

# Seller Readiness Checklist

## 10 Things to Know Before Selling Your Child Care Center

Thinking about selling your child care center? You do not have to be ready to sell today to start planning. A strong sale often begins long before the center is officially available.

Use this checklist to think through your next step, protect your privacy, and prepare your business for serious buyer conversations.

### 1. Know why you want to sell

Before talking to a buyer, get clear about your reason for selling.

Common reasons include:

- retirement
- burnout
- relocation
- health or family needs
- partnership changes
- financial reasons
- a new business opportunity
- wanting to step away from daily operations

Your reason can affect your timeline, your asking price, and the type of buyer you may want.

**Ask yourself:** Why am I considering selling, and how soon do I want to make a change?

### 2. Decide how private the process needs to be

Selling a child care business can be sensitive. Staff, families, competitors, and landlords do not need to know too early.

Think about:

- Who already knows you are considering selling?
- Do you need confidentiality?



- Are you comfortable sharing basic information privately?
- When would staff and families need to be told?

**Tip:** Start quietly. A private interest form is a safer first step than a public listing.

### 3. Review your licensing status

Buyers will want to know whether your child care license is active and in good standing.

Before moving forward, review:

- current license status
- inspection history
- renewal dates
- any compliance concerns
- open corrective actions
- staff qualification requirements

**Ask yourself:** Would a buyer see my licensing status as a strength or a concern?

### 4. Know your enrollment numbers

Enrollment is one of the first things many buyers ask about.

Gather information such as:

- current enrollment
- licensed capacity
- waitlist status
- age groups served
- full-time vs. part-time enrollment
- tuition rates
- recent enrollment trends

**Tip:** A center does not need to be full to have value, but buyers will want to understand the pattern.

### 5. Organize basic financial records

You do not need to hand over every document at the beginning, but you should know whether your records are ready.

Start organizing:



- revenue reports
- expense records
- payroll costs
- rent or mortgage costs
- tuition collection information
- profit and loss statements
- tax records, if available

**Ask yourself:** Could I explain how my center makes and spends money?

## 6. Think about your staff structure

A child care center's staff is a major part of its value.

Buyers may ask:

- How many staff members do you have?
- What roles do they fill?
- Is there a director in place?
- Are staff properly trained?
- How long have key staff been with the center?
- Would staff likely stay after a sale?

**Tip:** A stable team can make a center more attractive to buyers.

## 7. Understand your real estate situation

Real estate can make a sale more simple or more complex.

Clarify whether:

- you own the property
- you lease the building
- the buyer could assume the lease
- the landlord must approve a transfer
- real estate is included in the sale
- the building needs repairs or updates

**Ask yourself:** Am I selling only the business, or the business and the property?

## 8. Identify what makes your center attractive

Every center has strengths. Know yours before talking to buyers.



Possible strengths include:

- strong reputation
- good location
- long operating history
- loyal families
- stable staff
- high enrollment
- room to grow
- clean licensing history
- strong curriculum or program style
- good community relationships

**Tip:** Buyers want numbers, but they also want to understand the story behind the center.

## 9. Be honest about what may lower value

Being prepared means knowing the challenges too.

Possible concerns may include:

- low enrollment
- staff turnover
- licensing issues
- facility repairs
- unclear financial records
- high rent
- weak marketing
- outdated classrooms
- owner-dependent operations

**Ask yourself:** What would I want to improve before a buyer takes a closer look?

## 10. Know your ideal next step

You do not need to decide everything today. You only need to know what kind of help you may need.

You may need:

- a private conversation about selling
- help preparing documents
- guidance on what buyers look for
- help understanding your center's strengths



- support creating an exit plan
- help connecting with possible buyers

## Ready to explore selling your child care center?

If you are thinking about selling now, selling later, or simply learning what your options may be, **request your FREE consultation**. Complete the [Private Child Care Business Buyer/Seller Interest Form](#).

Your information will be reviewed privately. If your inquiry is a good fit, ChildCareEd may follow up to schedule a free consultation with Hwaida.

