

Good Neighbor Tips for Child Care Providers Operating in Residential Neighborhoods

Home-based, licensed child care providers offer an important and vital service to the Sunnyvale Community. As a result, the City would like to offer the following tips in an effort to help you maintain good relationships with your neighbors. Home-based child care providers who follow these tips are more likely to experience far fewer complaints from neighbors about noise, traffic, safety, and aesthetics.

Exercise Good Communication With Neighbors and Daycare Families

- Know your neighbors and encourage them to get to know you. Take the time to introduce yourself, explain your routines, the number of children being cared for in your home, the number of employees you have, your credentials, and, why you decided to become a child care provider.
- Give neighbors your contact information and encourage them to contact you directly if they have a concern or problem. Be willing and committed to solve any problem quickly.
- Explain the importance of maintaining positive relationships with neighbors during your orientation with new families joining your day care. Provide regular reminders to them through newsletters and include specific instructions in their contracts with you.
- Periodically remind the children how they too can be good neighbors.
- Take the initiative to discuss with your neighbors any planned changes to shared fencing or outdoor play equipment that could potentially impact their quality of life, home appearance, privacy or home value prior to purchase and construction.

Be Proactive in Addressing Parking, Traffic and Safety Concerns

Give families instructions such as:

1. Do not block, turn around in, or park in neighbors' driveways.
2. Do not double park, or honk their horns when picking up or dropping off children.
3. Supervise children carefully between vehicles and your home, to keep them from running into the street.
4. Instruct families that if they park across the street from your home they must escort children to your door.
5. Do not allow children to walk across or play on neighbors' property.
6. Stagger arrival and pick up times, to reduce the impact of parking and traffic on your neighbors.

Reduce Outdoor Noise

- Install fences or plant hedges to create an effective sound barrier.
- Limit outdoor play time to hours when neighbors are least likely to be disturbed, after 9:00 a.m. and before 5:00 p.m. Discuss outdoor play schedules with your neighbors in an effort to be less disruptive. Avoiding singing and the use of bells, whistles, and musical instruments outside.

- Children who are having a loud tantrum or argument outdoors should be taken inside until they quiet down.
- Do not have all the children playing outside at the same time.
- If children arrive very early or leave very late, talk with families about coming and going quietly.
- Consider the placement of the entrance to your child care home. If you opt for a side entrance, be considerate of the distance to your neighbor's home. Make sure that the gate or alternate door used is in good working order and doesn't create excess noise.

Resources Available to Child Care Providers

- City of Sunnyvale One Stop Permit Center (Building/Planning/Permits), *OneStop.InSunnyvale.com*, 408-730-7444
- City of Sunnyvale Youth & Family Resources, *Childcare.InSunnyvale.com*, 408-730-7800
- City of Sunnyvale Neighborhood Preservation, *DPS.InSunnyvale.com*, 408-730-7610
- State of California Community Care Licensing, San Jose Office, *ccl.d.ca.gov*, 408-324-2148

Adapted from "Being a Good Neighbor – Tips for Family Child Care Providers" by Kristen Anderson, Redwood City Child Care Coordinator