

KIDBIZ NEWSLETTER
FEBRUARY 2009

A Newsletter For Early Childhood & Child Care Professionals

Brought to you by:
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It's been a busy month for me, between the new stimulus package and Governor Doyle's new budget all coming out this week, I've got a lot to do on the Wisconsin Early Learning Coalition – but I'm excited about the possibilities for the field of child care! Remember to do your part in your own state – contact your state legislators to let them know what should be done, and to thank them when the right things are done! The more we raise our voices, the clearer we will be heard – don't our children deserve to be heard? Be their voice.

*Hug a kid for me!
Patricia*

HAVE YOU HAD YOUR HAIR DONE LATELY?

Has your child care business been experiencing a slump in enrollment? Would you like to hear your phone ring more often, or start a waiting list? Successful marketing of your business can lead to all of this and more, and it starts as easily as getting your hair done!

In child care, word-of-mouth is our golden ticket. When everyone knows who you are, how great you are, and tells everyone they meet about you – your business flourishes. Without it, the hundreds of dollars you just spent on a spiffy new sign to hang on the building announcing “Now Enrolling!” does little more than elicit a few “So-that’s-a-daycare?” comments. Get everyone in your community to know

just what type of business you run, and how special it would be for them to become a part of it, all through word of mouth.

Unlike advertising, marketing is about building your reputation. It happens over time, and it happens ALL the time, regardless of your openings. When it is successful, those enrollment signs are far gone memory, because your phone will be ringing everyday, and your waiting list will grow.

Marketing means one simple thing – get people to talk about you and make sure it's all good! There are many ways to get the word out, and my favorite is: go get your hair done! Hairdressers need good info about local businesses to pass on in idle conversations with clients all day long, so go get your hair done, or a manicure, or pedicure, and talk, talk, talk, about your great business.

Talk about your terrific curriculum and some of the new things you're doing, talk about the great fieldtrips you took with the kids recently, talk about earning a national accreditation, talk about a wonderful training you attended and how you can't wait to implement what you learned, talk about how much you love your job, and talk about how special it is to touch the life of a child. Make sure that by the time you're done, there is no doubt in that hairdressers mind that your place is the best in town.

In addition to your hairdresser, talk to other people around town: the grocer, the banker, the checker at each store, the mail carrier, the librarian, your doctor and nurses, your dentist, the local florist, baker, and pharmacist. Tell your waitress each time you dine out how much you love what you do. There is always a way to work it into a conversation! For every person you talk to that catches your passion, they will pass it on to three more. Before long, everyone in town will know about your commitment to quality and children and do everything they can to ensure their child has a spot.

In addition to talking, sometimes just being seen can get others talking. Fieldtrips with the children are great for marketing (not to mention terrific for getting hands on experience into your curriculum!) Just do your thing – take the children out in your community and show them the world around them. As you do, people will notice, so be sure to wear identifying t-shirts or have signs on your vehicle. Other ways to be seen and appreciated are to enter a float in a local parade, donate books to libraries and doctor offices with a sticker inside with your school logo, or donate to charities in your business name.

Word of mouth works, and here's an example: Tina Rockenbach recently shared with me her story of successful word of mouth advertising. She recently got a call from a parent looking for new daycare. The parent had heard about Tina from licensing and another provider, but it was her son who provided the best testimony – he told her “We have to go to Grandma's (Tina) that's where all of my friends on the bus go and they say it is so much fun! They do projects, they have

parties, they learn about all kinds of things and Jordyn (his little brother) wouldn't have to be split up from us!" (As he would in a traditional center.) She drove through a snowstorm to meet Tina after closing to do an interview. She enrolled soon after and told Tina that after what her kids had said, and what she saw when she came for the interview, she never did look elsewhere, even though the cost was at least \$120 week more (with all 3 kids) than other places. The parent said there were such high recommendations from many people in town she asked that she knew it'd be worth it.

Be high quality. Let others know you're the best. And the parents will not only come, they'll know you're worth every penny.

When you are passionate about what you do it's easy to talk about it, when others hear that passion, it makes them want to tell others about it too. Don't hide under your roof and wonder why the phone doesn't ring! Pick up that phone now and call your local hair salon to make an appointment! If you've got more than one in your area – great! Now you can get your hair done at one, nails at another, a massage at another, a pedicure, a..... Happy marketing everyone!

(Thank you Tina for letting me share your story!)

