

# Service keeps home setting for children's care

By Leslie Kendrick

The Day Care Home Center, provided through Family Service Child Care, 2202 S. 11th St., offers an alternative to traditional child care centers and babysitters.

Catherine Koneya, an administrator with the Day Care Home Care program, said care givers in the program receive training through the Family Service Child Care. The care giver's homes are registered in compliance with Nebraska laws on family day care, she said. The Family Service Child Care requires that the women care for no more than four or five children, including their own.

Koneya said many of the women in the home care program are wives of foreign students. The service helps the foreign wives by providing a source of income, a chance to meet people in the community, and a way for them to expand their knowledge of English, she said.

Many of the foreign women providing home care are exceptional people with backgrounds in nursing, medicine and child care, Koneya said. The women are always interested in becoming better care givers, she said. Foreign women have started in the program within the last seven months, she said.

Yolanda Crossa, 2820 T St., said she likes child care work because she likes children and she can look after her own children while working. Crossa and her husband are from Uruguay.

She said the child care service is good because Family Service checks up on the care givers and provides on-going training.

Crossa said child care in the United States differs from that in Uruguay. In most Latin American countries, families hire a person who takes care of the child in the family's home.

Often the person is also a housekeeper, she said. The person will either live with the family or provide day services. It would be impossible to have the same sort of care in the United States because it would be too expensive, Crossa said.

Vicki Alvarado, 3101 Kleckner Ct., cares for a group of children ranging in age from eight months to three years, in addition to caring for her own child, Sonya. Alvarado was a pediatrics and medical-surgical nurse in Honduras.

Alvarado said she contacted the service about the day care services after hearing about it from a friend.

Alvarado said she too likes the day care work because she can care for her own child. Her child also has an opportunity to play with other children and to learn English.

"When you know the children it is easy to care for them," she said. "It is not hard work at all."

Care is provided from 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Koneya said. Care givers receive \$6 a day per child and are reimbursed for

meals by the service. The service also gives the care giver \$5 per child a month to buy art supplies or special toys.

The home care service includes many support services for the care giver, Koneya said. The latest theories on child development and child care are presented to the care givers in workshops given by the Family Service Child Care.

A monthly newsletter is sent to the care giver and the parents to share ideas and tips on child care and ways to play with and entertain children, Koneya said.

The care givers can check out such equipment as cribs, play pens, toys, records and films from the child care service, Koneya said.

Medical and child development questions are answered by Pat Johnson, the service's registered nurse. Johnson also visits the care givers' homes.

Johnson said she interviews individuals interested in providing home care. Johnson said she checks on the physical setting of the home. Care givers' homes must meet state requirements, she said. For the home to be registered with the state, the background of the individual must be checked.

Individuals are screened by checking on their knowledge of child development, Johnson said.

"It takes a special person to provide care for other children," she said. "The pay is not that great. They have to like children and be able to tolerate them."



Photo by Dave Bentz

Care Home — Lisa Whyte (back) stands near her sister Amy (in swing) and Tiffany (foreground) and their day care companions Phillip Goyette (in walker), care giver Vicki Alvarado and her daughter, Sonia. Alvarado cares for the children at one of three Day Care Home Care centers in Lincoln.

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