

# KIDBIZ Resources

## Making A Difference In The Life Of A Child

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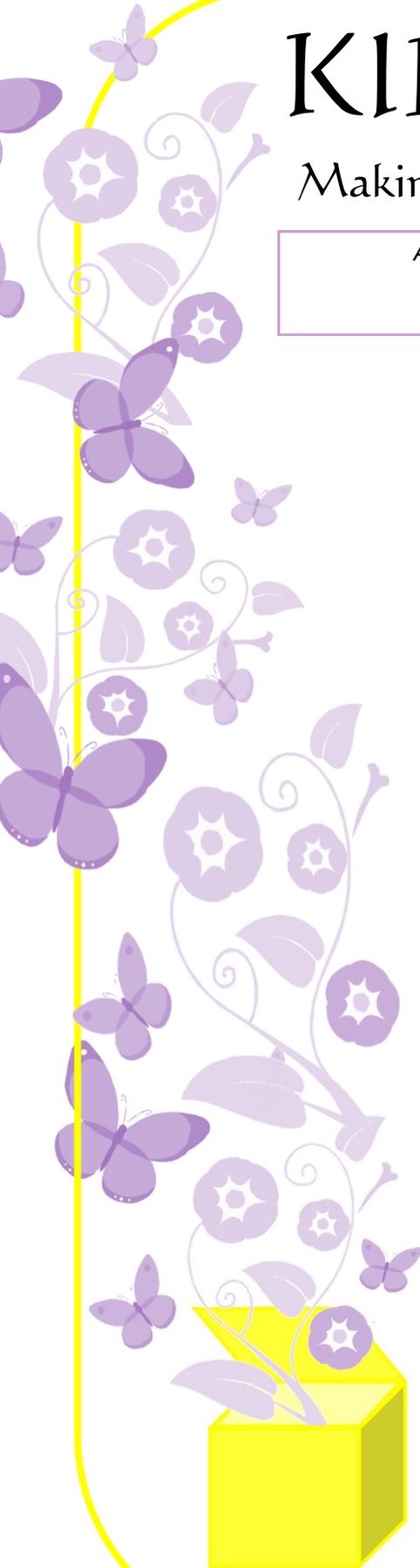
### Ensuring the Safety of Your Child's Daycare

By Patricia Dischler

As parents, reading stories of daycare centers that have lost children, tied the legs of babies or given the wrong formula to an infant with severe allergies, sends shivers up our spine. We become frightened for our own children's safety and begin wonder if there is anything we can do to protect them. The good news is that there is something we can do! The following five tips will help you to get a better idea of the safety at your child's program and help you to be more aware of their practices.

#### 5 TIPS TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF YOUR CHILD'S DAYCARE

- 1. Make unannounced visits.** This is the best way to get an idea of what types of practices your daycare uses throughout the day. Before enrolling, and after enrolling, make several unannounced visits at varying times throughout the day. See how they handle meals, nap time and free play first hand. Daycares are required to have an "open door" policy, which means you should be able to enter at anytime. If yours does not allow this it should raise concern.
- 2. Call State Licensing Agent and request a list of all prior licensing violations.** This information is available to the public. Look over the list and see if there is a pattern: understaffed, children lost, diaper changing procedures not followed, etc. Violations for paperwork, such as not having a child's physical, are not as serious and may be due to a parent not providing the information. But violations that directly affect the safety of the children are to be questioned.
- 3. Request the resume of your child's teacher.** Whether your child is in a center or in home child care, ask to see the resume of the person that is working directly with your child. You need to know if this teacher has experience, training or if they are just starting out. Many states allow teachers to work in child care with the "intent" of obtaining training, rather than getting it first. Find out if they are CPR and First Aid certified, and if not, if there is another person at the center who is. When enrolling, interview this teacher to get a feel for their philosophies and goals with the children. How dedicated are they? Or this a part time job to hold until they get their accounting degree?



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**4. Question EVERYTHING!** Don't ever be afraid to ask a question – it is your right. A quality child care professional will welcome a parent who shows their concern for their child. They should be able to provide you with viable answers, and if not, it should raise a red flag.

**5. Follow your gut.** You know your child better than anyone. If your child is showing any signs of stress when you drop them off or pick them up – find out why. If there is anything you see or hear while in the daycare that just doesn't feel right – question it immediately. You should have a complete sense of security when leaving your child with another person, if you don't, then don't leave them.

Often parents trust in the fact that there is a licensing body for child care to check up on the practices and ensure safety. Unfortunately, the reality is that due to budget cuts most licensors only visit a particular daycare once a year. You, the parent, are there everyday. You have the opportunities and the ability to ensure your child is safe.

*Patricia Dischler is an author, professional speaker and consultant. She has worked in the field of early childhood for over 25 years serving children and families and now provides trainings to others who care for and about children. Learn more at [www.patriciadischler.com](http://www.patriciadischler.com).*

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