

Top Tips for Early Years and Childcare Providers

This guidance has been drawn together following research with project partners, families and early years and childcare providers who have been part of the PACE project. The project involved 12 partners from 4 different European countries.

Objectives were

- **Improving access to childcare**
- **Supporting parents' journey to employment**

These questions for consideration are designed to support employers and businesses to be more flexible with their employment opportunities to parents and families.

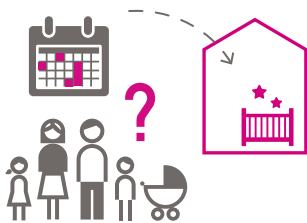
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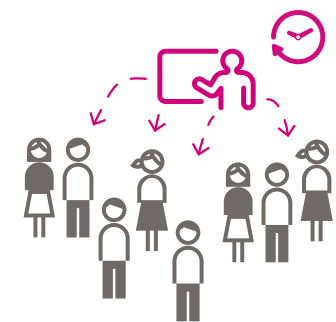
Case study



'Emma is a single parent with 2 daughters who lacked in confidence and self-esteem. She was referred to the PACE Project and took part in the Learning Links programmes initially to help build her confidence, she was able to bring her youngest daughter as a creche was provided as part of the 10 week programme. When Emma finished the programme she understood the importance of early years education for her daughter and with confidence, she was able to attend various courses to build up her employment skills and self-confidence. As she needed flexible and occasional childcare in order to attend the courses, the PACE project manager was able to identify a suitable nursery that was accessible via public transport, Emma was able to discuss her needs directly with the nursery, who understood the importance of offering flexible childcare to support Emma's needs. Emma became a volunteer with the Children's Centre, volunteering 2 days per week whilst her daughter attended nursery using the funded childcare for 3 years olds. In the meantime Emma has been applying for part-time jobs and pre-arranged occasional childcare with the nursery, so she could attend interviews when needed. Emma was successful in gaining employment as a Mid-day Supervisor with the local school and is currently training to completing her teaching assistant qualification.

Points to consider

- Promote your childcare provision to local business and employers to support them in offering their employees options for childcare.
- Find out if there are any local businesses that will subsidise their employee's childcare costs, link up them and market your childcare services
- Link up with Job Centre to offer childcare support for interviews and training courses offered to claimants. Is there any funding available to support childcare costs?
- Do you offer flexible sessions for parents and is there an opportunity for parents to change hours to support shift working, change of hours etc?
- Are you near any local businesses that have shift work, longer operating hours? How do you support parents that might already have employment there or looking for employment at these businesses?
- Link up with local training providers to offer childcare to parents taking up any courses, whether this is part-time or full-time. Some training providers have access to funding to support childcare costs.
- How do you offer flexible and occasional childcare to existing parents, who are ready to go back to work, or ready to start their journey into training or employment?



- What volunteering opportunities do you have that would support a parent's journey to training and/or employment? This need not only be in childcare practice but could be as a volunteer on the committee or support the administration for your setting.