



## How can I fill my vacancies?

### You can help fill your vacancies by....

- ❖ Advertising in church hall's and community centres, at mother and toddler groups and in local shops.
- ❖ Keeping the Children's Information Service regularly updated with your vacancy information. They will advertise your service for free, with your consent, by distributing your information to parents and putting your advert on their website.
- ❖ Tell the parents of the children that you are looking after if you have a vacancy coming up, they may have a friend looking for childcare and they will be able to recommend you. Remember that most vacancies are filled by 'word of mouth' recommendations.
- ❖ Go to 'mother and toddler' or 'bumps and baby groups' and spread the word that you're a registered childminder.
- ❖ Make sure that when a parent comes to your home for the first time, that your home is set up to show how you will look after their child ie: if it's a baby make sure you have out your cot, high chair, baby toys etc.
- ❖ Think about the outings and activities that you would do with the children and tell the parents.
- ❖ Contact your local school and ask the receptionist if you could advertise your service. You maybe able to give each class teacher a bundle of 30 adverts, one for each of the children to take home.
- ❖ Carry your certificate with you when promoting your service to show people that you are registered and tell them about your police check and training.
- ❖ Make sure you have an answer phone system so that parents can leave a message if you are unavailable.
- ❖ Build useful relationships with childminders near to you. They maybe able to pass on business to you and vice versa.
- ❖ Approach local large businesses and try and advertise in their staff restroom or canteen. Find out what their work shifts are and provide the necessary service.
- ❖ Be professional when meeting parents – you want parents to choose you to mind their child.
- ❖ Attend local childminding drop-in groups to keep up to date with changes and share ideas.
- ❖ Make sure your fees are competitive with other childminders in your area and that they reflect the service you offer.

### Advertising tips

- ❖ Keep your advert short but make sure you mention the key points – name and telephone number, the age range you mind, the area that you live (but not stating your address for safety reasons), the public transport near your home, your opening hours/days you work and your training.
- ❖ Postcard sized advertisements are ideal for newsagent windows and supermarket notice boards.
- ❖ Never use photos of your childminded children without prior written parental consent.
- ❖ Build trust by saying that you are registered, experienced and have children in your care.
- ❖ Make your advert stand out.



## How can I fill my vacancies?

### How can I encourage a parent to choose me?

- ❖ Take the parents on a tour of your house and show them the safety steps you've put in place such as safety gates, fireguards and plug covers.
- ❖ If you plan to use the garden make sure you show the parents that it's secure.
- ❖ Tell them about the food that you are able to provide and ask them if their child has any special dietary requirements.
- ❖ Think about the activities and outings that you will provide and make sure you tell the parents.
- ❖ Have your home set up as though you have already started caring for their child ie; have relevant toys for the age of the child and equipment in place to show parents.
- ❖ Let parents read your references and show them your registration and training certificates.
- ❖ Build a rapport with the parent during their visit.
- ❖ Make sure that their child will fit into your childminding provision.
- ❖ Talk about the other children that you care for and your daily routine.
- ❖ Talk about your experience and how long you've been childminding for.
- ❖ Discuss the arrangements openly and honestly and be very clear about what you will and won't provide.
- ❖ Make sure you discuss your fees and your working hours and check that they are happy with them.
- ❖ If parents don't make a decision on their first visit offer to call them the following day.
- ❖ You can help parents make a decision by summarising what it is that they require by listing back the main points of what they're looking for.
- ❖ Ask them if you can amend your service in anyway to meet their child's needs, this shows that you are prepared to be flexible.

If you have covered everything and they still say no try and find out why as the reasons they give might help you in trying to fill your vacancies in the future.

Remember parents want to be reassured that their child will be well looked after by you!

And finally but most importantly, this is your business and you are self-employed – be proud of what you do and tell parents why your service is the best!