

Who Are My Toughest Competitors? Competitive Analysis Worksheet

		<i>My Child Care Business</i>	<i>Competitor #1</i>	<i>Competitor #2</i>	<i>Competitor #3</i>
Competitor's Name:					
Street Address:					
Website Address:					
Ages of Children Served: <i>(Infant/Toddler/Preschool/School aged)</i>					
Special Needs Served: <i>(For example, mildly ill children, disabled children, second shift, third shift)</i>					
Comparative Pricing:	Infants:	\$	\$	\$	\$
	Toddlers:	\$	\$	\$	\$
	Preschool:	\$	\$	\$	\$
	School aged:	\$	\$	\$	\$
	Drop In:	\$	\$	\$	\$
Days and Hours of Operation:					
Appearance: <i>(Is the facility clean and well maintained? Is the children's area laid out well? Is it attractive with child friendly colors, decorations, and child created artwork?)</i>					
Equipment and Toys: <i>(Are there age appropriate outdoor and indoor toys and climbing equipment? Are toys and equipment clean and well maintained?)</i>					
Customer Service: <i>(Do the caregivers interact well with the children? How are potential customers treated? Is staff helpful and friendly?)</i>					
Children: <i>(Do the children seem happy? Are they involved in appropriate activities?)</i>					
Environment: <i>(Does the program have an age-appropriate schedule with time for structured learning activities, playtime, and quiet time?)</i>					
Would you use this provider to care for your children? <i>(Why or why not?)</i>					

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Competitive Analysis

Who Are My Toughest Competitors?

Competitive Analysis is just a fancy way of saying know your competitors.

If you are just **starting** as a child care provider, the best way to learn about your competitors is to visit them or at the very least to call them. Pretend you are a parent looking for child care. If you're uncomfortable doing this, ask a friend to help you. Of course, you'll ask about the prices they charge, the number of children they care for, their hours of operations, and so on. Here are some other questions that you can ask yourself as you visit your competitors.

- Are the children busy with age-appropriate activities?
- Do the children generally seem happy to be there?
- Is the site child-friendly with age appropriate toys, books, and activities?
- Is the environment (both inside and outside) safe and child-proofed?
- Are there examples of the children's projects on display?
- Is there a daily/weekly/monthly schedule and routine?
- Does the care giver treat the children appropriately? Does she or he seem to be happy working with the children?
- What do you like about this child care? What don't you like?
- Would you use this child care for *your* children?

Why is it important to know your competitors?

Seeing what others are doing (both good and bad) can help you really figure out **your vision** for your child care business. Once you know your vision, it will be much easier to tell parents what **you** have to offer that's special, that's unique from all other providers. It will make naming your business and marketing your business that much easier.

This exercise can be helpful even **if you have been in business for years**. What would you do if a large chain opens a brand new child care center in your neighborhood? You'd want to visit and find out all you can about it. Then ask yourself, what do you offer that's different? What benefits does your center or home offer that the chain doesn't? Maybe it's fewer children, home-cooked meals, more flexible hours, or a cozier setting.

Caution: If you are already in business you can't tell your competitors you are a provider and share price information with them. That could be considered price fixing, which is against the law.

You can use the worksheet on the other side as a simple guide to help you analyze your competition.

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