

**Security and Access—There's a way to have both!**

In light of serious incidents occurring around the country over the past several months, many programs have been tempted to just lock their doors during operating hours. We ask you to consider all your options when thinking about security at your program. You must ensure that you are in compliance with the Life Safety Code (fire) and Child Care Licensing Regulations. We have a rule requiring unannounced access to parents. \* There is a delicate balance between security of a building and access for parents.

One acceptable option is a keypad entry system—giving enrolled families the code so they have unannounced access. There are standard doorknobs with the keypad built in; they can be installed by the home/program owner and can cost around \$100 to \$150. More sophisticated systems may cost \$300-\$500. We suggest you tell the hardware store that you are a child care program (show your license) to see if they have a discount for schools.

Gregg Champlin our School Emergency Planning & Natural Hazards Program Specialist at Homeland Security and Emergency Management, has conducted some research and discovered that there are multiple systems starting at around \$120.

Before you make any changes, please contact your local fire inspector to determine what options are in compliance with the Life Safety Code, and then call our office to speak to a licensing coordinator. We'd be happy to consult with you to ensure that your safety measures are in compliance with the child care licensing rules.

**\*He-C 4002.24(a)** Parents shall be allowed unannounced access to their children at all times, including but not limited to observations of their children interacting with the children in his/her assigned classroom and with the child care personnel responsible for his/her care.