

**Dakota  
County Social  
Services**

# The Licensing Link

**April / May**

**2009**

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## Special points of interest:

- Coping and grieving strategies
- Upcoming training and courses
- Water Temperatures
- Safety



## From Your Licensing Workers

### Families and the Grief Process

#### Background

The experience of grief wears many faces for families whose lives are challenged by change, turmoil, illness, death and/or the loss of hopes and dreams. Grief is a process not easily acknowledged in our society, particularly the grief of experiences other than death. Yet grief is often an integral part of most life changes and experiences. Families who can acknowledge their grief and learn healthy ways to express their pain can then free their emotional energies to focus on life and the challenges ahead. Grief that is not allowed a healthy release frequently finds expression in anger, abuse and/or neglect of a loved one, substance abuse, illness and sometimes by the sabotaging of another's efforts to help.

It is a commonplace in the bereavement literature that unresolved grief can lead to difficulties coping with any losses throughout life. Families in need of planned or crisis respite all struggle with feelings of loss. For example, a mother who seeks out crisis nursery services may also be in the process of divorce which brings its own unique grief to the situation.

The family of a child considered medically fragile who is in need of respite care may experience a sense of loss over not having a "healthy" or "perfect" child. The spouse of a family member with Alzheimer's may grieve the loss of the life they have planned together.

Knowledge of the process of grief and how to help individuals and families cope with their loss experiences can be an invaluable asset to planned and crisis respite programs and their service providers. By offering individuals and families opportunities to grieve their losses and acknowledging the hurt that accompanies those losses, we offer them tools and strategies to cope with the ongoing losses that are a part of everyone's life.

#### What is Grief?

Grief is one's own personal experience of loss. Mourning, on the other hand is "grief gone public." It is the outward sharing and expression of the pain. Sometimes it is helpful to make a distinction between the two in order to understand that there are some individuals in our society who have "permission" to grieve but cannot mourn. Society does not easily acknowledge the grief of a parent whose child is born with a disability, parents who experience a miscarriage, families where a loved one is diagnosed with a life-threatening illness, families affected by AIDS, or dementia, such as Alzheimer's, etc. Caregivers can be helpful to such families by labeling their experience as one of grief and normalizing their pain and emotions. It is important to remember that all losses need to be grieved in some way.

(Continued on page 2)

# From Your Licensing Worker...Continued

## The Emotions of Grief



People experience the pain of grief with a variety of emotional responses which include shock ("it can't be true"), denial ("the tests were wrong"), anger ("why did she get AIDS and not someone else?"), guilt ("why did I smoke [or drink alcohol] during my pregnancy"), fear ("how will I manage to care for him?"), exhaustion, depression, confusion, and bargaining ("if only we could have a miracle"). These are just a few of the myriad of emotions people in grief experience. It is also important to understand that people experience these emotions in a roller-coaster fashion: sometimes feeling up and hopeful, other days feeling deeply depressed, other days coasting along and feeling virtually no emotion. All of these emotions are a normal part of the grief and mourning process.

## Healing Strategies for Helping Families Grieve

It is important when working with anyone who is grieving to do the following:

- Become aware of your own personal issues around grief. This means becoming aware of your own fears, attitudes and beliefs about grief. For example, if an individual were raised to believe that "We don't air our dirty laundry in public," then that individual may have difficulty helping a family who needs to vent and share their pain openly and/or with great emotion.
- Acknowledge the family's grief. Label their experience as one of grief. Let them know they have a right to have their feelings.
- Be there. One's presence can be the greatest gift given to a grieving individual. Sometimes holding someone's hand, offering a hug, or just acknowledging, "This must be so hard for you," can be enough to support someone in their grief process.
- Listen. Grieving people need to share their pain with another person who will not judge them or give them advice and suggestions. Listening to someone tell their story over and over can often be an invaluable gift to them in helping them sort through their feelings and release their pain.
- Offer "permission to grieve." Teach grieving families that it is important to express the emotions of grief, but that there are ways to express pain that are more healing than others. For example, an angry parent can learn to express their anger through physical activity such as yard work, tearing up old phone books, writing letters, or screaming in a pillow. The key is to help grieving people find constructive ways to release their feelings of grief rather than to take it out on others or themselves.
- Help families create a memory book. This might include photos, drawings, funny things someone said or did, etc. This is especially helpful to families who have experienced a death.
- Develop and encourage support groups. Support groups give families a chance to share their pain with others experiencing loss.
- Children love, therefore they grieve. Encourage children to participate in all of the above suggestions. By teaching children how to deal with the pain of loss early in life, we can teach them how to grieve the losses that are an inevitable part of their future lives, losses such as moving, divorce, the break-up of a relationship, or the death of a friend, loved one, or pet. Children can draw pictures or write letters to an ill sibling or grandparent as a way to express their love and concern.

