

Providing a Safe and Social Environment

Agency: United Day Care Centers

Service: Provides affordable childcare for children from age two to ten at two locations.

Need: In South Dakota, 47% of all children under age 6 are in paid child care. This is nearly twice the national average and more per capita than any other state in the nation. Additionally, 77.5% of mothers in South Dakota with children ages birth to 6 years are in the work force.

Impact: Parents have a safe and stimulating environment to leave their children while they work and support their families. Children can participate in an age appropriate educational environment and interact socially with other children.

“I needed child care to be able to work and have an income,” says Meredith. “I just went through the phone book calling places hoping someone had room for my kids.”

Through her calls to various child care centers in Sioux Falls, Meredith happened upon United Day Care Centers. It was there that Meredith found more than just child care for her children.

“You can’t find a better director than Judy,” explains Meredith. “She’s been there for me through some tough times. She’s always willing to listen and help out in any way she can, and I know she cares.”

Meredith has three children, one of which attends United Day Care full-time while her siblings are in school. Meredith’s youngest daughter, Cassie, has only attended United Day Care for a short time, but Meredith is already seeing the positive results of a quality day care.

“Cassie wasn’t a very social kid,” says Meredith. “She really likes it at United Day Care though, and she’s losing a lot of the shyness she used to have.”

For Meredith, United Day Care does more than just care for her daughter during the day. “She’s getting an education and she’s learning to socialize.”

United Day Care provides children with age appropriate activities to build social, physical, emotional, and cognitive development. They strive to provide quality care and loving attention while the children’s parents work or attend school.

And thanks to funding from Sioux Empire United Way, United Day Care is able to provide a sliding fee scale for low-income families. In 2007, parents of 37 children needed the lower fees to be able to afford quality child care.

“United Day Care is great for me and great for Cassie,” says Meredith. “It’s the perfect size for her and I know that she enjoys it.”