TIPS AND TRICKS

Spring is around the corner, and that means one thing in this business: MUD! The kids will get covered in it outside, so how do you keep it from covering your inside? Here's a few tips:

- Have the children continue to wear their snowpants and snow boots, even as the weather gets warmer. When it gets to warm to wear them without coats, let them wear just the snowpants and boots without coats, it will keep them as warm as a light jacket and no snow pants would, and protect their clothing much better.
- Place a shallow pan outside the door and have children step into it to rinse off the mud from the bottom of their boots before coming inside. Have a thick rug for them to step onto to dry them off.
- Use a hose with a gentle spray nozzle to hose off the kids before coming in (the ones in snowsuits and boots only!) Lay towels under the hooks to absorb the run off while they hang to dry.
- Place a box of surgical slippers (those thin blue ones doctors pull over their shoes) by the door for parents to slip on before coming in, or ask that they remove their shoes.
- If you want children to stay away from muddy areas outside, make sure the dry areas have something even more fun in them to do! Provide balls, chalk, or even blocks or legos in a bin to keep their interest away from the mud.

-Overcome your fear of mud! Gather a bucket of it to bring inside, put in a sensory table, or cover a table with a plastic tablecloth and dump some thick mud on it to play in. Provide trucks, tubes, spoons, cups, and other props for the children to use while they explore. Also provide things they can add to see how it changes the consistency such as water, dirt, rice, flour, sugar, salt, etc.

Get 101 Tips and Tricks to save you time and money!

Visit www.patriciadischler.com.

KIDBIZ BLOG

I've already received many great emails regarding the articles I posted on my KIDBIZ Blog, I'm hoping to have more time this month to share many more great articles I've received. Check it out today and send your comments too! Also, if you see a great article, send me the link and I'll check it out and post it on the blog as well. This is a place for all of us to share resources and information. I get so much from others, there's no room in the newsletter, so I'm going to be sharing all I get with you on the blog! If your organization would like to submit an article, that'd be great! Just send it as an attachment to me at: pdischler@wildblue.net and mark it "KIDBIZ BLOG SUBMISSION" Thanks!

Right now I'm featuring a great article titled "Crying in the Car Seat" by Elizabeth Pantley. Do you take field trips with infants? Then this article can really help you out!

Visit: <http://kidbiz.blogspot.com>

IN THE NEWS

My good friend Jeff Johnson has started a child care forum, it's a great place to connect with others in our field, ask questions, and get support. Check it out on his website: www.explorationsearlylearning.com. He's even offering a chance for some free books if you sign up now!

I want to share another great resource with you: Brain Insights – check out Deb McNelis' website for some wonderful resource cards for parents and providers: www.braininsightsonline.com. Also, she has just started a blog called Early Childhood Brain Insights, where she shares activities for children ages 0-5 years, check it out at: <http://braininsights.blogspot.com/>

THIS MONTH'S SALE ITEMS

February Sale Item: No Regrets: Making Your Decision In An Unplanned Pregnancy Booklet – 20% Off!

A three chapter excerpt of *Because I Loved You* this booklet is a great resource for pregnancy counselors. It shares my own experience of making a decision in an unplanned pregnancy, teaching women how to approach this decision with thoughtful reflection and gathering of information in order to find the decision that is right for them. An inexpensive way for counselors to get important information to women facing this decision. Price 10 for \$32.50 **Sale Price \$26.00**

March Sale Item: KIDBIZ Teleseminar Set – 50% Off!

A set of 6 audio training CD's, complete with handouts and training certificates totaling 6.5 hours of training! Get a jump start on your yearly training in the comfort of your own home. Trainings included are: Marketing & Interviews, From Braggers to Biters, Professional Image, Your Space/My Space, Holiday Tips and Tricks, and Creating a Parent Handbook. Regular price for set: \$120. **Sale Price \$60.**

Order yours today at: www.patriciadischler.com!

UPCOMING EVENTS

February 20 & 21, 2009

Fort Wayne, Indiana

Early Childhood Alliance Family Child Care Retreat

Friday night keynote: Crazy for Kids!

Saturday sessions: Professional Image, Parent Handbook, Marketing, Communicating with Parents, Teaching the 3 C's, Tips & Tricks

For more information call: 260-469-2476

February 24, 2009

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Child Development Center of St. Joseph Staff Training

Workshop: Teaching the 3 C's

For more information call: 414-645-5337

March 11, 2009

Milwaukee, WI

Lutheran Social Services Adoptive Parent Training

Trusting in Strangers for the Sake of a Child

For more information contact: Carrie Pedersen carrie.pedersen@lsswis.org

March 14, 2009

Chicago Area Families For Adoption

Lisle, Illinois

Benedictine University

Workshops: *Trusting in a Stranger for the Sake of a Child*

Teaching Respect, Understanding and Love in Adoption

For more information visit: www.caffa.org/2009conference

If you are a member of a group planning a training event and would like to book one of my keynotes or workshops, visit the Lecture page on my website and contact me for availability. Visit www.patriciadischler.com/lecture.php.

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Patricia Dischler

Author, *From Babysitter to Business Owner, Because I Loved You, Tips and Tricks* and *The Patty Cake Kids & The Lost Imagination Cap*.

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