

**Parent Magazine asked childcare providers from around the country to share their biggest pet peeves and to tell us how parents can bring out the best in their caregivers.**

1. **Treat me like a friend.** When your child sees that we have a close relationship, she'll feel more comfortable. Ask how my weekend was, for example. Take a picture of the three of us and frame it at home.
2. **Dress your child in play clothes.** Please don't send your child in nice clothes and then get frustrated when your child gets paint smeared on it.
3. **Relax.** We want your child to be happy and we'll do whatever we can to make your child feel as if this is your child's second home.
4. **Leave loveys home.** Kids don't want to share their blankies and favorite stuffed animals.
5. **Smile when you say good-bye to your child.** It's normal to have mixed feelings about being apart from your child, but don't let him/her know that. If you look as if you are about to cry when you leave, your child will have more trouble separating.
6. **Keep an eye on the clock.** If we close at 5:30, please don't arrive at 5:29 and then linger for ten minutes. We want to get home to our families too.
7. **Make the rules at home consistent with the ones here.** It'll confuse your child if he/she is allowed to throw toys at home, etc. But not at childcare.
8. **Leave us little reminders of you.** When your child is feeling lonely, we can comfort him/her with a family photo album, a tape recorded message from you or a handkerchief with your perfume on it in a plastic bag.
9. **Make time for morning and afternoon transitions.** If you're late for work and rushing out the day-care door every morning, your child will be stressed. Take a few minutes to help your child settle in. If you are late at pick up time, call ahead so we can prepare your child for a quick pick up.
10. **Tell us about changes in your child's life.** If you're separating from your spouse or there's an illness in the family, or even if one parent is traveling, keep us in the loop.
11. **Read the notes we send you.** And if there's something to be signed up for, please don't wait until the last minute.
12. **Your child won't be happy all the time.** Your child has bad moods and bad days at home, he/she will have them here too. As long as your child is content, don't overreact to minor incidences. And if your child seems grumpy one day, don't drag out the good-byes. Just say, "I know you're having a rough day, but I have to go to work. Your teacher will take care of you."
13. **Label everything you bring from home.**
14. **You are your child's most important teacher.** Don't get mad at us if your child is not using the potty yet or doesn't know how to tie his/her shoes. You should be working on these things at home too.
15. **Don't ask us to bend the rules.** Centers have unannounced inspections from the state and can be shut down for breaking regulations.
16. **Pay on time.** If you are having financial trouble, let us know and we will work with you.
17. **If you're unhappy about something, talk to us.** Please don't just complain to other parents. This does not get the problem addressed and solved and can do real damage to a center perhaps unfairly.
18. **Follow our fever policy.** Before coming back to day care, your child must be fever free, without medication for at least 24 hours.
19. **Stay on top of supplies.** Please make sure you are up to date on things like diapers, wipes and extra clothes.
20. **Say thanks.** We like being appreciated for the things we do for your child. We also love hearing the nice things your child tells you about us.