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## A Working Mom's Guide to Sick Kids

By Margery D. Rosen

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**Sick-Child Day Care? Yes, It Exists!**

Get Well Place at Rainbow Station in Richmond, Virginia, a preschool and school-age recreation center for mildly ill kids, is a great Plan B for many working parents.

Founded 20 years ago by Gail Johnson, R.N., a former professor of nursing, Rainbow Station is now a franchise with nine facilities in Virginia, North Carolina, and Texas. The Get Well Place is staffed by a pediatric nurse, who dispenses medication and calls parents with updates during the day. Kids are cared for in separate rooms according to illness (respiratory ailments, such as flu; gastrointestinal illnesses; highly contagious diseases, such as pinkeye and strep throat; plus a room for kids recuperating from surgery). Each is equipped with a reverse ventilation system so no one has to worry that a child with, say, a broken leg, will catch the flu. Fees can range from \$5 to \$10 an hour depending on location.

Unfortunately, facilities like this are few and far between. Some are located in hospitals or medical centers (such as The Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota) for their employees only. Others, like Kid's Care at Northridge Hospital Children's Center, in California, are also open to the community. To find a backup-care center near you, contact your local or state social-service agency that licenses day-care centers, or call hospitals directly. "Some have these kinds of facilities but don't advertise them," says Johnson.

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