Huffer Memorial Children's Center Promotional Video

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

By

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Abstract

Huffer Memorial Children’s Center is a successful business located at 2000 N. Elgin St. in Muncie, Ind. In addition to running a child care center of its own, Huffer is one of 11 Child Care Resource and Referral agencies in Indiana. This part of Huffer helps parents, child care providers and community organizations in 10 counties to find and improve quality child care in their area. The video I produced is a promotional video which will help spread the word about Huffer’s services and be a fundraising tool in Huffer’s upcoming capital campaign. This Child Care Resource and Referral video has been packaged with a previously completed video about Huffer’s own child care services to form an overall promotional DVD for Huffer.

Acknowledgements

- I want to thank Assistant Professor Suzy Smith for advising me throughout this project. She provided a fresh perspective, gave constructive criticism and feedback and ensured the video was an overall sound piece of work.
- I also want to thank Associate Professor Dom Caristi, who was my teacher for TCOM 487, the class in which I produced the other (Educare) video included on this DVD. Dom acted as an unofficial advisor since he was in Italy this semester.
- Finally, I want to thank Huffer Memorial Children Center Executive Director Carrie Bale who worked with me every step of the process to ensure that we produced the best and most effective video possible.
Basic Video Production Dictionary

- b-roll – video footage that is usually seen while someone is speaking
  - this footage ideally shows with video whatever the person being interviewed is saying (example: if a person is talking about teachers teaching, a teacher teaching would be shown)
  - b-roll makes one of the biggest differences between a mediocre video and a truly effective video (interviewees can say whatever they like, but if an audience does not see visual proof of the persons words, they may not believe it
- an edit – an edit is a semi-competed version of a film; an video usually goes through several edits on its way to completion
- a shoot – a shoot is a specific time and place when and where filming takes place
- title cards – a title card is simply text on a colored background; title cards are used to break up different segments of a video
Background

This thesis project developed out of my TCOM 487 class, Seminar in Production. This course, taught by Dom Caristi, requires students to produce promotional and/or informational videos for outside businesses or clients. During the fall of 2007, I began working with Huffer Memorial Children’s Center on making promotional videos for their center. They are already a successful business that has been around for many years, but they wanted some promotional videos to aid in their upcoming capital fundraising campaign.

I began working with Executive Director Carrie Bale. We first addressed what she wanted the videos to accomplish. We began by outlining Huffer’s two programs:

- Educare – the actual child care service located in Huffer
- Child Care Resource and Referral – Huffer is one of 11 statewide CCR&R centers in Indiana. As part of this service, Huffer:
  - helps families find child care, wherever they are in the 10 counties Huffer covers
  - helps providers improve their child care services by holding trainings, providing resources and offering advice
  - works with community organizations, such as United Way and local universities to improve the overall child care scene in a city or county

We decided each program needed a separate video. The next step was to write the scripts, and at this point the two directors for each of the programs became more involved. Paula Morris is the program director for Educare and Christina Lynn-Wright is the program director for Child Care Resource and Referral.

Because they had no video experience, I guided the three Huffer representatives as much as possible, while trying to ensure they were the ones deciding what they wanted in the video.

We proceeded to film for both videos, focusing on the Educare video, because its concept is much simpler and almost all of the filming took place at Huffer. As we progressed through the semester, it became obvious that this was going to be a much bigger task than any of us anticipated.

I barely finished the Educare video before the end of the semester, and that video alone required work worthy of more than a 400-level course. At the time, I considered the Educare video to be my finest work at Ball State. I received the highest grade in the class and the client loved the video.

I worked out an arrangement with Carrie Bale to continue working on the CCR&R video throughout this semester. At the end of the fall semester, I had already filmed some interviews and some b-roll footage for the CCR&R video, but a significant amount of work remained. The CCR&R video is twice as long as the Educare video and was more difficult to produce because the CCR&R program is more complicated and difficult to grasp. More care had to be taken in order to ensure a general audience would understand all of the program’s aspects.
Spring Semester 2008 Overview – CCR&R Video

When I started working on the video again in January, I already had all of the scripts written, a few interviews filmed and some of the b-roll footage filmed. However, I still had a significant amount of work ahead of me.

