the child's mood, what she learned, special accomplishments, or what she needs for the next day.
- Parents can also use the communication book to inform the child care staff of upcoming doctor's appointments or assessments. Similarly, you can let families know about field trips, specialized consultants coming into the classroom, or special events happening at daycare (e.g., bake sale).
- The communication book can also be used as a record-keeping tool. This can be a great way to keep parents informed about any difficulties their child may be having (e.g., like wetting her pants, temper tantrums). The book may help to track the concerns and initiate ideas to solve the problem.
- A communication book can promote consistency between home and child care (e.g., behaviour management strategies or learning goals). It is a wonderful way to reinforce a child's positive behaviour or development.

Remember – If there are serious concerns regarding a child's care, and emotional or physical well being, they should be discussed directly either in person or during a phone call. Concerns that you would not discuss in front of a child do not belong in the home/child care communication book.

For more information:

- Take a look at some of the other resources in the Parent Pages section like the workshop on [Informed Consent](#) and the Tip Sheet on [Talking to the Family about Your Concerns](#).