(Continued on page 3)

## From Your Licensing Workers...Continued



Encourage families to write letters to someone who has died or is ill. Frequently they can express many unresolved emotions in letters that need never be sent. Writing a letter or note to a family member who is in crisis respite may offer a caregiver a healing release of feelings of frustration and despair.

Every grieving individual or family can teach us about what they need from us at this painful time in their lives. Grieving individuals can also remind us about what truly is important and meaningful in our own lives.

### Caring for Self

It is very important when working with individuals who are in pain to take good care of oneself, physically and emotionally. There are times when care providers can become too involved or attached to trying to "fix" the problems their families face. This can deplete the psychological energy needed to work effectively with families who are experiencing grief. It is helpful to realize that each of us have gifts to share with others, such as the gifts of one's presence, understanding, love, and concern. Becoming overly attached to how others receive these gifts, sets us up for pain and disappointment. It is also important to nurture oneself on a regular basis by setting limits, treating oneself in special ways, and taking moments each day to renew, relax and appreciate life.

### When to Be Concerned

There are times when the grief experience can be overwhelming and individuals and/or families may need more extensive counseling and support. Clues to more complicated grief and mourning include:

- lack of basic self-care
- unusual and alarming behavior patterns
- suicidal threats or attempts
- multiple losses that can be overwhelming
- severe withdrawal and/or depression
- substance abuse
- radical lifestyle changes

### Summary

All losses need to be grieved for, obvious losses as well as symbolic losses, such as the loss of hopes and dreams, or the loss of what never will be. Since families who seek out planned and crisis respite services are also families experiencing some kind of loss, knowledge of the grief process, and how to assist someone in the process, can enhance one's effectiveness and sensitivity to families in need.

### ADDITION FROM DAKOTA COUNTY CHILD CARE LICENSING

We in the childcare business are currently experiencing a familiar form of grief in a greater way; that of grieving the loss of employment, and the effects that this has on the families of children in care...and subsequently the providers of those children. Hopefully this article will offer you some discernment and direction in dealing with the job loss of parents of children within your program.

This fact sheet was produced by the ARCH National Resource Center for Crisis Nurseries and Respite Care Services funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau Cooperative Agreement No. 90-CN-0121 under contract with the North Carolina Department of Human Resources, Mental Health/Developmental Disabilities/Substance Abuse Services, Child and Family Services Branch of Mental Health Services, Raleigh, North Carolina. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the funders, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This information is in the public domain. Readers are encouraged to copy and share it, but please credit the ARCH National Resource Center.

# SUPERVISION U

## Upcoming Training

**NOTE:** **WSC** denotes the Western Service Center in Apple Valley and **NSC** denotes the Northern Service Center in West St. Paul.

### CORE courses (required) Dates Time Location

1. **Super Care Starts with SuperVision** 9/8/09 6:30-8:30 NSC 110 (Call Sue at 952-891-7229 for registration. Also look for Supervision class options in the RCC catalog

2. **FULL-Supervision Thru the Preschool Stages FULL** 4/9/09 6:30-8:30 WSC L139 Both pre-school and toddler courses need to be completed for Supervision U

**FULL-Supervision Thru the Infant/Toddler Stages FULL** 4/23/09 6:30-8:30 WSC L139 (These classes meet the child development training requirement)

3. **Prevention-It's all about Environment by Cory Woosley** Time: Monday, May 4, 6:30-9:30 p.m. Fee: \$27.00, 3 in-service hours Location: Veterans Memorial Community Center, Inver Grove Heights  
**Registration is through RCC only after April 4, 2009. They do not have registration info until after that date** There are only 20 to 25 slots available for this class.

### ELECTIVES (choose three)

1. **Rule Review/Handbook** Pick up a handbook from your licensor and take the post test for 2 hours of training credit

2. **Group Dynamics** 10/1/09 6:30-8:30 WSC L139 Registration is with Dakota County, see info below.