I began by making a rough cut of the video using the footage I had. Most of the major ideas we wanted to get across were in the video, but there some major holes and flaws. I showed the rough cut to Carrie Bale and Christina Lynn-Wright and we talked about what we still needed to film and also what we needed to change. We laid out a skeleton production schedule in order to have the video done by early April, a couple of weeks before Huffer would be starting its capital campaign.

This semester, I filmed more interviews, filmed more b-roll footage and spent many hours in the editing lab to produce a final version. Because of a period of a couple of weeks, where our schedule had to be postponed, I just finished making the final DVD on May 2.

Skills Gained and Knowledge Acquired in the Production Process

One of the most important skills I gained while working on this project, was the ability to work with an actual business and professional employees on a media project. I interned at a professional newspaper this past summer, but this video project is the only long-term project I have ever done for a company. Working for almost an entire school year on a single project has been an intense and rewarding experience.

I learned much more about pre-production than ever before, including conducting background research on the company, talking to leaders about what they need and want from the project, writing a script, producing a shooting schedule and finding outside students to help on certain shoots. The organizational skills required to undertake and complete a process like this are substantial. I had to work to coordinate several schedules at once and make sure I had the necessary equipment and help at all times.

I had to report directly to a supervisor, whereas in most classes, creative projects are assigned and then simply turned in at the end of the semester. This process was a constant review and revision process, because the client is the one who has to be happy with the video, not me. I also had to learn to work with some decisions that were not mine. In most classes, you are the only working on the project and the only with the final say. On this project, there was a lot of give and take. I was the media expert and so had a great deal of say, but they were the client and, therefore, had the final word on all decisions.

I had a decent amount of video experience before this project, but much of my experience had been in news reporting, where a producer must simply film the environment without changing anything. In this project, the look of the project was almost as important as the content. In news, the look is clearly secondary. For this project, I worked with lighting, which I had not done much of before, and I also worked with altering the environment and setting up/staging shots to get the best results.
I also had to learn some Adobe Flash animation skills in order to make the opening graphic in the CCR&R video, and I had to learn more about DVD production so I could make a good-looking DVD menu and put chapter markers in the CCR&R video. Another thing I learned was how to work with non-TCOM people on a video project. I had to guide along Carrie Bale and the other Huffer members, because they had no previous experience working with video. They had a general idea of what they wanted, but I had to help them sculpt that into an actual script and then into an actual video. It was an enjoyable process, because I was able to keep them involved and in control, while keeping the production quality high.
Decision Making Process

Overview
The CCR&R video went through several different edits. The first edit was nothing more than interviews placed back to back with title cards separating the three different sections: families, providers and communities. This preliminary edit gave me a sense of what I had and what I still needed. At this point, it was clear we needed to prove what our interviewees were saying with a lot more b-roll.

I am a big believer in showing as much through b-roll as possible. This was the biggest challenge during the CCR&R video. Because the video covers three different roles of CCR&R it has a lot of people talking about a lot of different things. This as a result, requires a lot of b-roll.

The other major challenge was making the CCR&R program comprehensible to a person who is not an expert in child care. In particular, the communities part of CCR&R is often too abstract upon first explanation. We had to make sure we identified specific examples of work that an audience would be able to understand, instead of simply talking about the idea of working with communities. We also had to, again, be able to show this work to reinforce the audience’s understanding.

Walkthrough of Video
Originally, the CCR&R program was going to be covered by three separate videos, one for each section: families, providers and communities. However, Carrie Bale decided she was fine with the videos all being together and simply separated with title cards.

We organized the video segments by who used the CCR&R service the most. Parents are the major user of CCR&R services, followed by providers and then communities. However, I also made chapter markers for the video so people can skip to whichever segment they want.

Parents Section
In the parents section we wanted one parent, Christa Winchester, to speak about wanting to find a licensed child care provider and we wanted one parent, Michelle Friend to speak about finding care for her infant in particular. We made sure to include Matt because we wanted a masculine voice in a field often associated only with women.

We chose Christa because she had originally put her son in a center that wasn’t licensed or accredited. When she discovered the difference through CCR&R, she used CCR&R’s resources to find a center that fit what she wanted.

We chose Michelle Friend because a lot of parents have trouble finding quality child care for infants. She told her story about using CCR&R to help her more effectively search for child care.

