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An Open Letter to Daycare

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Dear Daycare,

Inside your walls, you welcome children from as young as 6 weeks old to as old as 12 years old, in some places. Your employees smile at the parents every morning as they walk in looking rushed, glaring at any teacher they see with pleading eyes to make their drop-off go smoothly. The young girl with no kids of her own, struggling to get through college and getting paid barely above minimum wage, sees the harried look on our faces and quickly greets the trembling-lipped child. She scoops them up and distracts them with a toy or book far more awesome than anything we have at home. Sometimes our kid will cry in spite of her efforts. But sometimes they just need that kind voice to encourage them to wave at the window with a promise that Mom or Dad will return soon.

We have the tendency to walk in with our seemingly perfect child that can do no wrong and we expect the undivided attention of the lead teacher. We are sometimes completely oblivious to the seven other children playing behind you. Even so, for the two minutes we see you in the morning and evening, you make sure that we feel like our child is the only one in the room. You listen intently to our instructions and tips and trite stories, regardless of how big of a brat our little angel was for you the day before. Your professionalism far surpasses that of most CEOs'.

To the employee who is there every morning at 6:00 a.m. waiting with open arms for our children and to the other employee, who is there until 6:00 p.m. giving the last hug of the day, I say this to you both: Sometimes we, as parents, need to hear your voice, too. Whether it's just to feel reassured for the billionth time that our child will be safe and happy in your

care. Sometimes we just need to be reminded that you care as much as we do. Mostly, your cheerful salutations are all we need.

To the director that fields complaints from employees and parents, fixes boo-boos, makes the sick calls to parents at work, handles emergencies with a level-head and probably does a long list of other things, I'd like to tell you something, too: It takes a special kind of person to work in this industry day in and day out, and YOU are special. You act as the principal, the referee, the accountant, the parent, the confidant, the cook, the janitor and the boss all day, every day. You encourage our phone calls to you and always take the time to listen. You treat your employees like family and you expect them to treat our children the same way. We may not always be the easiest to deal with, but you make every effort to keep us coming back.

We know it isn't cheap or easy to keep your programs running. But we appreciate everything you do, every single day. We know you care. We really, really do. Even when we're nit-picky about messy clothes, or a missed nap, or a time-out we didn't think was necessary, or whatever it is we feel you didn't do right that day. At the end of the day, our kids came home to us safely and, well, we're sorry. We're sorry we don't praise you enough. We're sorry we complain. And we're sorry for whatever our kid did to be put in time-out.

So, to you daycare, from the bottom of my mommy heart, I would like to say thank you for keeping my babies safe, happy, engaged and loved.

Sincerely,
A daycare mama since 2010

This article originally ran on Jeannette's blog, [Mommy Needs A Martini](#). You can follow Jeannette and her adventures in motherhood on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).