

PD Day Planning Toolkit (Child Care Programs)

“Setting Educators Up for Success” Toolkit

Use this toolkit to plan an annual PD Day + build follow-up so training sticks.

SECTION 1 — Quick Start Guide (1 page)

What is a PD Day?

A **PD Day** is a planned day of training that:

- strengthens educator skills (competency)
- creates consistent practice across the center
- builds confidence and culture
- improves quality and compliance
- supports retention and mental health

Why it matters (simple message to operators)

Training is not an expense — it’s a stability strategy.

A PD Day reduces risk and stress by making expectations clear and building shared tools.

Best practice principles

A strong PD Day is:

- ✓ practical (tools used immediately)
- ✓ interactive (practice time, not lecture)

- aligned to center needs
 - followed up (so it doesn't fade)
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SECTION 2 — PD Day Planning Checklist

Step 1: Decide your goal

- Pick **1–2 center priorities** for the year
- Identify the **biggest stress point** for staff
- Choose a **theme** that supports quality + compliance
- Define what success will look like

Your center theme: _____

Step 2: Identify your team needs

- Send staff a quick survey (template below)
- Review incidents/accidents trends
- Review parent concerns/common issues
- Review licensing feedback or risk areas
- Review turnover patterns (why people leave)

Step 3: Choose training that fits

- Does it solve a real challenge in your center?
- Does it give tools staff can use immediately?
- Does it help staff feel more confident and supported?
- Does it strengthen consistency and reduce compliance risk?
- Is it aligned with child outcomes and parent expectations?

Step 4: Plan the logistics

- Date set: _____
- Location: _____
- Facilitator chosen: _____
- Schedule created
- Coverage/closure plan confirmed
- Supplies/materials ready

- Staff communication sent
- Food/snacks organized
- Certificates / PD records prepared

Step 5: Follow-up

- Schedule 2–3 follow-ups in advance
 - Assign a “tool champion” for each key strategy
 - Build PD into staff meetings monthly
 - Track 2–3 measurable outcomes
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SECTION 3 — Staff Needs Survey (Copy/Paste)

Subject: Help us plan our annual PD Day

Instructions: Please answer honestly — this helps us choose training that supports you.

1. What is the hardest part of your day right now?

- behavior guidance
- transitions/routines
- parent communication
- documentation
- inclusion/diverse needs
- teamwork/conflict
- supervision/safety
- programming
- other: _____

2. Where do you feel least confident?

3. What topic would make your job easier this year?

4. What would you love more support with?

5. What would make a PD Day worthwhile for you?

- practical tools I can use immediately
- time to ask questions
- scenarios/practice
- resources/templates
- team connection and collaboration

SECTION 4 — PD Day Theme Selector (The “Fit Test”)

Pick a theme that meets all three:

Team Fit (Educators)

What will reduce stress and increase confidence?

Centre Fit (Program Priorities)

What will improve consistency + quality + compliance?

Child Fit (Outcomes)

What will benefit children & families?

Choose ONE clear theme:

Our PD Day theme is: _____

SECTION 5 — PD Topic Menu (Innovative + Practical)

These themes tend to create real changes:

Behavior + Mental Health

- Co-regulation and behavior guidance
- Trauma-informed care in real classrooms
- Preventing educator burnout through practical strategies

Quality + Compliance

- Inspection-ready routines & documentation
- Supervision, safety & risk management
- Incident response & communication

Inclusion

- Supporting diverse needs
- Supporting children with complex behaviors
- Working with families + outside supports

Team Culture + Leadership

- Professionalism, accountability & conflict resolution
- Coaching conversations and performance feedback
- Building a strong center culture

Choose your top 2:

1. _____
2. _____

SECTION 6 — Sample PD Day Agenda (Highly Effective)

6-Hour PD Day Example

9:00–9:20 Welcome + why this matters + expectations

9:20–10:45 Training Block 1 (core concepts + tools)

10:45–11:00 Break

11:00–12:00 Workshop: practice tools + role-play scenarios

12:00–12:45 Lunch + team connection

12:45–1:45 Training Block 2 (advanced strategies + examples)

1:45–2:30 Centre action plan: agreements + systems

2:30–3:00 Next steps + follow-up schedule + commitments

Built-in success factors

- staff practice time
 - shared scripts and routines
 - center agreements
 - follow-up plan established the same day
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SECTION 7 — “Training That Sticks” Tools

The 3 things every PD Day should produce

1. **Shared Language** (what we call things)
2. **Shared Tools** (scripts, routines, templates)
3. **Shared Agreements** (what we all commit to)

Centre Agreements Template

After training, we agree to:

- We will _____
- We will _____

- We will stop _____
 - We will support each other by _____
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SECTION 8 — Follow-Up Plan (So it Doesn't Fade)

Pick 2–3 follow-up supports:

- 15-minute refreshers monthly
- coaching check-ins every 6–8 weeks
- buddy/mentor system
- observation + feedback cycles
- focus strategy of the month
- room leads model the approach
- include tools in onboarding for new staff

Follow-up schedule:

- Follow-up #1 (date): _____ topic: _____
 - Follow-up #2 (date): _____ topic: _____
 - Follow-up #3 (date): _____ topic: _____
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SECTION 9 — Measuring Results (Simple + Realistic)

Choose 2–3 outcomes to track:

- fewer incidents
- improved staff confidence
- improved consistency across rooms
- fewer parent complaints
- improved retention
- stronger licensing outcomes

How we'll track:

- incident log review monthly
- staff feedback (3-question survey)
- parent feedback / communication themes
- observation checklist

Define Success (one sentence)

"After this PD Day, we will see _____."

SECTION 10 — Staff Invitation Script (Copy/Paste)

Subject: Our Annual PD Day — Investing in Our Team

Message:

Hi team,

We're setting aside a dedicated PD Day this year because we want you to feel supported, confident, and successful in your role. This training day is designed to give you practical tools you can use immediately and to strengthen consistency across our program.

We'll be focusing on: **[PD Day theme]**

Your input matters — please complete the short survey by **[date]** so we can choose training that best supports you.

Thank you for everything you do. We're investing in this because *you matter* and because strong educators create strong programs.