The parents section, overall, tells parents how CCR&R can help them find quality child care. Huffer’s child care services are really only available for people in Delaware County, so this video is designed to tell parents in other counties how they can use Huffer to help them.

Providers Section
In the providers section, we wanted to show the resources CCR&R makes available to providers. We chose Lois Noggle because she is a frequent user of CCR&R’s services.

I wanted to have another provider to add some depth to this section, but the Huffer people felt like Lois was enough. With Lois we able to touch on a few of the key features available to providers. Providers are always able to call over to discuss any problems or ask any questions. Huffer also provides access to many teaching resources, including the resource van, a popular resource that can travel to the provider.

Lois is not the most eloquent speaker, but we felt like she provided an authentic quality that would connect with our audience.

**Communities Section**

This section was the most difficult to produce. CCR&R often works with communities by sitting on boards and participating in meetings. These aren’t very interesting to talk about or show. So we did our best to have our two interviewees talk about specific programs. Karen Hemberger of United Way was still too vague, but she at least gave an idea of what CCR&R does, and Kerri Aborn of Anderson University provided a very specific example of CCR&R actually helping to design a curriculum. We originally didn’t have Kerri in the section, and I knew we needed something more substantial, so we added that interview.

**Final Author’s Comments**

The real art of video production comes in the editing process. I filmed around 15 hours of footage, which I had to import into the computer and sort through. We wanted each interviewee to be natural so we asked them a series of questions instead of scripting out a single response. The Huffer employees were scripted, but the parents, providers and community leaders were not. This is where the editing really came into play. I had to sort through the questions, pick out the best responses and often combine responses from multiple questions in order to get across our message. They were several times where I thought an interviewee’s responses wouldn’t quite work, only to eventually find a way to combine their thoughts into what we needed.

I did almost all of the filming and editing myself. I had two students help me on three different shoots, but considering I went to around 20 shoots, this video project is basically all my work, which is why I am so proud of it.

I think the overall quality of this video is at a professional level and represents my best work at Ball State.
Bibliography


Outline of Script for Educare

1. Start with the story of a family or individual that represents the audience we are appealing.
   a. What is the audience’s number one need? Is it affordable child care, or is it quality care? Huffer obviously provides both, but we need to identify what will appeal to the audience most? Start with that aspect.
   b. So the family’s story will set up our most important point. I’m going to assume cost is the most important with quality directly related. I’m also going to assume we are appealing mainly to low-income mothers.

2. Our representative mother really needs to address the needs of the audience as a whole. Let’s call her Susan for the purposes of this outline.
   a. Example of Susan’s testimonial: “I was really in a bind. I was trying to work as much as I could, but I was having trouble finding someone to care for the kids. I couldn’t afford most child care places and the place where I enrolled my son didn’t seem to really care.”
   b. The multi-generational family we talked about sounded like a great example of Huffer in general, but I would need more information to see if any of them fit our specific need for that opening profile.

3. From there Susan would transition into talking about Huffer.
   a. Example: “Then a friend told me about Huffer and how great they were. I was a little skeptical at first, but when I went to check Huffer out I found a perfect fit.”
   b. *Note: We can script what Susan is going to say or let her tell the story in her own words exactly. We have some freedom here as long as we keep the spirit of her story intact.

4. As Susan starts talking about how Huffer helped her we would use shots from the Educare program to support what she is saying. Again here, we can choose what aspects we want Susan to talk about.
   a. Examples:
      i. When she talks about all-day care, go to quick montage of different activities throughout the days, kids constantly involved.
      ii. When Susan talks about a staff that cares, show staff members up close really working with kids.
      iii. When she talks about how the child care was affordable we can have Carrie or someone else talk about how Huffer is not-for-profit and charges on a sliding scale. We could even use a graphic to compare the average cost at Huffer to the average cost at other child care facilities.
      iv. We can interject interviews in these spots from teachers, other parents and kids.

5. After talking about main parts of Educare, we can go into other aspects.
   a. Narrator – “Huffer provides child care for all children, including those with special needs. Many other child care facilities won’t accommodate kids with extra needs, but at Huffer we pride ourselves on helping all children.”
b. May want to mention some of the most common special needs Huffer deals with and show special needs kids being cared for.

