

## Helpful Hints

These boxes serve as a reminder of good practice when working with children.

Childminder and children



### // Bubble quotes //

These comments have been made by practising childminders or those considering this profession.

## Aims

To increase your knowledge and understanding of:

- the professional role of the childminder
- the National Standards for Under Eights Daycare and Childminding
- the importance of promoting equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice
- the benefits of being a childminder.

## Introduction

The word 'childminder' conjures up the picture of someone simply 'minding' children, perhaps an adult who is 'keeping an eye' on them. The term doesn't describe someone who is actively encouraging and stimulating the development of children. Childminding would benefit from a term which suggests the professionalism of the job. In America, Australia and New Zealand, childminding is called Family Day Care and this term seems to describe better what the childminder actually does.

## Who can be a childminder?

A person who is able to provide warm and consistent care for children in their own home. In addition, childminders need to meet the requirements of the National Standards for Childminders. For example, a childminder will need relevant experience and a willingness to undertake training and gain qualifications.

Throughout this book, you will find occasional references to the National Standards that may help you make essential links with the content.

### National Standard 1: Suitable person

Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

As you read through this book, you will find it helpful to refer to a copy of the Childminder's Guidance to the Early Years National Standards 2001, published by Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education).

## What do you need to know?

The chapters contained in this book are designed to equip you for the very responsible role of looking after children.

Broadly speaking, you will need to know:

- how to fulfil your responsibilities towards all children
- how to meet individual needs of children
- how to be friendly but at the same time professional
- where to seek advice and how to make good use of further professional development
- how young children develop
- how to provide activities that stimulate development
- how to ensure the health, safety and protection of children
- how to provide nutritious meals.

## Terms

We use the words *parent* or *parents* to include anyone who is the main carer. Where appropriate we refer to children in the plural to avoid distinctions between 'he' and 'she'.