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**PROFESSIONALISM IN CHILD CARE**

**ARE YOU A PROFESSIONAL?**

**Definitions:**

- **Profession:** A CALLING requiring specialized knowledge and often long and intensive academic preparation.
- **Professional:** Characterized by or conforming to the technical or ethical standards of a profession. Exhibiting a courteous, conscientious, and generally businesslike manner in the workplace.
- **Professionalism is: always working to offer your best to the children and families you serve!**

**Elements of a Profession:**

- Internalized character strengths and values directed toward high quality service to others
- Dedication
- Ethical Standards
- Licensing/Accreditation
- Education and/or training
- Continued Education
- Accountability and Liability

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**Professionalism Starts at the Top!**

- Managers/Supervisors need to set an example!
- The organization needs to have policies and procedures in place to support staff professionalism.
- Managers/Supervisors need to provide staff with the necessary tools to perform their job duties successfully.
- Managers/Supervisors need to recognize and reward employees performance.
- Managers/Supervisors need to provide staff with feedback.
- Provide funds for training and education.
- Personnel Policies need to be applied across the board.

## **Child Care Providers Need to Recognize Themselves as Professionals!**

Group child care is a relatively “new” industry. In years gone by, child care was provided by the mother, and in her absence, extended family members. When group child care came into being, along came the lingering term that child care was “babysitting.” But anyone involved in the child care field, knows that child care far exceeds babysitting! Child care providers can help to change this preconceived, false notion of child care by recognizing themselves as professionals and conducting themselves as the professionals they are. Focus needs to be on:

- Professional dress
- Professional language in the workplace
- Maintaining confidentiality of clients and co-workers
- Eliminating gossip in the workplace
- Professional interactions with clients and co-workers
- Showing up to work regularly and on time
- Striving to improve skills and knowledge through increased professional development
- Dedication to the job
- Professional conduct at all times
- Responsible social networking