6. Talk about benefits for family outside of child care.
   a. Narrator: “At Huffer, we don’t just take care of children, we take care of families. We want to help you become self-sufficient. That’s why we offer ____, ____ and ____ in order to get you up on your feet and help you stay there.”
   b. Here we could have a testimonial from a client of Huffer who really utilized these services. A mini-story within Susan’s larger story.

7. At this point I think we have covered the major parts of Educare and have provided the viewer with a lot of important information without overwhelming him or her.
   a. I would provide all relevant contact information here, unless we want to put his information in a separate area on the DVD.
   b. Then I would close with Susan who will bring the story full circle to an end. Example: “Huffer really helped me out with all of its services and as you can tell it has helped out many other families just like mine in Delaware County. I’m sure we can help you too.”

8. One shortcoming of this outline is that it does not include the facts and figures: what ages does Huffer serve, how many children attend Huffer now and what plans does Huffer have for the future. These are items we will need to work in later.
Gabriel Khouli <gmkhouli@gmail.com>  

Educare script
3 messages

Gabriel Khouli <gmkhouli@bsu.edu>  
To: Caroline Bale <cbale@huffermcc.org>  

Wed, Oct 3, 2007 at 3:29 PM

Carrie,

Not to put any pressure on you, but I was just wanted to make sure everything was still on schedule as far as finishing up a script later today. I'd like to go over the scripts myself tonight so we can plan to meet again later this week or early next week and start planning how and when we are going to film everything. Thanks.

- Gabe

Gabriel Khouli  
Ball State Daily News  
Co-Multimedia Editor  
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Caroline Bale <cbale@huffermcc.org>  
To: Gabriel Khouli <gmkhouli@bsu.edu>  
Cc: Paula Morris <pmorris@huffermcc.org>, Christina Lynn <clynn@huffermcc.org>  

Wed, Oct 3, 2007 at 4:45 PM

Hi Gabe,

I am so sorry .... this week is off to a bad start. Here is the take we think we would like to go with the Educare side, and it would be different than what we talked about. Again, kind of taken from another commercial I saw but here it goes. Sorry this is so rough

Paula or myself say What our goals and aspiration for the children at our center  
"We have a vision that all children who come to Huffer will be better prepared academically and socially to enter Kindergarten ready to succeed . . ."  
Then show children "at work" ie . . . play at Huffer  
"We have a vision that we will build strong community partnerships to strengthen the services for children in Delaware County"  
Then show a shot from the CHili Supper or Open House  
Have a set of parents (maybe 2) also state their dream? Vision - and then show their children at HUffer  
1 set of parents we can have say being able to in order for them to work ie . . . affordable child care  
1 set of parents we can have say quality child care . . .

Have a board member state their vision for Huffer - and then show that in action

Do you see where I am going with this? I think it is a little clearer with more direction???

Do you envision a slower, softer piece?
Educare Script

Introduction:
Narrator or Carrie: - Huffer Memorial Children’s Center is a Nationally Accredited, non-for profit Child Care Facility serving families in Delaware County. Huffer opened its doors in 1972 and services children from any income, and any ability. Since Huffer began they have served thousands of children and strive to be the number one provider of child care in Delaware County.

(The above would be the introduction into the Educare part of the DVD)

The visions of Huffer;
Carrie Bale: My vision for the children who come to Huffer is that they discover a lifelong love of learning in a safe and loving environment that works to develop all developmental aspects of each individual child.

Shot of children “in action” Orange Room – science project etc.

Paula Morris: My Vision for children who come to Huffer is that they reach their highest potential, regardless of their ability, enabling them to be ready to go to school.

Shot of 2 different special needs children in 2 different classrooms reaching their potential.

Rosamae: My goals for my child when he came to Huffer was that he would be well taken care of in a quality child care center, while I as a single mother could better my life by going to school and working. Huffer made that possible for me and Quentin.

Shot of Quentin being read to by a teacher – Orange Room.

Amanda & Kareem West: We sent our children to Huffer so that we were able to work and provide for our family, and know that our children were gaining the skills necessary to prepare them for Elementary School.

