

The Licensing Link

From Your Licensor — Helping Children Control Their Behavior

Part 2 — by Becky Elrasheedy



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In the last newsletter, we discussed the importance of teaching children feelings as part of your curriculum. A second step in helping children understand feelings is helping them control their behavior when facing their own strong feelings. This step is crucial to a well developed emotional intelligence. Children are naturally impulsive and aggressive in getting their needs met and we need to help them learn to control the way they act towards others and objects. In addition to a child's natural inclination to be impulsive, there are certain temperament traits that make it difficult for some young children to gain control. The methods that you use to teach them appropriate behaviors need lots of practice. Role playing various scenarios where a child may become out of control normally is a good way to help children know what to do when a situation arises. Following are some activities that can help children understand ways to remain calm when they are upset, excited, and sad, etc. Make these activities part of your routine and think of additional ones that will help the children in your care. By practicing these activities you help children understand what calming exercises are and then they can determine which one would help them remain or become calm if they are getting out of control.

Calm Island- I created a little island area that can be used whenever someone needs a break, needs to relax, needs to remain calm, needs to let off some excess energy. The island is a piece of material, that looks like sand, sewed together with material that has fish all over it and it represents an island in the ocean. You can use a plastic blow up palm tree, a cloth palm tree, a paper palm tree, or a cardboard cylinder tree for the palm tree that is on the island depending on the amount of space you have. There are items on the island that can help soothe children such as a flamingo ring toss game, stuffed animals, tape player and classical music or lullabies on tape, and books. I also have a little box of items that children can choose from before they go to the island and in this I have bubbles, smooth rocks, a hand held little plastic fan with rubber fan blades, little fish that you squeeze and they blow out air, blank tapes in case they want to record how they feel. The children can practice calming themselves during the day (take turns) and then when they really need to calm themselves down they know that they can use calm island to help them relax.



I recently went to Amy Bergum's home and she always changes out different sections of her room. She had a tropical island theme that would also work for helping children find a calm place. She used some ocean paper that she got from Lakeshore toys and put this on the wall around a corner of her room to simulate the ocean. She then had a palm tree and she had fishing poles that had a magnet attached to a metal pole. She had the fish that went with this fishing pole on the ground for the children to use. She had a lot of other things that finished off her theme such as flower leis, hats, grass skirts etc. This corner can also be a calm island and the fishing poles would work the same way the flamingo ring toss game does in helping to get some excess energy released.

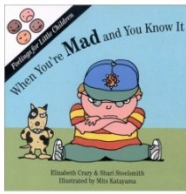
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The grass skirts would also be great with some music to help use up that excess physical energy children have when upset. You could make a little island out of a scrap of carpet that the child could get and take into the island corner.

Ball toss-A lot of children get adrenaline built up in their bodies and need a way to physically release this. If you can, it is a great idea to go outside and be able to run around, do jumping jacks, etc. If you cannot get out right away one thing you could do is to have a ball toss where children would have a little plastic bucket of sponge balls and have a target on the wall that they can aim at and throw the sponge balls at the target. They can throw this quite hard and not hurt anything. This can be a game during practice time and you can point out that the children can get their “frustrations”, “mads”, or “hurts” out when they are upset by doing this. Do not have this as a free play item but use it for an activity with all the kids and then it is special if they need to get their “mads out”.



“When You’re Mad and You Know It” -Obtain the book “When you’re Mad and You Know It” by Elizabeth Creary and use this as an activity. Practice singing the words to the tune of “When you’re happy and you know it” and have the children practice the actions for the words in this book. This is a great activity that is fun but also helps children understand what they can do if they are mad instead of hitting. It is always important to let children know what they can do and not emphasize what they can’t do.

I’m a Balloon- Tell children they are going to pretend that they are a balloon. Tell them to take a big breath so that the balloon gets bigger. Now have them blow out all the air so that the balloon goes flat. They can even slowly lower themselves to the floor to lay there like a balloon would. This is a way to teach children to take big breaths that help them relax. When children are older, you can just have them take a big breath and then blow it out slowly.

Dance to the Music-Find a favorite piece of soothing music. Have each child take a large piece of soft cloth or scarf. Have the children walk or dance around the room to the music, moving their piece of cloth all around their body as they move to the music.