3. **Temperament** (Check out RCC for classes on this subject)

4. **Stress & Burnout** (Check out RCC for classes on this subject)

5. **Behavior Guidance** (Check out RCC for classes on this subject)

To register for the **FREE Dakota County licensing sponsored classes**, contact Sue Jahnke @ [susan.jahnke@co.dakota.mn.us](mailto:susan.jahnke@co.dakota.mn.us) or 952-891-7229

To register for classes offered through RCC, call 651-641-3549 or register on-line at [www.mnstreams.org](http://www.mnstreams.org) or mail in the class registration form from the RCC catalog. There is a class fee for RCC training.

## Rule Reminder — Handwashing

These rule reminders go hand-in-hand (get it). We have almost made it through the cold and flu season here in Minnesota, but as most child care providers know, the cold season can be twelve months out of the year. In order to attempt to keep provider’s programs as healthy as possible, hand washing is so very important. That means the hands of the little ones, the sort of little ones, the bigger ones, and, of course, the provider(s’).

As you can see from the other information in this newsletter, the temperature of the water you use for hand washing is also very important. Your water temperature must be 120 degrees or less. Any temperature over that 120 degrees can cause scalding.

### **9502.0435 Sanitation and Health Subp. 15. A and B:**

**A child’s hands must be washed with soap and water when soiled, after the use of a toilet or toilet training chair, and before eating a meal or snack. The provider shall monitor and assist the child who needs help.**

- A. In sinks and tubs accessible to children, the water temperature must not exceed 120 degrees Fahrenheit to prevent children from scalding themselves while washing.**
- B. Caregivers shall wash their hands with soap and water after each diaper change, after assisting a child on the toilet, after washing the diapering surface, and before food preparation. Hands must be dried on a single use towel.**

This information appears to be relatively basic as most safety instructions can be. As a child care provider, you do play an important role in keeping your children as safe and as healthy as possible. In the hustling and bustling of your day, you and the children can’t afford to skip or take short cuts in your hand washing protocol. Strict enforcement of the hand washing rules not only helps keep germs at bay, but it also sets a great foundation in sanitation for the children as they grow. Running water and soap, we are told by the Public Health people, along with the friction of rubbing hands together, is the most effective way to get rid of those germs. Hand sanitizers and wipes are good for the times you are not home near a sink, but they are not meant for all day use while you are at home.

We can’t do a Rule Reminder without talking about supervision, so be there when those little ones need teaching and help. It never hurts to check on those older kids if you think they might be taking short cuts.

In regard to the water temperature, make sure that you test the water at the sink where the children wash up. If they never go near your kitchen sink, it does not make much sense to test the water there. You can obtain an inexpensive thermometer at most stores. Test that water every few months, for the water temperature can change without touching the water heater, (at least that is what licensors often hear). Others in your home may turn the water temperature up without you knowing it, but as with all of the Child Care Rules, it is the provider’s responsibility to keep the water temperature in the acceptable range.

## Did You Know???

The child care rule states that water temperature may not be any warmer than 120 degrees. Did you know that:

- Water heaters leave the factory with temps set at 140 to 150 degrees.
- Children burn faster than adults because their skin is thinner.
- It takes 2 seconds for a child to receive third degree burns from 150 degree water, 5 seconds at 140 degrees, and 30 seconds at 130 degrees. Water temps of 120 degrees still have the capacity to severely burn a child in a matter of minutes.

To test your water heater's temperature:

- Check it in the early morning before anyone has used the hot water.
- Go into the room most used by children, usually the bathroom, and turn on the hot water in the sink for a full two minutes.
- Hold a thermometer in the stream of running water until the temperature stops rising. A digital thermometer will give the most accurate temperature reading.
- If the temperature is above 120 degrees, you must turn the thermostat down on the water heater. Gas water heaters have an external thermostat, near the bottom. Turn the dial to a lower setting. Electric water heaters have two panels screwed to the top and bottom of the tank or one panel on the side. Set it to "low" or "energy efficient".
- Wait 24 hours and then test the water temperature again to see if it is at or below 120.
- If the temperature did not go down, consult a professional about the problem. The water heater may be malfunctioning.



