



Backup Child Care

You are going to put a lot of planning and effort into finding the best possible care for your child, but even the best child care arrangements don't always run like clockwork. Your child or child care provider may get sick. Schools close for vacations, holidays, trainings or even severe weather. You may need to work over time or take a work-related trip. Whatever the reason there will be times you need back-up child care.

Why should I worry about back up child care?

Recent studies conducted by Work/Family Directions found that one of the biggest problems working parents have is finding care when children are sick, or when regular child care arrangements break down. The very best time to think about backup care is when you are first making your regular child care plans. The next best time is right now! Here are a few ideas to help you get started.

How can I start planning for backup care?

- Talk with your spouse or partner about your schedules and child care needs. Discuss whose job is more flexible, who has more sick time or available time off. Having this conversation ahead of time might save you from a potentially heated discussion at 7:00AM when you discover your child cannot go to his/her regular scheduled child care provider.
- Understand your options at work. Make sure you understand your sick time and personal leave policies. Knowing how much flexibility you have ahead of time can make decisions about taking time off less stressful.
- What are your child's needs? Some children approach a new situation with enthusiasm, others may be upset or fearful. Most children are happiest with a familiar adult and a familiar setting. If you can't provide both, which is more important to your child?

What should I do first?

- There will be times when you'll need backup care that you can actually anticipate and write down on your calendar today. No matter what kind of care you use (child care center, family child care, a nanny, babysitter, friend or relative) ask now about any scheduled holidays and vacations.
- If your child is in school, get the school calendar

and check the dates for holidays, vacations, and early release days. If your child is in a before and after school program, you should also check the program calendar. And remember, no matter how carefully you plan, there are always situations that spring up with little or no warning. Plan for the unexpected!

How do I find backup care?

- Call The Children's Cabinet. A Child Care Resource and Referral Specialist will be able to assist you with a list of organizations and child care programs that provide backup care. There may be several options open to you.
- Your regular child care provider might be able to suggest a substitute provider or help you find substitute care.
- Friends, relatives, and other parents are often willing to share or trade child care for short periods of time.
- Family child care providers or child care centers in your area may offer backup child care or drop-in care to a few extra children as an extension of their regular services.
- School-age programs often extend their hours to provide care on holidays and school vacations.
- In-home and nanny agencies can sometimes send a provider to your home on very short notice.

**Remember that pre-registration
is required by many programs.
Be sure to ask!**



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Child Care Plan for Parents

Parent Name _____

Date of Plan _____

Primary Provider

Primary Provider:	Contact Name:
Address:	Phone Number:
City: State: Zip:	Days and times of operation:
Meals Provided:	Observed Holidays or Center Closures:
Cost per week: \$	
Additional Fees: \$	Things to pack:

Back-Up Provider

Back-Up Provider:	Contact Name:
Address:	Phone Number:
City: State: Zip:	Days and times of operation:
Meals Provided:	Observed Holidays or Center Closures:
Cost per week: \$	
Additional Fees: \$	Things to pack:

Family, Friends, and Neighbors

Name:	Phone Number:
Address:	Alternate Number:
Days Available:	Times Available:

Name:	Phone Number:
Address:	Alternate Number:
Days Available:	Times Available:

Name:	Phone Number:
Address:	Alternate Number:
Days Available:	Times Available:

Who can I call to pick up my child if I am unable to do so?*

Name:	Phone Number:
Name:	Phone Number:

* Make sure your child care provider has your written authorization that the above individuals may pick up your child.

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