

Healthy Kidbits

Newsletter produced semi-annually by the Child Care Team at Tri-County Health Department, Colorado serving Adams, Arapahoe, and Douglas Counties *Summer 2007*



Wading Pools

Wading pools are great fun for children during hot summer days! In child care settings, children using wading pools must be toilet trained. Children in diapers, including pull-ups or swim diapers, are NOT permitted in wading pools or swimming pools. Diapers containing feces or diarrhea contaminate water and can spread disease to other children and adults. Wading pool water should be changed daily.

Effective Discipline

“Effective Discipline teaches children behavior that is right for that time and place. As a child care provider, you want to help children develop self control. With self control, children will know how to behave even when no one is watching.”

Children learn best from what actually happens, not from what is said to them. Model good behaviors by treating people with kindness. Let children know when you are pleased with them. Use effective praise, “I like the way you used blues and yellows in your picture,” rather than, “that’s a beautiful picture.”

Use positive language with children. Let them know with your words or actions, what you would like for them to do. “Let’s use our indoor voices,” rather than “Don’t yell!” Reward good behavior by smiling, nodding, and paying attention when children are behaving appropriately.

Discipline is ongoing. This includes the way you talk to children, the way you treat children, and how you help children respond to the positive and negative day-to-day events in their lives.

Adapted from “Discipline that Works: The Ages and Stages Approach and Effective Discipline For Young Children. NCC

Sanitizers Vs. Disinfectants

Proper sanitizing and disinfecting of surfaces within your center helps control the spread of bacteria and viruses. Knowing the proper cleaning compounds and concentrations will help you clean surfaces safely, kill germs, and save money!

The most common way to **sanitize** surfaces and items which come into contact with children (i.e. kitchen tables/ countertops used for food preparation, classroom tabletops used for eating or play, and children’s toys and sleeping mats) is to use a concentration of bleach mixed with water. Use *chlorine* test strips to check this solution and maintain it between 50 and 200 ppm bleach. Chemical test strips are available online or from restaurant supply companies. Be sure to purchase the correct strips.

To **disinfect** surfaces that come into contact with high hazard body fluids such as feces, blood, urine, or vomit, you’ll want to use a higher concentration of bleach. Again, use the *chlorine* chemical test strips to ensure the solution is maintained at 200 ppm chlorine or above. Examples of surfaces which require disinfection are: diaper changing tables (following each diaper change), contaminated restrooms, laundry areas, or any other area of the facility which has been exposed to high hazard body fluids.



Some sanitizers, in addition to bleach water mixtures are approved for use in childcare centers. The product must be EPA registered as a sanitizer/disinfectant and must be approved for commercial use, so do your research prior to incorporating the product in your facility!

Written by John Bergstrom, Tri-County Health Department Environmental Health Specialist III

Nutritious Finger Foods

According to the Journal of the American Dietetic Association, the transition from baby foods to table foods can alter healthy eating habits. This is the time when high-fat, high-sugar items like cookies and sweetened cereals tend to edge out good, healthy foods, especially fruits and vegetables. There are many super nutritious, delicious finger foods!



Remember to cut everything into small pieces to avoid choking hazards (pea size at first). Avoid hot dogs, popcorn, raisins, nuts, seeds, and hard raw vegetables. (As a childcare consultant, I have seen raw carrots given to children under two years old. Several years ago a child in one of the centers I visit nearly choked to death while eating a grape!!!)

Some nutritious, safe choices—small pieces of: avocado, sliced blueberries or raspberries, small bites of cherry tomato, whole wheat rotini pasta, corn niblets, low sugar O-shaped cereal, ripe mango or papaya, cooked green beans, cooked and peeled sweet potato cubes, tiny chunks of turkey meatballs, mozzarella cheese, well cooked diced carrots, canned pears, ripe peaches, tofu, banana, cooked zucchini or squash, watermelon (seeds removed), canned fruit cocktail, kiwi, canned pineapple, whole wheat macaroni and cheese, and well cooked asparagus tips.

Submitted by the TCHD Nutrition Division

Did you know???

As of March 1, 2007, staff in child care centers and restaurants are **REQUIRED** to wear gloves while preparing or serving ready-to-eat foods. Examples of ready-to-eat foods are carrot and celery sticks eaten raw, sandwiches, cut fruit, graham crackers. Ready-to-eat foods also include any foods eaten cooked such as pizza, bread rolls, corn dogs, and chicken fingers. Staff must wash hands thoroughly with soap and water prior to donning gloves and change gloves between tasks.

Social and Emotional Wellness in Childcare

The term “mental health” often conjures up negative images. It is extremely important to use child care practices that promote mental wellness by:

- ❖ Creating a caring, cooperative classroom using predictable daily schedules, routines, and transitions.
- ❖ Reducing aggressive behaviors (requires children be taught alternative positive social behaviors).
- ❖ Realizing it is just as important to teach appropriate social behaviors as it is to teach reading, math, and science.
- ❖ Teaching children the important ability to recognize their social responsibilities and the consequences of one's actions.

Teachers help children learn to form positive relationships with adults and peers by encouraging them to engage in play with peers, initiate social contact, join a group, develop friendships, and demonstrate respect for diversity.



Teachers also show children how to control strong emotions by helping them label, validate, and express feelings. Teachers can assist children with problem solving by providing them with appropriate words to use to resolve conflicts and by demonstrating appropriate ways of expressing and managing anger.

Adapted from Colorado University Cares, a resource service provided by the University of Colorado