

Growing Your Preschool Program First Impressions Count!

Pacific Union Conference
Early Childhood Education
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First Impressions

- Some of the first impressions that parents get about your program are from:
 - Web page
 - Telephone calls
 - Other parents
 - Visiting and touring your program



First Impressions

- On-line presence
 - Is your web page up to date?
 - Description of the program
 - Pictures
 - Is there an on-line application?
 - List some things that you offer that others may not



First Impressions

- On-line presence
 - Parent testimonials
 - Example #1
 - I really love Discoveryland, my daughter is so happy! Joan A.
 - This testimonial is not very descriptive and is too generic
 - Example #2
 - I can see how patient, loving and creative the teachers are with my daughter. She is always so excited to go to Discoveryland and has already learned so much. I am very thankful to feel so comfortable sending my daughter to Discoveryland. Joan Anderson (Ava, 3)
 - This testimonial is descriptive and personal.

First Impressions

- On-line Presence
 - Is your web page interactive?
 - Videos
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VKogq1cMpns>
 - Links to parent pages
 - School calendar
 - Classroom daily schedule
 - Parent forms



First Impressions

- On the phone:
 - These are important conversations with parents because:
 - Your conversation will have a lasting impact.
 - You want to ask specific questions for specific information about the perspective family.
 - You want to schedule a tour or a call back.

Making a Good First Impression On the Phone

- Have a plan in how you will answer the phone and train the staff in the procedure.
 - When answering the phone, do so in a professional and pleasant way. Your attitude is reflected so take a breath and put on a happy smile.



Making a Good First Impression On the Phone

- Be ready to ask for their basic information. You can use the form on the PUC ECE web site to help you remember what to ask and then record it.

<http://paucearlychildhood.adventistfaith.org/marketing-tips>

Making a Good First Impression On the Phone

- Possible Script:
- Hello, this is Jane, thank you for calling Discoveryland Preschool.
- First question to ask after the parent has talked:
- May I have your name? (if the parent asks a question such as, “what are your prices?”, say: “I can help you with that, but may I have your name?") Try your best to get their name.
- Second question to ask: “What is your phone number in case we get disconnected?”

Making a Good First Impression On the Phone

- The third question to ask:
- What prompted you to call us today? Listen and focus on the parent throughout the conversation.



Making a Good First Impression On the Phone

- Offer to schedule a tour. (Set aside specific days and times for tours.)
- Encourage them to bring their child.
- If they do not set up a time, call back at another time to see if they would like to set up a tour then.



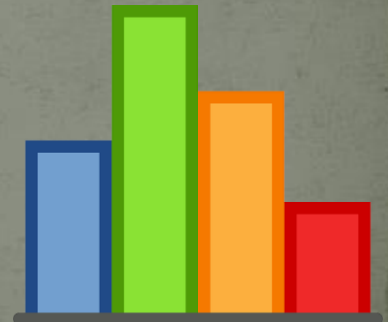
First Impressions

- Filling out the Telephone Log
 - Use as a script to help you stay on track while filling out the telephone log.
 - <http://paucearlychildhood.adventistfaith.org/marketing-tips>



First Impressions

- Why fill out a telephone log?
- Keeping record of the perspective parent phone calls will help you gather data on your marketing strategy. Such as:
 - How many prospective parents have called in a given month?
 - Did you follow up with the prospective parents?
 - How many parents came in for a tour?
 - How many parents enrolled after the tour?



First Impressions

- The Follow up
- E-mail the parent to thank them for their call and confirm the tour date.
- When it gets closer to the day of the tour send a reminder e-mail; “We look forward to seeing you on _____”
- If you are able to, text the parents a reminder of the tour as well.



First Impressions

- When sending follow up information in the mail:
 - Keep it short and to the point so a post card like mailer would work well.
 - Things to include on the post card:
 - Pictures of the program
 - 5 things parents say they love about your school
 - Address and phone number
 - 5 things that are unique about your program
 - Have a space so you can write a short note to them.