Bounce the grumps out -Get an assortment of balls that bounce. Let each child pick a ball they feel comfortable with. Have the children pretend to bounce the anger, the wiggles, or the doldrums out of their body. When this is all bounced out, have the children sit in a circle and roll a ball to each person

Dance those feelings- Get an assortment of music ready (classical music works great). Have the children get in a line and then get ready to pretend to be fairies, giants, kites, dandelion fluff, trees blowing in the wind, etc. At first you direct the child’s action in telling them what to be, and then later you can have a child think of something to be. The children will move across the room following the person in front. Be sure to tell them not to bump into the person in front-they must leave room for that person. Once the children have an understanding of what to do have them listen to the music and be what they feel the music is telling them. They can dance anywhere in the room now as long as they do not bump into anyone else.



Draw Those Feelings-Have each child take a large piece of drawing paper and 3 crayons. Play some music for the children and have them draw how they feel when they hear the music. Tell them to keep drawing as long as it takes them to get their feelings out. Another way to do this would be instead of playing music, tell the children you are going to ask them to think of something that made them happy, or mad, or scared, and then have them draw or scribble how they felt. Remember they are not drawing pictures of the item but feelings.

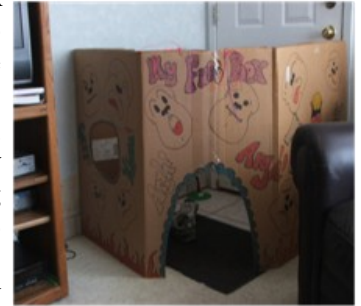
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Throwing my anger away- Bunch up a lot of newspaper into balls. Have the children think of something that made them angry. Tell them to put all their angry feelings onto the balls of newspaper and have them throw the balls of newspaper into buckets. Tell them to throw the balls as hard as they want to into the buckets so they can get all their angry feelings out.

Pounding my anxieties out - Have the child(ren) get some play dough. Tell them to pound and push away their anxieties, anger, hurt, madness, etc.

FUSS BOX - (Have places where children can express their feelings)-Obtain a large box big enough for children to enter into. Cut out a door for children to enter the box. Decorate the outside of the box with a lot of different faces expressing different feelings. Have a mirror on the inside of the box so children can look at themselves. Allow the child to go into the box and express all their feelings. There is no wrong or right feelings in this area, they just need to get everything out. You may have paper and colors so the child can draw how upset they are or how they feel about something. If a child is really upset or saying things that are mean, you should tell them that they can say this in their fuss box, but nowhere else. Have them go in and see how frustrated they are and when they are ready to talk calmly and respectfully, they should come out and talk to you or the person they were upset with.



The other children should know that this is a private area and they should not be overhearing what the other child is saying. The other children should carry on with their activity.

REMEMBER THAT THESE ACTIVITIES ARE WAYS TO HELP CHILDREN GET THEIR AGGRESSIVE FEELINGS OUT IN A SAFE ACCEPTABLE MANNER. YOU NEED TO TALK TO CHILDREN AND HAVE THEM TELL YOU WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO HELP THEM CALM THEMSELVES. AND THEN PRACTICE THAT METHOD WITH THEM WHEN THEY ARE GETTING ANGRY, FRUSTRATED, ETC.

Legislative Update from the Department of Public Health for child care providers

There have been two recent changes in reporting varicella (chickenpox) and zoster (shingles) disease that affect child care providers.

One change that has been made is that Child care can no longer accept a parent/guardian's signature to document that a child has had chickenpox instead of taking the chickenpox vaccine. As you know, a child who has had the chickenpox (varicella disease) is immune to it and doesn't need to have a varicella shot to go to childcare. However, starting September 1, 2010 you can no longer accept a parent's/guardian's signature to document that a child has had chickenpox. Legally you will only be able to accept:

- The signature of a health care provider along with the date of the child's chickenpox or
- The signature of a health care provider along with a statement that the parent's or legal guardian's description of the child's history of chickenpox indicates a past varicella infection, or
- The signature of a health care provider or a representative of a public clinic along with laboratory evidence of the child's varicella immunity.

The second change is that as of 2010 the Minnesota Dept. of Health is asking all child care providers to report all cases of chickenpox and shingles in children or staff.

- To report a case by phone, call MDH at 651-201-5414 or toll free at 1-877-676-5414
- You can find the form to mail or fax on the website at: www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/diseases/varicella/index.html then click on "Varicella Information for Child Care Providers"

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** (Watch for announcement in fall newsletter)
2. **Supervision Through the Stages is a two part class.** (Watch for announcement in fall newsletter)

You must attend both sessions.

