

TJ Solutions - Management Solutions for Your Child Care Organization From The Desks of Joy & Terri – Putting Policies into Practice, What You Need to Think About?

We hope everyone had the chance to enjoy the summer which seems to go by faster every year. We know everyone has been very busy with FDK whether you have been planning, implementing, or simply trying to stay ahead of all the work. The development of new FDK programs and the ongoing changes to our sector's legislative requirements require us to be always adding to or updating our policies and procedures

Up to date, well written Child Care policies are critical in ensuring “best” practices in both programming and administration of our programs. We rely on our policies and practices especially when it comes to managing staff, health & safety, legal liabilities and regulatory requirements. Our policies are there to speak on behalf of the organization, to defend our actions and to ensure we minimize risk to our programs.

With the many demands on our schedules it often seems easier to copy an existing policy from another source or to ignore our current out of date policies hoping we do not have to rely on them. On one hand borrowing/copying policies can be especially alluring when the policy is associated with either deadlines and/or ministry/legal requirements. On the surface it may seem to be an easy solution to copy a policy, give it a quick read through, change the name of the organization where required and then breathe a sigh of relief when we get the required check mark.

However from our perspective, after completing a number of organizational reviews to assist child care organizations in developing “best” policies and practices, we have identified some serious potential problems for those organizations that have adopted policies (hiring policies, progressive discipline, performance reviews, interviewing etc) but do not adhere to them or have outdated policies that are inconsistent with current legislation.

Child care organizations are becoming increasingly aware that they are accountable to a number of legislative bodies both as licensed programs and as businesses. With these increased demands for accountability and transparency it becomes even more important for child care owners/operators to develop their own policies and practices showing due diligence and consistency with current “best” practices.

Recognizing, there are benefits to having template/sample policies to assist and guide you in creating your own policies. Here are some questions or guidelines you should think about carefully before you copy policies from other organizations;

- What guarantee do you have as to the integrity, and accuracy of this policy?
- Is the organization you are borrowing from the original owner of the policy?
- When it comes to putting the policies into practice who will be held accountable for ensuring the policy is really “best” practice or meets legal requirements?
- How do you verify that the material is not outdated? (Remember policies are living documents that require regular review)

- Are the policies congruent with how the organization operates and/or how you manage today?
- Can your organization implement and apply the policy in a consistent manner?
- If the policy is associated with a legal requirement will you know how to implement all of the required procedures and practices without proper training?
- How will you demonstrate consistent implementation and documentation of the policies and procedures within your organization?
- What will happen to your organization if during an investigation you have to show proof of the policy but cannot show evidence of its implementation on a consistent basis?

While we recognize that having sample templates can assist organizations in creating their policies; it is critically important that organizations regularly review their policies to ensure they are up to date, meet the required standards and most importantly that they are congruent with the current practices of the organization.

Please feel free to share this email with others who can benefit

We are looking forward to working with everyone this fall,

Joy & Terri

For more information and resources please visit our website at www.tjsolutions.ca

Joy Lerman & Terri Carr have worked as facilitator/trainers all over southern Ontario providing solutions in managing your child care organizations. Their interactive style provides workshops that are creative, dynamic, and energetic. They always make sure you walk away with tools you can actually use in the workplace.

The information contained in this handout is intended as a general guide only and organizations must create their own policies. It is not intended to replace professional legal advice. If legal advice is required for a specific issue or situation, organizations should contact a lawyer. Please be advised that TJ Solutions does not give legal advice.