First Impressions

- The Tour
 - What do parents see, smell, hear, when they arrive?
 - Is the lobby warm and friendly?
 - Fun idea: Have a large photo frame in the lobby that has a slide show of current pictures.



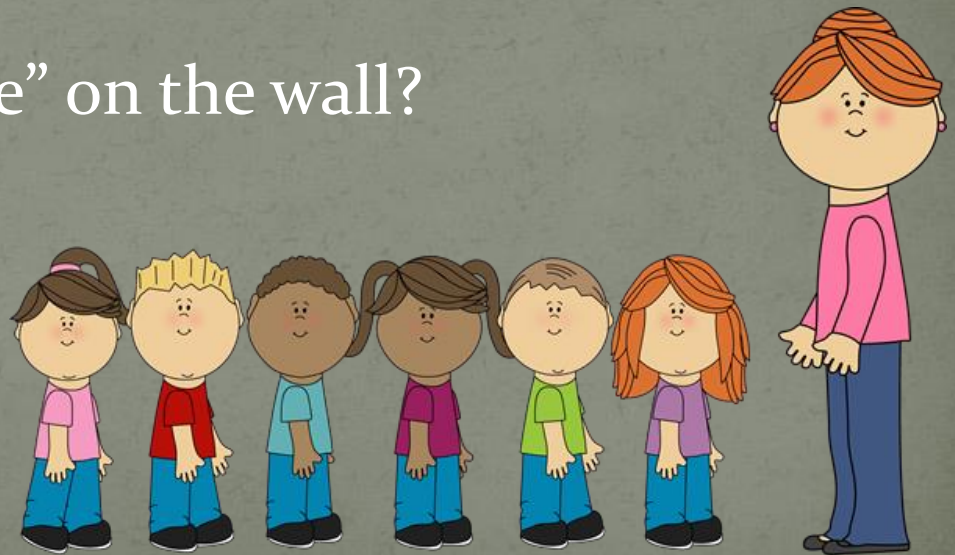
First Impressions

- The Tour
- Have a rehearsed presentation ready:
 - Welcome
 - History and philosophy of ECE program
 - Information about the curriculum offered
 - Show enthusiasm for the program



First Impressions

- The Tour – In the Classroom
- Was the teacher informed ahead of time that a tour would be coming through?
- Are weekly lesson plans displayed on a parent board?
- Is the classroom clean?
- Is there a “teacher feature” on the wall?



First Impressions

- The Tour in the Classroom
 - Who knows the classroom better than the teacher?
 - Train the head teacher to be part of the tour:
 - Plan to take over the class for a few minutes so that the teacher can engage with the parents and the child.



First Impressions

- The Tour in the Classroom
- Roll play with teachers so they feel comfortable and ready to engage with the parents during a tour.
- Roll play
 - Handshake and smile
 - Have them introduce themselves
 - Have them welcome the parents to the classroom
 - Listen to and answer questions
 - Share what fun things are going on in the classroom

First Impressions

- The Tour Wrap-up
- Have a parent packet ready to give at the end of the tour. Some things to include:
 - Brochure
 - Registration packet
 - Business card
 - One page flyer sharing parent testimonials and some of the unique things about the ECE program
 - Incentive to choose YOU!
 - Free day offer
 - Free registration fee

First Impressions – Group Activity

- Your Programs First Impressions
- Work in partners to discuss these questions
- List three ways you are giving a good first impression of your program:
- List three things you could do to make an even better first impression of your program:
- Share with the group

First Impressions

- These are just some of the “little” things that can be done to grow your program.
- Do your best to make the BEST first impression!



Resources

- Carelulu,
<https://www.carelulu.com/resources/childcare-providers/make-great-first-impression-parents-call/>
- Murry, K, (2012). The Ultimate Marketing Child Care Guide. Red Leaf Press, ST. Paul, MN.