

Getting Information from the Play Yard to the Client

Objective: Improve communication processes between the play yard and the client.

Content: A small scratch, a broken toe nail, loose stool or excessive barking can occasionally occur even in the safest play yards. No big deal, right?!? You are correct, these issues should not be a big deal but can escalate quickly if the right communication does not make it from the play yard to the client. Proactive communication of tiny bumps and bruises will prevent them from escalating into significant customer service issues. Utilize this activity to review and improve communication from play yard to client.

Prior to Lunch & Learn Session:

- In preparation for leading the group discussion, the leader should review the supporting document section to determine what information will be utilized and presented.
- Review your current method of communicating minor issues from the play yard to the client. What is working well and what is not working well?
    - If desired, present the short survey below to get input/ideas from your team.
- Prepare an example of a recent success and a recent failure at your center communicating an issue from the play yard to the client.
- Have a white board or other way to document notes during your meeting.

During Lunch & Learn Session:

- Open with your thoughts on why this topic is so important. If you need guidance, see the supporting documents.
- Discuss what constitutes a "minor issue." Have your team assist with compiling this list. A few common examples are noted in the supporting documents. You can edit as needed.
- Review the current method for communicating these minor issues from the play yard to the client. What is working well and what needs improvement? Are certain things getting missed? Discuss the results of the survey here.
- Brainstorm with the team on how your process can be improved based on ideas from the survey and thoughts from team members.
    - Write ideas on the white board or notepad.
- Don't forget the good stuff!!! Discuss positive and fun things that should also be communicated to the client from the play yard. For ideas, see the supporting documents section.
- If a final process cannot be completed during the meeting, nominate one or two team members to compile ideas and develop an improved process to present to management at a later date. *Tip: remember to update the employee handbook with new procedures.

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Supporting Education Articles/Tools: The information below provides additional guidance on the topic and should be reviewed prior to and during the meeting:

Why is this topic important?

In the pet industry, your number one goal is to have pet parents trust you with their pets. Since pet parents are not around to observe exactly how you provide the care, they are left with the words they hear and the impressions that are made each and every time they interact with a member of your team. Today's pet parent has high expectations and desires a very developed level of competence and service.

Good communication will build trust and confidence. Gaining customer's trust is important not only to make them loyal and come back, but also so they insist their friends do business with you too. Their experience with your pet care center should be helpful and enjoyable, making them *want* to come back even when a minor issue has occurred. Proper communication of minor issues will show them that you are paying attention and care about the health and safety of their pets.

Common Minor Issues in the Play Yard

- Small scratches/scrapes
- New bumps
- Removal of a single tick
- Isolated incidence of loose stool/vomiting
- Broken toe nails (without active bleeding)
- An isolated instance of a challenging behavior
- ...don't forget to add others during the meeting!

Sample Good Stuff

- Improved behavior (wait at the gate, quiet during naptime)
- Making a new friend (human or canine)
- Especially enjoyed an enrichment activity
- Well behaved for grooming/bath
- A funny antic from the play yard
- ...don't forget to add others during the meeting!

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Communication Process Survey

We value the opinions and ideas of our team members. Please take a minute to help us evaluate and improve our communication of minor issues from the play yard to the client. Utilize the scenario below to answer the survey questions.

Sample Scenario: Daisy is a playful daycare dog that comes to our center routinely. A small scrape is discovered on her belly during the early afternoon. The scrape gets a quick cleaning and inspection. It is determined that it is very minor, and she can return to play.

1. **Is it necessary to bring this minor issue to the pet parent's attention?**

   ○ Yes

   ○ No

   Why or why not?

   _____

   _____

2. **Do you believe we have a clearly defined, effective process for communicating minor issues to our clients.**

   ○ Yes

   ○ No

   How would you suggest improving this process to be more effective?

   _____

   _____

3. **Are you clear on what minor issues need to be communicated to our clients?**

   ○ Yes

   ○ No

4. **Is there any other input you would like to provide on this topic?**

   _____

   _____

   _____

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