

The Need to Be More Efficient in the Classroom

Limited time and money are the traditionally perceived barriers to providing the kind of high-quality early education that develops young minds while also engaging parents. While there can be no doubt that teachers in child development centers and preschools are struggling due to limited time and money to do their jobs, there is a more fundamental barrier.

That fundamental barrier is technology.

Teachers are being tasked with increasing administrative, educational, developmental, and parent-engagement responsibilities. Unfortunately, most teachers aren't supported by the right type of technology that is specifically designed to help them do their job more efficiently. Without this technology, they are stuck with using routines that limit their productivity.

When teachers are empowered to apply advancements in technology to their long list of tasks and responsibilities, they can modify and streamline their old routines. By working more efficiently, teachers can get more done with less effort, while having a greater impact.

With a state-of-the-art parent-engagement system in place, teachers can free up time to focus less on administrative paperwork and more on the parts of their job that make a difference in lives of children.

A Teacher's Typical Workday Can be Overwhelming

Getting to the classroom before the children arrive, and leaving hours after the children go home, teachers spend their typical workday struggling to balance administrative tasks, student development, and parent engagement. They are teachers, mothers, fathers, caregivers, and administrative assistants all combined into one person. The burden can be overwhelming.

Administrative Tasks

Teachers get to work early to make sure the classroom is prepared and that everything is in order before the children arrive. Throughout the day, they are managing the educational and social development of perhaps 15 or more children, each with unique personalities and needs.

Before teaching begins, teachers spend lots of time creating lesson plans that follow state educational guidelines. They also spend time completing mounds of paperwork—often by hand—that are associated with licensing or accreditation requirements.

The best way to understand the burden of the administrative tasks associated with accreditation is to take a look at the standards. Two of the most important national accreditation associations are: the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the Association for Early Learning Leaders.

NAEYC has 10 standards and accreditation criteria designed to promote positive educational and developmental outcomes. They cover relationships, curriculum, teaching, assessment, health, family engagement, community relationships, the physical environment, and leadership and management.¹

The Association for Early Learning Leaders has 91 accreditation standards, divided into six component areas, each with their own set of indicators. They also verify compliance with their standards through document reviews, classroom observation, parental surveys, staff surveys, and interviews.²

Student Education and Development

The majority of a teacher's day is filled with teaching and making sure the needs of the children in their care are met. Presenting the curriculum is only part of their role. They are also caregivers responsible for the health and safety of their students.

¹ National Association for the Education of Young Children, Introduction to the NAEYC Accreditation Standards and Criteria, 2014.

² Association for Early Learning Leaders, National Accreditation Commission Standards, 2014.

Additionally, there are administrative tasks associated with these educational and developmental responsibilities. When children reach milestones, their progress must be recorded. If a child has an accident, the teacher must handle the situation and make a record of the incident.

Parent Engagement

Ideally, parents should have a high level of engagement in their child's education. To facilitate this engagement, teachers provide parents with ongoing daily, weekly, and monthly reports.

Daily reports document the child's experience throughout the day and their progress toward developmental milestones that should be aligned with state early education standards. Newsletters inform parents about what their child is learning so that parents can reinforce the learning at home. Progress reports combine all of this information to give parents and teachers an overview of a child's growth over time so that they can identify and address needs for development.

Clearly, it takes an enormous amount of time to prepare these reports for an entire classroom. Contributing to the time burden is the fact that much of this administrative work is typically done with pen and paper and almost no automation tools.

Teachers Struggle with Time and Resources

Both inside and outside of the classroom, teachers are challenged with finding an acceptable balance between spending quality, one-on-one time with students and handling their administrative work. They live through a constant cycle of compromises.

On the one hand, to make more effective lesson plans, teachers need to spend time interacting with each student to learn their individual strengths and weaknesses, their likes and dislikes. On the other hand, teachers must keep up with their paperwork and administrative tasks. They need to make assessments, record progress, and engage with parents.

Teachers shouldn't be forced to decide that paperwork is more important than having a longer, more meaningful interaction with every child. The current process puts everyone at a disadvantage.

