

# Promoting the Benefits of Your Early Learning Program

Many early learning providers, especially ones that are new, seek additional guidance in promoting the benefits of their program. The features of the program – the hours the program is open, the ages of children served, the fact that they are licensed – can easily be disseminated. However, families trying to figure out the best program for their children as well as funders seeking outcomes find value and connection in the benefits of an early learning program rather than just those features. Families want to know how a program will meet their needs and those of their children. Funders want to know how an investment in the program will ensure measurable outcomes for children, families, the community, and the funder.

**Features** tell what the provider offers. **Benefits** show how the program will be of help to the children and parents. **Features** focus on the providers, while **benefits** focus on the outcomes for children and families. Additionally, **benefits** describe the contributions that the program makes to the community. Benefits may be helpful in designing potential plans and strategies for outreach, marketing, and recruitment.

Below are some samples of features and benefits. Use the worksheet on the other side to write out your program’s features and benefits. If you aren’t sure, ask current and past families in your program why they chose your early learning program. Families will usually answer in terms of benefits. If you are new to providing early care and education, ask families in your local neighborhood and other community collaborators for information regarding the benefits of early learning programs and find current research and best practice to cite.

<b>Features</b>	<b>Benefits</b>
<i>My program is open from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.</i>	<i>My program fits with the schedules of working parents.</i>
<i>My program cares for children from infants through school age.</i>	<i>My program cares for all ages of children providing a continuity of care and consistency that supports a child to be socially and emotionally ready for school and beyond.</i>
<i>My program is licensed.</i>	<i>My program meets all health and safety requirements to make sure your child is safe and secure at all times.</i>
<i>My program serves breakfast, lunch, and two snacks.</i>	<i>My program serves nutritious meals the promote healthy children. Weekly menus are posted so families know in advance what we are serving everyday.</i>
<i>My program meets all child-to-staff ratio requirements.</i>	<i>My program’s low child-to-staff ratios and small group sizes allow each staff to spend special time with each child to meet their individual learning needs.</i>
<i>My program’s teachers are experienced.</i>	<i>My program’s teachers are selected for their knowledge of child development, their experience with children, and their warmth and love for children. Most of my program’s teachers have been with my program for more than [#] years!</i>
<i>My program is enrolled in and participating in Quality First.</i>	<i>My program invests in quality improvement efforts around educational instruction, quality environments, and programmatic excellence to provide the most meaningful, individualized, and the highest quality service to families and our community.</i>

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Use the worksheet below to write out your own features and benefits. Benefits may be helpful in designing potential plans and strategies for outreach, marketing, and recruitment:

<b>Features</b>	<b>Benefits</b>

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*Adapted from: Family Child Care Marketing Guide: How to Build Enrollment and Promote Your Business as a Child Care Professional, by Tom Copeland, J.D., Published by Redleaf Press, 1999. Retrieved from [www.firstchildrensfinance.org](http://www.firstchildrensfinance.org) at <http://childcareaware.org/providers/planning-for-success/marketing-your-program/>.*