

A Day in the Life of A Working Parent Game

Supplies Needed: (one set for each small group)

- ✓ Game board
- ✓ Child care crisis game cards (cut apart)
- ✓ Items to use as “parent game pieces” (suggestions: coins or buttons)
- ✓ Number cards (cut apart)

Activity instructions:






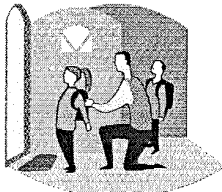











- Divide participants into groups of 2-4 people and give each group the supplies needed.
- Each participant should pick a parent game piece and a number card to see who goes first (the highest number goes first and the rest of the participants follow clockwise).
- The game board represents a day in the life of a working parent. The game is played by the players picking number cards and then moving that many spaces forward.
- Every time a player lands on a space that says, “Child Care Crisis Card,” he or she must take a card and attempt to answer the question on the card. Answers should be discussed with the other game players.
- The purpose of the game is for you to think about possible child care crises that could happen and what you might do to solve the crises — there is no one right answer.
- Once each player makes it to the space that says, “Hooray, you made it through the day,” the game is over.

Time Needed

Approximately 20 minutes.

Adapted from *When You Work Curriculum Sourcebook* (#BWYWCS), by Laurie Boyce, et al., University of Wisconsin-Extension, Cooperative Extension, Madison WI, 1997

A Day in the Life of A Working Parent Game Board

 START Wake up on time	 Drop the kids off at child care	 CHILD CARE CRISIS — Take a card	 Traffic jam on the way to work	 Arrive at work
Hooray! You made it through the day!	 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin: 10px auto; width: 80%;"> <p style="font-size: 1.5em; margin: 0;">Place Child Care Crisis Cards Here</p> </div> 			 CHILD CARE CRISIS — Take a card
 Pick up children and head home				 Busy day at work
 CHILD CARE CRISIS — Take a card				 Enjoy lunch break with a friend
 Supervisor praises your work	Machines break down at work 	CHILD CARE CRISIS — Take a card 	Supervisor in a bad mood 	CHILD CARE CRISIS — Take a card 

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Number Pieces

1	2	3	1	2	3
1	2	3	1	2	3
1	2	3	1	2	3
1	2	3	1	2	3
1	2	3	1	2	3
1	2	3	1	2	3
1	2	3	1	2	3
1	2	3	1	2	3

Child Care Crisis Game Cards

<p>The babysitter calls you at work saying that Joey has the flu and needs to go home immediately. Your employer does not have children and does not seem to understand the situation.</p> <p>What do you do?</p>	<p>Your child care provider calls early in the morning to say that her three children are sick with the flu.</p> <p>What do you do?</p>	<p>You are 15 minutes late picking up your son from child care and your day care provider asks you to pay \$15 (a dollar for every minute you were late) on the spot.</p> <p>What do you do?</p>
<p>You wake up late at 8 a.m. You were supposed to be at work at 8:30 a.m. and have to get your two children ready and drop them off at child care.</p> <p>What do you do?</p>	<p>You have to work late, until 6 p.m., but your child's child care center closes at 5 p.m.</p> <p>What do you do?</p>	<p>Your child care provider calls you at work to tell you that your son gave another child a black eye at child care today.</p> <p>What do you do?</p>
<p>You hear rumors that the child care center that watches your children has mistreated children in the past.</p> <p>What do you do?</p>	<p>You are heading out the door to take your daughter to child care and can't find her shoes anywhere.</p> <p>What do you do?</p>	<p>You drop off Mary at child care and upon leaving, she begins to cry loudly, yelling "Don't leave me here, Mom!"</p> <p>What do you do?</p>
<p>Your child has a temper tantrum every time you leave her at child care.</p> <p>What do you do?</p>	<p>At the child care site, you notice a pot of boiling water on the front burner in the kitchen unattended.</p> <p>What do you do?</p>	<p>Your child care provider calls to say that she will no longer watch your children. You have to be at work in an hour.</p> <p>What do you do?</p>

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Child Care Crisis Game Cards (cont.)

<p>The child care provider smokes while taking care of your 10-month-old daughter.</p> <p>What do you do?</p>	<p>Your child care provider is licensed to care for eight children and you notice that she is caring for 12 children.</p> <p>What do you do?</p>	<p>When you pick up your children, the child care provider is not there. Her 13-year-old daughter is watching your children along with five other children.</p> <p>What do you do?</p>
<p>Your are bathing your 3-year-old son and notice that he has a big bruise on his leg that wasn't there last night when you bathed him. He was at child care all day.</p> <p>What do you do?</p>	<p>When heading out the door to take your son to child care, you realize he is out of diapers.</p> <p>What do you do?</p>	<p>You have an argument with the child care provider about your child being spanked by the provider.</p> <p>What do you do?</p>
<p>You pick up your infant from child care and notice that his diapers are soaked.</p> <p>What do you do?</p>	<p>Your child care provider transports your 10-month-old child without a car seat.</p> <p>What do you do?</p>	

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Child Care Dilemmas: What Do I Do When...

