

Business Focus

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A Child's Touch Childcare, Thornton

MAKING A POSITIVE SETTING FOR KIDS

Profile

Business: A Child's Touch Childcare
Address: 9141 Poze Blvd., Thornton
Hours: 6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday to Friday
Founded: 1977
Contact: Call 303-286-8460 or go to www.achildstouch.com
Employees: 45

Interview with Mike Grillo, owner

Q: How did you get involved in this business?

A: Now, I don't know about you, but I never thought that a mobile home park, a church, and an unhappy truck driver would be a recipe for greatness in the world of child care. However, these seemingly incongruous puzzle pieces emerged to create perhaps the perfect fit. My future wife and I both worked at the same childcare center in Federal Heights in 1975. We both had an educational background and loved teaching. Two years later, with our marriage on the horizon, we realized that opening a child care center was something we could do ourselves.

Q: What distinguishes you from other businesses in your category?

A: I believe the first thing that distinguishes our child care from others is our setting. We have 14 playgrounds with an area that is over one acre. That size is unheard of in most child care settings. However the best part is that these playgrounds are so unique. We have a 2,400-square-foot castle play structure, soccer field, real log cabins and four amazing nature playgrounds along with other play areas. These nature areas include ponds and waterfalls that mimic our beautiful Rocky Mountains. It is creative, ever evolving, yet state-of-the-art in appearance and function. Many centers are duplicates



Top: Wesley Kauffmann climbs a fireman's pole in the playground area this week at A Child's Touch Childcare Center. Seth A. McConnell, YourHub

of each other with size, building, locations and playgrounds. Many centers exhibit it nice, but cookie-cutter facilities. Our center is unique and that's the way we like it.

Q: What do you like best about your line of work?

A: There is no better or more important job than impacting children in a positive way. To have the privilege of knowing that you made a difference in a child's life is awesome. When a child is learning and enjoying the

learning process, that is the art of teaching. You never get tired of the laughter, the hugs and the excitement and wonder of being around children. Seeing children, who started as infants graduate from your kindergarten program and knowing that you taught their parents in the same program a generation ago is a powerful statement; I know of no other job that offers such rewards.

Q: What is your business' biggest challenge?

A: The biggest challenge to A Child's Touch Childcare is finding teachers that have the gift to teach. We have high standards and are not comfortable in keeping warm bodies in teaching positions. Degrees are nice but that does not mean you will be a successful teacher. You have to have the passion and dedication to make a difference with children. As the years have gone by that teacher is harder and harder to find. Our teachers are talented, on-going learners

who make a positive, life-long difference in the lives of children and we would never settle for less.

Q: Something people might be surprised to learn about you or your business:

A: I believe there are many things that people might be surprised by about our child care center. One is that we were in an article written by the *Rocky Mountain News* in 1989, our first year at our present location.