

Summertime Child Care May Mean Bigger Age Range of Children

By Colleen Gengler, Family Relations Educator,
University of Minnesota Extension

Summertime can be a challenge for child care providers if you have the addition of school age children. Routines you've set up during the year are interrupted. Activities, toys and supplies may not be adequate for older children. It is important to practice developmentally appropriate care for each age. If you have older children in your care, ask yourself if you are doing the following for the different ages. Are you . . .

- Patient and supportive with children?
- Promoting creativity, discovery, and exploration?
- Encouraging children to take initiative in selecting activities?
- Understanding the individual capabilities of children?
- Interacting with the children by talking to them as well as listening to what they have to say?
- Allowing children to do things for themselves?
- Offering choices of activities and materials?
- Setting and enforcing reasonable limits?
- Willing to use different methods of care to meet each child's abilities and needs?

Child care is a challenging profession. These questions are a "check-up" for providers; especially during the summer when you may have a bigger age range of children.

For summer care ideas, go to: <http://betterkidcare.psu.edu/>

Click on Summer Resources under "Cool Stuff" on the left.