BUILD IT STRONG!

Family Policies & Handbooks that Strengthen Your ECE Program

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Introductions

Let us introduce ourselves!

Kelly Matthews, MA weca

Welcome!
We're glad you're here!

Paula Drew, MS weca

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Welcome & Agenda

- **Welcome**
- **Our "why" behind the "what"**
- **The Iron Triangle**
- **Policies vs Procedures**
- **Policies that impact your bottom line**
- **Q&A**
- **Closing**

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Our Why Behind the What

- **We've seen programs do what everyone else in their market does, regardless of the consequences.**
- **We've seen programs not doing everything they can to protect themselves from liability in their policies.**
- **We've seen too many programs close because their policies didn't protect their bottom line.**
- **We're nerds.**

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How much you pay for what's in your cart isn't just for the products. It's for the infrastructure.

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In child care, the way we talk about it is:

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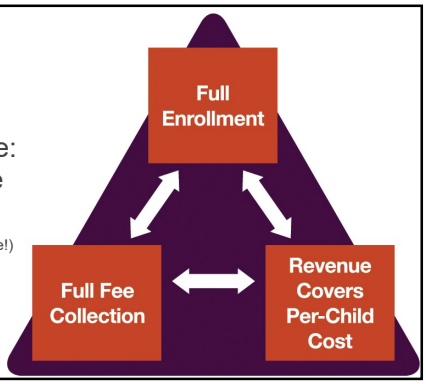
Our favorite shape: The Iron Triangle

(Thanks, Opportunities Exchange!)



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Policies and Procedures are there to support your bottom line.

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Policies and Procedures

One is what you (or others) are going to do (or not do).

The other is the details of how you (or others) are going to do it (or not do it)

AND

what is going to happen if the policy isn't followed.

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Your policies and procedures are your program's fingerprints.

Handbooks are relationship tools.

So are contracts.

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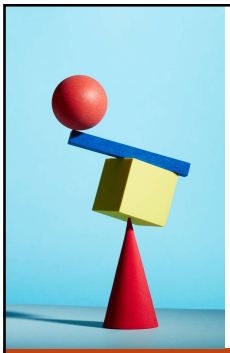

From Policy Negligence to Deliberate Indifference

Good policies and procedures:

- ✓ Risk Mitigation
- ✓ Compliance
- ✓ Protection
  - ✓ Proof in court cases
  - ✓ High liability areas

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What policies can you identify that would impact your finances?

- Vacation
- Registration fees
- Sibling discounts
- Tuition rates and collection of fees
- Holding fees
- Late fees (late payment, late pickup)
- Staffing ratios (above and beyond licensing minimums)
- Ages served
- Type of food served and how sourced

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Focus your policy lens

Language matters – be specific, include procedures and consequences

Think it through – what are you *really* saying and why are you doing it

Think it all the way through and then some – what are the potential unintended consequences of this policy?

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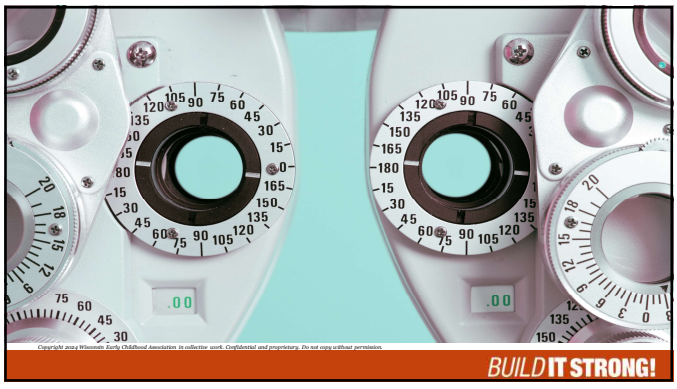

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Focus your policy lens

Sample policy: A parent must pay on time.

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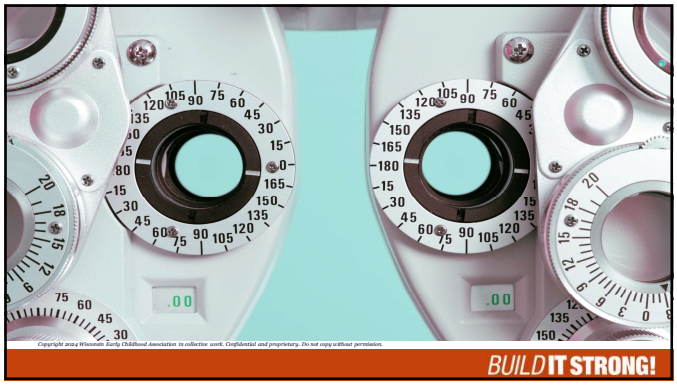

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Focus your policy lens

Language matters - specific, include procedures and consequences

New policy: The financially responsible party must pay by the last Friday of the month by 5PM (CST) for the following month of care. Payments will be made electronically through our CCMS. Delays of processing by the bank or entity is not an excuse for late payments. Late payments will be charged a late fee according to our policy on page XX. Failure to pay care cost or any associated fees as well as excessive late payments can be grounds for termination.

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Focus your policy lens

Think it through – what are you really saying and why are you doing it

I deserve to be paid on time, respected, and not have my business disrupted.

Think it all the way through and then some – what are the potential unintended consequences of this policy?

It may mean that some parents may have to change their payment style. You may lose customers. You may also gain customers who appreciate the ease of not writing checks.

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Consider the impact

Sibling Discount policy

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Running the numbers

In order to make informed business decisions, you HAVE to do the math.

Or you might give away over $14,000 without even knowing it.

DO THE MATH x+x=x

Discount is $100 per month x 2 families = $200

$200 per month x 12 months = $2,400 per year

$2,400 per year x 6 years these families may be with you =

$14,400

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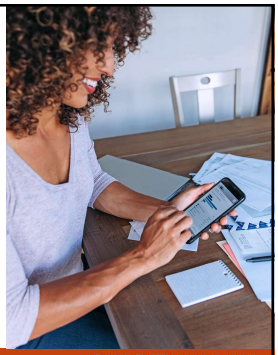
Help yourself help your business

Use the tech that is out there specifically made for child care management.

- Mileage tracking
- Accounting
- Staff time tracking
- Child & Staff files



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EMPOWERED Policies and Procedures

If you have them, be prepared to enforce them. Put it in writing.

You need to have a brain, a heart, AND a spine to run a child care business.

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What impacts your bottom line?

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"If we wait for the moment when everything, absolutely everything, is ready, we shall never begin."

- Ivan Turgenev, novelist

You've got this!

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EXCLUSIVE SNEAK PEEK!

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Thank you. Questions?

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