

Children's Lighthouse Learning Centers History

In 12 short years, the Children's Lighthouse Learning Centers have transformed from a realization that demand was increasing for affordable and education-based childcare to one of the best child-care organizations in the United States.

Children's Lighthouse was conceived in 1994 when successful Fort Worth business owners Mike and Pat Brown recognized that parents in the 21st Century sought more than just a place to drop off their children for the day. The Browns heard parents demanding for their children a care center that is not only fun but also secure and educational.

As successful businessmen who had owned and operated a thriving manufacturing company, Mike and Pat Brown spent three years researching what parents today want from their childcare provider as well as the best practices of excellent childcare companies from around the country.

Mike's and Pat's work resulted in the establishment of the Children's Lighthouse Learning Centers. The brothers built the Children's Lighthouse center on five tenets:

- * Provide affordable and educational childcare
- * Ensure that each child has an opportunity to learn and to have fun
- * Have a qualified and committed staff
- * Use a proven educational curriculum
- * Locate near an elementary school in growing and easily accessible neighborhoods

In August 1997, the first Children's Lighthouse Learning Center opened its doors at 4636 Highway 360 South in Grand Prairie, Texas. As the cornerstone of the Children's Lighthouse Centers, the Grand Prairie Center now serves more than 300 children ranging in ages from 6-weeks to 12-years-old.

Today, Children's Lighthouse Learning Center operates nine corporate centers throughout North Texas and Houston, with an enrollment of more than 2,000 students.

The early success of the first corporate-owned Children's Lighthouse Center convinced the Brown brothers to move into a new aspect of the business: Franchising centers. With well-planned assistance from the corporate staff, the first franchise Children's Lighthouse Learning Center opened in Katy, Texas in September 2001. Since opening the doors the center has grown to a staff of more 30 teachers who serve more than 200 students.

Since the first center in Katy, Texas opened, 14 more franchise learning centers have opened in North Texas as well as in Houston, San Antonio, North Carolina and Florida. Another 11 centers are slated to open in locations ranging from Riverside, California to Atlanta, Georgia and New Jersey.

The key that makes Children's Lighthouse Learning Centers one of the fastest growing childcare businesses in the U.S. is its continued focus on family. Each center focuses its services on creating a family environment, which is fun and educational for the children. In turn, the Children's Lighthouse corporate staff serves as a family to each franchise, using the lessons learned at corporate centers to help each franchisee succeed.

Despite the current financial crisis, the future looks bright for Children's Lighthouse Learning Center. With the economy forcing more spouses to work, demand for affordable, quality and educational childcare services is growing. At the same time, business professionals looking to escape the roller coast world of corporate business are turning to small business franchise opportunities such as a Children's Lighthouse Learning Center. The federal government, in an effort to stimulate the economy, is using the Small Business Administration (SBA) to offer affordable loans to resourceful business professionals who desire to start a small business. Because its centers have sound business plans and are successful, the SBA readily offers loans to Children's Lighthouse Learning Center franchisees.

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