

THEY CARE

by:

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“There can be no keener revelation of a society’s soul than the way in which it treats its children.” – Nelson Mandela, Former President of South Africa

How the children are being treated at their early age mirrors the adults surrounding them. Are they being treated the way they deserve? Our children are very fragile physically, mentally and emotionally. We as adults should take care of them until they fully develop and have the capacity to live on their own. We do this not just because it is our responsibility. We do this out of love.

As much as possible, we want our children on our side whenever and wherever we are but how will it be possible if we also have to work for them? We need to earn. We need money to provide their needs. The average working period in our country is eight hours in addition to travel time consumed on the way to work and back home. Most of the time, an ordinary worker goes home to rest and wake up the following day and do the routine. The chance to take care and guide a child is from little to none. Children need their parents while they are currently in the process of development.

We need something or someone which can provide them care while we are busy earning to provide their other needs. We need day care centers.

If you will be asked about Day Care Centers, what comes first to your mind? Our country’s government day care centers are somehow different from our neighboring countries. Parents leave their children in the center and pick them up after few hours of learning psycho-social, intellectual, physical and emotional as if they were already in

school at a very young age. There are day care centers where parents can leave their children the whole day and be able to work without worrying about their children but those are not free of charge.

As a parent of a one-year old boy and a regular government employee, the Executive Order No. 340 signed by the late President Fidel V. Ramos caught my attention. I wanted to get a nanny for my child but the cost would not let me get one. What if EO No. 340 has been fully implemented in all offices? This order states that all National Government Agencies and Government-Owned and Controlled Corporations shall provide day care services to the children of their employees under five years old. It will not only be beneficial to the children and their parents but also to the office itself. When it comes to family, being absent cannot be avoided but it can be minimized if the children go with their parents at work. Performance will then follow.

Its objectives are to ensure that children enjoy proper care and nutrition to become physically fit; develop their social, mental, intellectual skills, spiritual, socio-cultural, nationalistic values, and strong positive attitudes towards God, the family, the environment and the society; and most importantly, to substitute parenting and protection from all forms of neglect, abuse and exploitation while the parent is at work.

Knowing that someone will take good care of your child while you are at work and at the same time be able to see them when you find a spare time is very relieving. With this, the performance of the employees affected will follow. In our institution, there are plenty of young, even the not so young teachers who are currently in the process of establishing their own family. They wed, give birth to a baby after a year, go on maternity leave and what after? Return to work. Thinking who will take care of their children while they are doing their tasks. They need to earn to provide their children's needs. Not everyone is lucky enough to have their parents or member of the family to take care of their children the whole day without being anxious. With the EO No. 340, it would not

be a problem anymore. This would be one of the best gifts the government can serve their employees to show that they care.

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