## Let's Talk About Safety



Gates or barriers must be used on all stairways when children between 6 and 18 months are in the home. The Rule regulates the equipment used and states; "equipment may be new, used, commercial, or homemade as long as it is appropriate for the ages of the children and activities for which it will be used, **safe** and in good repair." When looking at the type of gate that is safe for stairs the US Consumer Products Safety Commission recommends the use of hardware mounted safety gates - those that are mounted directly into a solid wall or wood post with screws - **at the top of stairs to prevent young children from falling down the stairs.** CPSC is aware of a number of incidents where pressure gates have popped out of openings at the top of stairs resulting in children falling down the stairs.

There is another type of safety gate – pressure mounted. These gates fit in door openings and can be manually adjusted for a tight fit. They are ok for use on **one** level, such as in hallways and between rooms. When using these gates, the CPSC recommends that the pressure bar on these gates be on the side away from the child, because the bar may be used as a toe hold by a child to climb over the gate. The direction for the pressure mounted gates provide the following warning: To prevent serious injury or death, securely install gate and use according to manufacturer's instructions. **TO PREVENT FALLS, NEVER USE AT TOP OF STAIRS.**

Hardware mounted gates start at around \$35.00. There are mounting kits available for converting pressure mounted gates, but they are around \$17 each, and two are required.

## News from CPSC

### U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

Office of Information and Public Affairs

Washington, DC 20207

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Firm's Recall Hotline: (888) 345-4407

March 12, 2009

CPSC Recall Hotline: (800) 638-2772

Release # 09-151

CPSC Media Contact: (301) 504-7908

### Kidde Recalls to Replace Fire Extinguishers Due to Failure to Operate

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, in cooperation with the firm named below, today announced a voluntary recall of the following consumer product. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed.

**Name of product:** Kidde XL Fire Extinguishers

**Units:** About 167,000

**Distributor:** Walter Kidde Portable Equipment Inc., of Mebane, N.C.

**Hazard:** The pressurized cylinders in the recalled fire extinguishers could lose pressure and fail to operate. In the event of a fire, this failure could put a consumer and property at risk.

**Incidents/Injuries:** None reported.

**Description:** This recall involves the Kidde XL Fire Extinguishers with model numbers FX340SC, FX340H, FX340GW, XL5MR, FX210R, FX340SC-2, FX210W, XL2.5TCZ-4, E-340-3 and with manufacture dates between October 2007 and April 2008. "Kidde" and the model number can be found on the label on the front of the extinguisher. The manufacture year is on the bottom of the extinguisher. If your extinguisher is one of the listed model numbers and is marked with the year 07 or 08, contact Kidde to determine if you have a recalled extinguisher.

**Sold at:** Department, home, and hardware stores nationwide from October 2007 through April 2008 for about \$35.

**Manufactured in:** Mexico

**Remedy:** Consumers should immediately inspect the pressure gauge. If it points to the red zone, contact Kidde to receive a free replacement extinguisher. If the gauge is not in the red zone, but you have questions about an extinguisher within the listed model numbers, please contact Kidde for additional information.

**Consumer Contact:** For additional information, contact Kidde at (888) 345-4407 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. ET Monday through Friday or visit the firm's Web site at [www.Kidde.com](http://www.Kidde.com)



## Heeding The Call Of The Wild Children & Nature Deficit Disorder

One might ask how we have come to a place in our lives that we must now have a syndrome that identifies children's lack of connection with the great outdoors. Richard Louv, author of "Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder", points out that children of this technological world have become alienated from the natural world. Factors that have contributed to the decline of children's time in nature include fewer open spaces, the dramatic rise of electronic media, safety concerns and having both parents work. Not only has this impacted children's physical fitness, as clearly seen in the dramatic increase in childhood obesity, but all indications are it also affects their psychological and spiritual health. The author contends that time spent in nature is essential to healthy human development. The brain was originally designed for an agrarian, "live off the land" existence, and humans have not been able to keep pace with today's over-stimulating environment. The more sedentary a child's lifestyle, the more likely there can be mental health issues, such as depression and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Some studies suggest that spending time in nature can be an effective means of restoring a sense of peace and reducing attention deficits in children. Researchers studying ADHD at the University of Illinois concluded, "contact with nature is as important to children as good nutrition and adequate sleep." The simple prescription of outdoor time in green spaces is inexpensive, accessible, has no side effects or associated stigma, and increases joyful living. Nature-child connections are important to future conservation efforts as well. If there is no involvement or knowledge of the great outdoors, there will not be any commitment to preserving it.