It's also important to consider the hard costs of this inefficiency. There are more than 115,000 childcare centers and preschools nationwide.³³

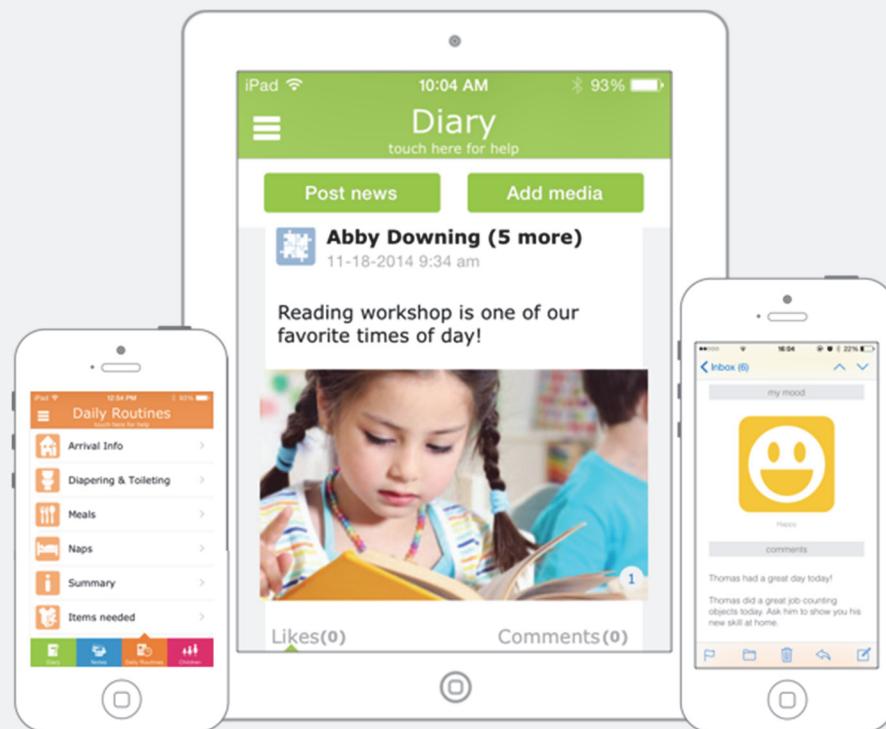
Education experts have estimated that the annual hard costs of supporting the current level of administrative inefficiency are as high as \$10,000 per year for each classroom. That means this segment of the education system has a problem that exceeds one billion dollars every year.

Fortunately for teachers, administrators, and families, the lack of technology is no longer a barrier to efficiency.

n Automated Parent Engagement System Boosts Efficiency

Traditionally, it is believed that providing high-quality early education that develops young minds while also engaging parents requires a constant trade-off. A teacher has to choose between spending more one-on-one time with the children and focusing on administrative responsibilities. With the right technology, compromises like this are no longer necessary.

By applying the right technology, teachers can automate their time-consuming routines so they can spend more time interacting with their students and less time managing administrative work. This technology has the added benefit of reducing the hard costs of inefficiency.



³ ChildcareCenter.us, Childcare Directory, 2014



With an automated parent-engagement system, teachers can easily:

- **Align** their curriculum with education standards by customizing the system to reflect the state's early learning standards.
- **Engage** parents by keeping them updated on their child's learning and development with daily sheets, attendance and incident reports, child- specific diaries, portfolios, and photos.
- **Personalize** communications by sending parents secure emails, shared calendars, newsletters, and reminders of school events.
- **Focus** on learning by sharing daily activities, notes, and classroom diaries tagged with curriculum objectives that foster dialogue between parent and child, helping parents reinforce what their child learns during the day.
- **Measure** impact by automatically tracking key statistics such as attendance, achievement, and parent engagement.
- **Provide** accessibility by giving teachers, admin, and parents access through a web-based interface and mobile devices 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- **Protect** privacy by hosting all information on a safe and secure platform.

MyChild is the Efficiency Tool Teachers Need

The MyChild parent engagement system is the easiest, fastest, and most direct way to engage parents in early childhood education. Built for convenient web-based access as well as iOS and Android devices, MyChild is the missing piece of technology you need to help your teachers do more in less time and with less effort.

Because MyChild is delivered through an affordable software-as-service platform, it instantly delivers a positive ROI by reducing many of the hard costs associated with outdated paper-based administrative processes.

Trusted every day by hundreds of child development centers and preschools, MyChild can be easily customized to your state's early learning standards. In addition to assisting with maintaining accreditation and licensing requirements, this feature supports your teachers' efforts to demonstrate to parents that their child's development is a top priority.



About MyChild

MyChild is an award-winning parent engagement and learning management tool designed specifically for child care centers and preschools. It is the only completely customizable solution that allows directors and teachers to focus on child development instead of paperwork, and allows web-based interaction with parents to extend learning at home.

Through the use of MyChild's parent engagement tools such as daily diaries, newsletters, calendars, and libraries, parents remain completely informed about their child's activities and learning progress on a daily basis. For more information about MyChild, call 855-866-9244 or visit mychildnow.com.