Shot of Kareem at Foundry

Shot of 2 school aged sons on playground – Peyton and Cameron

Carl Pieroni: My vision for Huffer Memorial Children’s center, as a the Board President, is that Huffer makes positive impact on the lives of the children and families in Delaware County and that Huffer is regarded as a the premier facility in East Central Indiana for communities to come to help support early childhood initiatives.

Shot is Chili Supper – Nov 1 Community and Family members
Ending: Narrator or Carrie – Huffer Memorial Children’s Center will continue to provide comprehensive Child Care Services and for the citizens of Delaware county thus making our community a better place for everyone.
CCR&R Script Outline

*Note: As you are reading through the script think of video shots that could go with each set of words. I attempted to write the script to give us an opportunity to prove that Huffer does everything we say in the script.

Introduction:
Narrator: At Huffer Memorial Children’s Center, we strive to provide as many people with high-quality child care as possible. But with only one building it’s impossible to provide care to all the children who need it. The 10 counties surrounding us contain more than ________ children alone. (Have graphics listing the counties Huffer serves and the number of children in those counties) That’s the reason we started a program at Huffer to help people all around East Central Indiana. It’s called Child Care Resource and Referral, and it helps everyone from parents, to child-care providers, to entire communities. Find out how we can help you.

The above would be the introduction into the CCR&R part of the DVD. After the intro, a menu would appear with sections for each of the three audiences: For Parents, For Providers, For Communities.

For each of the three sections we will have a person tell the story of how he or she used the services provided by Huffer.

For Parents: Parent (We’ll call her Julie): I was using this child care provider in (some city), because it was cheap and close. But I wasn’t sure if the place was taking good care of my daughter. She wouldn’t tell me much and the lady who ran the place wasn’t very open either. So I called Huffer, because I heard they keep a list of all the qualified child care providers in my area.
The place my daughter was going wasn’t accredited by the state, but Huffer gave me a list of five other providers in my city that were state approved.

Narrator or Christine or Carrie: When we help families look for child care providers we work with that family’s specific situation to find the best fit.

(Transition into another story) Another parent (Vicki): Our Tommy has ________ (handicap or disorder). Not many places are able to or want to take care of him. Huffer helped me find a certified agency that could help our Tommy grow and thrive.

Narrator: Huffer is a non-profit organization, so we’re able to provide families with unbiased information on all the child care options in their area. In addition to referring families to outside providers, we give them tips on how to care for their kids at home. Taking care of kids is a full-time job and Huffer is here to help you through every step of the process.

For Providers:
Provider (Trisha): Our business was doing well, but we were struggling to meet the increasing demands in our area. So we hired some new people who weren't as qualified as we would have liked. Things were OK, but we weren't getting the most out of our staff. I had our newer and older alike attend some training sessions offered by Huffer and that training plus the other resources offered by Huffer turned my staff from just average to exceptional.

Narrator or Christine: At Huffer we know how difficult it is to constantly provide quality child care, so we do our best to help every child care center reach their potential. We provide training opportunities ... child care resources ... and help child care facilities find customers by referring families to places that fit their needs. If you want to become a better child care provider, Huffer can help you reach that goal.

For Communities:
Editor's Note – I still need help understanding the role CCR&R plays here before I would be comfortable scripting out anything.
CCR&R Script Outline

Introduction:
Narrator - At Huffer Memorial Children’s Center, we strive to provide as many people with high-quality child care as possible. But with only one building it’s impossible to provide care to all the children who need it. The 10 counties surrounding we serve are home to more than 70,000 children under the age of 10 alone. (Have graphics listing the counties Huffer serves and the number of children in those counties) That’s the reason we became a member of a program that helps families all around East Central Indiana. It’s called Child Care Resource and Referral, and it helps everyone from families, to child-care providers, to entire communities. Keep watching and find out how we can help you.

The above would be the introduction into the CCR&R part of the DVD. After the intro, a menu would appear with sections for each of the three audiences: For Families, For Providers and For Communities.

