

# **Safe Interviewing Practices**

Beth Mork, [bethmork@comcast.net](mailto:bethmork@comcast.net)

Recently questions have been asked about how safe it is to schedule interviews in a provider's home with potential clients who met them in a park and observed them with children, or who called on the phone or who accessed their information through a Resource and Referral or Licensing website. Here are some suggestions for your consideration:

1. Activate Caller ID on your phone.
  - A. Verify the name, address and phone number using a telephone directory or the internet directory.
  - B. Get a work phone number for the person you are to interview and confirm your appointment by placing a call to work and to the home.
  - C. Notify the person that you are going to do this. Explain that it is your policy in order to protect the security and safety of the children in your care. Parents will certainly be understanding of your concern and appreciative of your precautions.
2. Never open your door to accept an interview from a person who just stops by your home. Explain that you take interviews by appointment only. Have the person call you and then follow the steps above. Any official representing law enforcement, licensing, child protection or the Food Program will carry a photo ID with them.
3. When running an advertisement or printing a flyer, never give your home address. Realize that it is accessible on the internet on DHS website and that is why you need to be cautious about allowing someone into your home for an interview.
4. Conduct first interviews after business hours, when children are not present and if possible, have another adult in the home with you.
5. Some providers require background checks of the parents they accept into their programs, and licensing may require it if the person will be volunteering or substituting in your child care home.
6. Ask for references from parents you interview. If they have left another child care program, ask why they left that program and if you may contact that program for a reference. Remember you are interviewing them for fit with your program as much as they are interviewing you for fit with their family.
7. Often the best and safest way to fill openings in your child care program is through word of mouth or referrals from your current or past clients.

Child Care & Nutrition, Inc. • PO Box 138 • Ivanhoe, MN 56142

1-800-634-3359 • [www.childcarenutrition.com](http://www.childcarenutrition.com)