



Circles of Life

Wisconsin's Annual Family & Provider Conference

Tips for First-Time Conference Attendees

Welcome to the Circles of Life Conference! Here are a few tips to maximize your opportunities and increase your comfort during the conference:

- **Preparation and Registration**
 - Before the conference, write down questions you have, goals you would like to accomplish, or people you would like to talk with while at the conference.
 - Scan the brochure ahead of time to identify sessions of interest to you. Ask other conference attendees if they have heard a speaker before to see if the content is what you are expecting.
 - Bring a friend, neighbor, or family member to be with your kids while you attend the conference or network with people you meet.
 - Only register for parts of the conference you plan to attend. If you must leave early, please say that in your registration. It is expensive for the conference to waste meals due to people leaving early.
- **Items to bring**
 - Bring a tote or backpack with file folders or a binder for handouts or give-aways from exhibitors.
 - Bring cash or checks; many exhibitors have useful materials for sale. You may want to buy a raffle ticket for the auction and items from vendors.
 - Bring mailing labels for raffle tickets and other information pieces that require contact information.
 - Bring a pen or pencil, a highlighter, sticky notes, and/or note pad. Some participants bring a clip board to make it easy to write on presenter hand-outs.
 - Bring a water bottle you can refill to keep hydrated throughout the busy day. You may also want to carry a few snacks with you like granola bars, an apple, or crackers.
- **Dress and clothes**
 - Dress in layers. Some rooms may feel chilly, while others may feel warm.
 - Wear comfortable, broken-in shoes. You will be doing a lot of walking.
 - This is a casual conference; sneakers and blue jeans are fine.
- **During the conference**
 - Plan a meeting spot to connect with friends during meals and other fun events.
 - Take advantage of all aspects of the conference:
 - Visit exhibitors during breaks and meals
 - Come back after dinner for Family Fun Night and auction
 - Stay through lunch on Friday for the annual slide show and prize give-away
 - Fill out the evaluations after each session. Your feedback is used in developing the conference for next year. Your suggestions for speakers and content are valuable in developing useful and interesting sessions and a better overall conference.
 - Use the personalized business cards in your folder to network and exchange contact information with other parents and presenters.
 - If you have children in the Sibshop or Gathering of Youth, do not call them or stop by until their session is over. It is difficult for both the children/youth and adult facilitators to have interruptions.
- **Have fun!** This is your two days to focus on learning, growing, sharing and relaxing.