For Families:
Christa Winchester: After I had my daughter (replace with name), I needed to find a good child care provider, because I was going to work in the hospital. I found a ministry-based child care center for my daughter, but I just wasn’t sure how good the center was for her. So I called Huffer, because I heard they keep a list of all the certified child care providers in my area.
The ministry wasn’t accredited by the state, which was important to me, so I asked Huffer to give me a list other providers in my city that were state approved. Now my daughter is at a certified childcare, and I couldn’t be happier.
Christine: When we help families look for child care providers, we work with that family’s specific needs to find a quality provider that’s the right size.
Michelle Friend and husband: Quality child care is so hard to find and many of the places we looked at were completely filled. Finally, we turned to Huffer’s CCR&R program to help us find a top-notch facility that had a spot for our child (name).

Narrator or Carrie: Huffer is a non-profit organization, so we’re able to provide families with unbiased information on all the child care options in their area.
In addition to referring families to outside providers, we give them tips on how to care for their kids at home. Taking care of kids is a full-time job, and Huffer is here to help you through every step of the process.

For Providers:
Lois Noggle: I run a child care service out of my home, and I’m always looking for ways to improve the care we offer. I really enjoy working with Huffer’s CCR&R program because they provide me with access to so many resources, including training sessions ... and their resource van ... I’ve really enjoyed working with them.
At Huffer we know how difficult it is to constantly provide quality child care, so we do our best to help every child care provider reach their potential ... and we help providers find customers by referring families to places that fit their needs. If you want to become a better child care provider, Huffer can help you reach that goal.

For Communities: (This section is still rough. We need to work more on dialogue and possible shots.)

Every community has its own vision for providing quality child care and Huffer is dedicated to bringing that vision to life. We work with each community to address their needs and to find the best way to serve them.

Karen Hamburger: As an employee of the United Way, I focus on finding ways to make child care in Delaware County the best it can be. I partner with Huffer to help our community any way I can. We put on workshops for schools ... hold fairs and festivals for providers ... and (something else).

Narrator: At Huffer, we realize strong communities make for quality child care ... and that’s what we’re all about.
**Narrator:** At Lifetime, we strive to provide as many people with quality child care as possible. But with only one, it's difficult to provide care for more than a couple of children. The counties surrounding us contain more than a hundred thousand alone. That's why we started a second program here at Lifetime to help people all around East Central Indiana. It's called Child Care Resources. Federal aid helps ensure that parents, the child care providers to entire communities. And at how we can help you.

Go to Menu

[ ] For Parents  [ ] For Provider  [ ] For Comments

Have injectors for each story

**For Parents:**

**Conditional. Example:**

"Julie: So I was using this child care provider because it was cheap, but I didn't want to be sure if they were taking good care of my daughter. She couldn't tell me much at the lady who ran the place wasn't very open. So I called Lifetime because I heard they keep a listing of all the qualified child care providers in the area. The place my daughter was going on the list, but Lifetime gave me a list of five other places that were state approved."
Help child care facilities find children by referring families in need of child care.

We're your one-stop shop to becoming a better child care provider.

For communities: Still need help understanding this?
Questions for Video

**Karen Hemberger:** Karen will talk about the role that Huffer CCR&R plays in the community in Delaware County.

Karen, can you talk about the different ways that United Way has supported Huffer CCR&R?

Tell us in your own words why United Way is a supporter of HMCC/CCR&R?

Could you elaborate on the role of CCR&R in the newly developed Community Solutions Team?

Karen, you can add lib as you see fit. Gabe will let you know when he feels that has what he needs.

**Rosamae:**

Why did you choose Huffer for Quentin?

Quality child care, an enables her to go to school and work

Tell us about your experience with Quentin and Huffer . . . .

**Kareem & Amanda West:** They will highlight areas of increasing family self sufficiency i.e . . . . Working and starting own business while finding a facility to help prepare their two young boys for elementary school.

If you didn’t have Huffer, what would you have done?

Highlight sliding scale fee has helped offset the costs to be able to .

How has Huffer helped prepare your children for elementary school?

Basics skills, building relationships, getting them ready. Your youngest is in Kindergarten and Huffer helped prepare him and us for the transition to Kindergarten.

**Carl Perioni:** Carl will highlight the board members vision for Huffer in the community at large.

Carl, why do you feel passionate about serving on the Huffer Board?

What lasting impact do you envision for Huffer in our community?

Offering services for children and their families and thus providing a strong foundation with which families can develop and raise their children. Positively shaping the lives of young children in our community etc . .