No matter how good you feel about the child care that you have selected for your child, you still need to plan for certain situations. Everyday problems such as a sick child or financial restraints can change the ideal situation into a sticky one. This fact sheet addresses some of these problems and possible solutions. The key is to plan for them before they happen.

My Child Is Sick and Can't Go To Child Care

You can plan on your child getting sick at one time or another. Before your child gets sick, check with your employer's human resource or personnel department on the policies for sick child care.

When you cannot miss work, arrange back-up care. Possibilities include a neighbor or relative who knows your child well. There are public and private agencies who will provide in-home care for sick children.

Sick child care centers are available in some cases. Some employers even cover a part of the daily fee.

Keep in mind that when your child is really ill, he or she needs to be in the care of either a parent or someone who is close to him or her, as well as separated from other children to prevent spread of illness.

My Child Care Provider Is Sick And Can't Care For My Child

At the time you select a provider, it is a good idea to cover what happens when he or she gets sick. Is there a back-up person who can care for the children or are the parents expected to find alternative care? Are you required to pay the provider for days when he or she is ill and cannot care for your child?

If your provider doesn't have a back-up plan, you need to make arrangements for your child. Some possibilities include:

- keeping a list of relatives or friends who would be willing to care for your child for a week or less,
 - compiling a list of other providers in the area who do drop-in child care, or
 - finding out in advance what sick child care policies exist at your work.
- Some work places keep lists of temporary providers for employees.

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I Work Odd Hours and Can't Find Child Care

Most family child care and child care centers are open during regular work hours. If you work during the day but have early or late hours, a child care center may offer the flexibility you need. If you work nights and/or weekends, you may have more trouble. Check with the following places for lists of child care providers and their hours of service:

- a local resource and referral agency
- co-workers, relatives, or friends who have children
- your work place's human resource department.

I Need Help Making Ends Meet

Talk to your provider and let them know what's happening. If this is a short-term situation, try to arrange for a payment plan after paying at least part of the bill. If your provider is agreeable, consider offering to help with care for his or her children in exchange for a reduced rate. If you have other skills such as sewing, yardwork, or accounting, consider offering these skills as partial payment for your child care. Keep in mind that your financial problems will create financial problems for the provider as well. (See factsheet entitled "Planning for Child Care Costs.")

If you're having long-term financial problems, you need to find help with your child care costs. Find out what your county social service department can do to help. Ask for information about the sliding fee program.

I'm Going to Be Late Picking Up My Child

Call your provider. Let them know that you will be late. To avoid problems, try to plan in advance for times when you will be late. The following tips can help:

- Arrange for two or three people who will pick up your child when you can't. Let your provider know who they are and how they can be reached. Most providers will require written consent to allow another person to pick up your child.
- Get to know other parents who use the same family child care provider or child care center. When problems arise, you can agree to provide short-term care for each other's children.
- *Find out what your provider's policy is regarding late pick-up. Is there a charge for caring for your child beyond a certain time? If so, how much? How long will they hold a child who has not been picked up? What is their plan when a child stays beyond closing time? If a parent does not contact the provider, by law some providers call the police or child protection authorities and have the child put in protective custody. You need to know how to find your child if this happens.*

My Child Has Bruises Or Marks When I Pick Her Up From Child Care

Your first step is to ask your provider to explain what happened. Ask them how your child was injured. Get as many details about the incident as you can. If your child is old enough, ask her what happened. Do the stories match?

If your child frequently has bruises or marks, it may be a good idea to take him to a doctor for medical attention. Ask your doctor if the injuries could be explained by the reasons you have been given. Some children regularly hurt themselves during play activities. If the injury seems related to a particular piece of play equipment or furniture, point this out immediately to your provider. Ask that the item be removed or modified so your child will have a safe environment.

If you suspect that your provider, or someone in the home or center, is abusing your child, report it immediately to your local child care licensing agency or child protection agency and remove your child from the program.

I Have Had A Change In My Personal, Home, Or Work Life That Is Affecting My Child

When you and your family have a change, whether it's good or bad, it's a good idea to talk about it with the person who cares for your child. This person is a partner in caring for your youngster. They need to understand your situation so they can respond appropriately to your child.

If you or your family are going through some tough times, your child care provider can play an important role by providing stability for your child. It's important to involve him or her and keep him or her informed.

My Child Seems To Be Sick A Lot Since He's Been In Child Care

Some kids are more prone to illness than others. They may have a chronic cold, ear infection, or always get a bug when it's going around. Discuss this with your child's doctor. If your child fits this description, you may want to consider using child care where your child will be exposed to fewer children. A family child care provider who cares for three or four children might be ideal.

Another option is to examine your provider's sick-child policy. Are other children coming to child care when they really should be kept at home? Ask your provider about this; let them know you are concerned. Keep your child home when he or she is sick. As inconvenient as it may be, it is your responsibility to reduce the spread of infection. Proper hand washing in the child care center or home – before and after meals, after toileting, and diaper changes – can help reduce the spread of germs that can make your child ill.

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