

Planning for a future of working on – not in – childcare business.

Dana Barnhart is the busy hands-on owner of Maryland childcare center, Kiddie Academy of Kent Island.

The state-accredited, level five NAEYC-rated school is licensed for 98 children between eight weeks and 10 years of age. As we all know, this is no small feat!

Their learning approach and curriculum encourages children to explore and progress in their own way, and at their own pace to grow socially, physically, emotionally and intellectually.

Highly trained teachers are there every step of the way to guide, nurture and cultivate every child's development.

"It is our job as educators to empower and celebrate imagination and curiosity as it gathers momentum in our children," says Dana.

With more than 20 years' experience within Kiddie Academy, Dana is an industry veteran who had robust compliance procedures in place – albeit on paper.

Through The Childcare Success Company she learned about an online compliance and best practice software that removed the reliance on paper.

"I came across 1Place Childcare through a virtual conference and signed up for an exploration call."



Saying goodbye to paper

A treehugger at heart, Dana was thrilled to find a solution that kept her compliance in-check without the need for paper.

"I write injury reports for kids and they just sit in the parking lot because they fall out of the parents' cars."

With 1Place Childcare, injuries are logged through an online checklist and emailed to parents.

"Most parents don't want a copy but I like that I can email them if they do. It's a really easy system to use."

Every teacher within the school now uses a classroom tablet to carry out regular checks and reports through the 1Place Childcare app.

"It was a little learning curve at the beginning because the teachers were used to doing it all on paper," she says.

However, she soon established procedures to ensure correct processes were followed.

The school now uses 1Place for daily classroom open and close checks – including additional COVID-related sanitization and cleaning requirements – building checks, children's health checks, injury forms and to log maintenance tickets.

Maintenance is carried out by Dana's husband Scott. Dana says the process and communication of the issues has improved with 1Place Childcare.

"There wasn't a process before. I would text him, start a mental 'honey do' list and we would come in on the weekends and pray we remembered to do everything."

Now, teachers are prompted to report any maintenance issues at the end of the daily close checklist, and can also create tickets in the app, which are sent directly to Scott.

"In the eight months since we've had 1Place we've resolved 27 different issues. It is more than we would have before 1Place, which is cool," she says.

However, online injury reporting – and the paper it's saved – is Dana's favorite feature "by far".

KIDDIE ACADEMY
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Custom checklists for added protection

Dana worked with her 1Place Childcare key account manager Annette to create a specialized daily health checklist that keeps a running record of marks on children's bodies.

"It's not a state required form, it's more a 'protect us' form so, if we're watching a child with marks that might or might not be suspect, we have a running record of those marks."

Dana says these were previously recorded on paper and she would hold on to any of concern.

"Now I don't have to worry about it, I can go back if there's something noteworthy and, if I ever had to, I can tie that mark to an injury."

Dana is also thrilled to have access to 1Place Childcare's NAEYC Accreditation checklist for licensing.

"I like that it's in there and I won't have to hand a book to the teacher. It has the portfolio, evidence checklist, and ages all ready to go, which will be great when I start using it in the new year," she says.

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DANA BARNHART
OWNER, KIDDIE ACADEMY

Planning for the future

While going paperless and improving accountability was the initial appeal, Dana knows there are many more features of 1Place Childcare, such as trend reporting, staff training and satisfaction, that she's yet to tap into.

"I really need to take some time to get the most out of the data, information and analytics. That is on my horizon next. I know that data's there and I love that I can access anything if I need to."

Dana has a different future in mind that doesn't involve spending 60 hours a week working in the center.

"The goal is to work on my business and not be a teacher in my business. When I get to my perfect world, I will be using 1Place as a tool for that accountability piece and the reporting won't seem a lot because I'll have the assurance they've done it, investigated it and it's been signed."



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