What can be done to promote natural world experiences? First as adults working with children, we must set examples by being involved with children outdoors, not just sending them outside to explore on their own. Adult interaction not only reinforces positive experiences with children in care, but also enables providers to maintain proper supervision. Keeping children within your sight lines at all times and being capable of intervening will protect children and decrease your worries.

Activity ideas that can foster a connection to and curiosity about nature are not complicated.

- Let children plant and care for flowers or vegetables in a garden plot or planter boxes.
- Take children outside in the rain to splash in puddles, inspect the raindrops on leaves, etc.
- Plan a scavenger hunt for various objects found in nature.
- Have children help you set up a sundial in your yard.
- Place some nuts in the shell outside and check back the next day to see what happened.
- Build bird feeders or houses. Start a list of birds/animals/insects children see in your yard. Have guidebooks to help identify them.
- Go on "I Spy" walks in your neighborhood, having children point out what they see.
- Have a creature hunt by turning over rocks, pieces of wood, or leaves on the ground.
- Collect rain or pond water in a clear plastic jar that is covered with a piece of old panty hose, and keep for observation over several weeks.
- Visit a nature preserve or county park with nature trails.
- Encourage children to use all their senses (sight, hearing, smell, touch & taste) to explore.
- Demonstrate and expect respect for the natural world, including picking up any litter dropped by anyone in the group.

To locate other activity ideas, check the library, the National Wildlife Federation website, [www.nwf.org](http://www.nwf.org), and the January 2008 issue of the Journal of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, <http://journal.naeyc.org/btj/200801>, to enhance children's outdoor experiences.

# Dakota County Family Child

## Week Of The Licensed Provider

The Dakota County Board of Commissioners will proclaim the week of May 3<sup>rd</sup> to May 9<sup>th</sup> 2009 as Licensed Family Child Care Provider Week.

In sincere appreciation for all that you do, Dakota County Child Care Licensing is hosting an OPEN HOUSE and celebration of the 2009 SUPERVISION U graduates.

### CHILD CARE LICENSING OPEN HOUSE Refreshments and Fun

#### IDEA STATIONS

- LANA Program Information
- Biting Kit
- Shaken Baby Syndrome video

Door Prize drawings

### SUPERVISION U GRADUATION

7:00

"Diplomas" and graduation gifts will be presented.

Please come and take a break, enjoy some cake and applaud you fellow providers and

Supervision U graduates!

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
 ★ May 7th, 2009 ★  
 ★ 6:30 to 8:30 pm ★  
 ★ Western Service Center ★  
 ★ 14955 Galaxie Avenue ★  
 ★ Apple Valley ★  
 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**DAKOTA COUNTY  
CHILD CARE LICENSING**



Dakota County Social Services  
14955 Galaxie Avenue  
Apple Valley, MN 55124

Phone: (952) 891-7400  
Fax: (952) 891-7374

**SIDS/Shaken Baby Syndrome Training**

Tuesday, May 5, 2009

6:30 to 8:00 PM - Room L139

Western Services Center in Apple Valley

Call Sue at 952-891-7229 to register

This training is free and required every five years for all providers and assistants when infants are enrolled in your program.

**Pass It On**



From John Baars:

Make your meals visually appealing as well as flavorful and you will be surprised what good eaters you have. Slice up some colorful bell peppers or make a creative design with a sauce of dressing, even if the child doesn't like it, it may get him to eat more of the other food on his plate.

Joan Finley purchased a waterproof tube at a hardware store, (what realtors use for brochures) and filled it with required first aid supplies. She has easy access to what she might need if a child receives a minor cut or scrape during outside playtime. The tube is mounted on a deck post. The permanent outside kit is very handy!



**DAKOTA COUNTY CHILD CARE LICENSING**

**Hastings, Inver Grove Heights**

Becky Elrasheedy 952-891-7361  
Becky.Elrasheedy@co.dakota.mn.us

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Marian Eisner 952-891-7334  
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**Website:**

[www.dakotacounty.us/HealthFamily/ChildCareProviders](http://www.dakotacounty.us/HealthFamily/ChildCareProviders)