

Wassom's Child Care Marketing Wisdom #371

Easy Ways to Ask for the Enrollment

By Julie Wassom

For many directors of early care and education programs, guiding a parent through a center or school visit is an enrollment responsibility that is generally comfortable. Are you one of these? You know your program and you are proud of your facility. You have confidence in your staff's ability to deliver your curriculum and provide enriching, fun learning experiences. You want to show it all off to prospective parents and potential enrollees. Yet, the key words here are prospective and potential. They are not yet enrolled.

Just showing them your center and telling them all the benefits of your program is not enough. You will convert far more enrollments if you ASK your prospects to enroll. Many directors tell me this is the hardest skill for them to practice comfortably and confidently. Of five proven ways to ask closing questions, here are two types that are the easiest for you to ask and the easiest for your prospects to answer during the center visit.

Alternate Choice Closing Questions – This type of closing question offers your prospect a choice of two options. Their response to either one means they have enrolled. For example, you might say, “*Would you like to start Timmy on Monday or is Wednesday a better day?*” Prospects find it easier to answer this type of closing question, because they have a choice and it gives them flexibility in their response. If neither choice works, they are far more likely to respond with one that is. For instance, a parent might respond, “Neither of those days work, but would it be alright if he starts tomorrow?”

Assumptive Closing Questions - This type of closing question can be very effective in converting the visit to an enrollment. It is a question that actually assumes the prospect will want to enroll, and merely presents a question about some of the details surrounding that decision. “*Would you like me to give you some privacy here in my office to complete the enrollment forms?*” is an assumptive closing question. A positive response to an assumptive closing question means your prospect is enrolling. You have then accomplished your goal of converting that visit into an enrollment!

Asking closing questions is not manipulative or pushy. – If you have done a good job of assessing your prospect's needs, addressing them with the benefits of your center or program, and requested some agreement from the parent to what you have presented, then asking for the enrollment is something your prospect expects. Your asking them to enroll simply confirms that you really do believe in the quality of your program and in their child's ability to thrive within it. If you want higher capacity utilization, practice asking for the enrollment until it's easy.

To learn more about easy ways to close and handle objections →