- **Supervision Thru the Infant/Toddler Stages** (These classes meet the child development training requirement)
- **Supervision Thru the Preschool Stages** Both preschool and toddler courses need to be completed for Supervision U

3. Managing The Child Care Environment — Watch for announcements in RCC's training brochure and from DCFCCA's training

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** —July 22, 2010 6:30-8:30 WSC room L139-14955 Galaxie Ave, Apple Valley, MN Call 952-891-7400 to register
3. **Temperament** (Check out RCC's training brochure for classes on this subject)
4. **Stress, Burnout & Adult Self-esteem** (Check out RCC's training brochure for classes on this subject)
5. **Behavior Guidance** (Check out RCC's training brochure for classes on this subject)

To register for classes offered through RCC, call 651-641-3549 after you have made your class selection from their training brochure or register on-line at www.mnstreams.org or mail in the class registration form from the RCC catalog.

There is a class fee for RCC training.



Internet Use

Recently we have been receiving a number of complaints regarding internet use during daycare hours. The licensing rule was written in 1985 and does not address internet use. The concern comes in when providers are not adequately supervising. The internet is a wonderful tool that can be used for your business. Many providers save time by entering their food program records, emailing parents or licensors and finding resources and recipes on-line. Providers just need to keep in mind that whatever you are doing throughout the day, be it talking on the phone, internet use, cleaning up after lunch, etc, your first priority must be appropriate supervision. Licensed providers are held to a higher standard than the rest of the community when it comes to caring for children. Good practice would be to limit internet use during the day. Limit it to nap times, when children don't need to be supervised.

REMINDER

Just a reminder to check your SIDS and Shaken Baby Syndrome Training date. These two trainings need to be completed every five years and there are many of you who originally took it in 2005. Check Resources for Child Caring catalog and online websites (educarer and care courses) for training. (A certificate must be received for this training and shown to your licensor)

Summer Safety



Many providers use wading pools once the weather gets nice and we want to make sure you are following the rule and using wading pools safely. Remember:

- Wading pools add a new dimension to supervision –remember supervise, supervise, supervise
- Wading pools cannot be over 24 inches in height
- They must be able to be emptied
- Parents must receive the wading pool letter and sign the permission form annually
- Wading pools must be emptied when not in use

Check this web site for water safety tips- <http://www.safekids.org/safety-basics/safety-spotlight/pool-water-safety/>

Did You Know...

Did you know.....that a 4-year-old child died after choking at a child care center in Mankato earlier this month? The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) lists whole grapes as a choking hazard for young children. "Although children under age 4 are most at risk for choking on food and small objects, youngsters in their middle years can choke too," the AAP says on its website. "A number of foods or other items -- for instance, hot dogs, poorly chewed pieces of meat, grapes, raw carrots, hard candy, balloons, and small toy parts -- can become lodged in the child's airway."

The AAP urges parents and other caregivers to cut food for infants and small children into pieces no larger than a half-inch and then instruct the child to chew food thoroughly. Children younger than 5 years can easily choke on food and small objects. Children should be seated while eating, and should not eat while walking or playing. When kids trip or fall they often inhale what is in their mouth, which can cause choking.

Activities involving eating must be carefully supervised. Choking can be a silent killer.



FAMILY CHILD CARE CONNECTIONS

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Helping Children Resolve Peer Conflict

by Stephen Green, Ph.D., and Jonathan Thomas

Dealing with conflict between children can be extremely frustrating; however, peer conflict is an entirely normal part of growing up. Researchers have found that children are likely to engage in up to eight peer conflicts per hour during a typical day (Stevahn, Johnson, Johnson, Oberle, & Wahl, 2000). While this may seem excessive, most conflicts tend to be short in duration (i.e., around 30 seconds) and are often resolved by the children themselves with little or no guidance from adults.

Although not all of children's conflicts require adult intervention, it is important for adults to teach children how to handle conflict effectively at an early age. Studies indicate that violent behaviors are often learned as early as kindergarten, if not before (Stevahn et al., 2000). Without proper intervention, these behaviors tend to worsen. It has been discovered that by the age of eight, many of the violent behaviors exhibited during the kindergarten years are very difficult to change. For this reason, experts recommend that children be taught conflict resolution skills as early as possible. The more often children are exposed to constructive conflict management, the more likely they will be to retain the skills needed to resolve conflict with their peers as they grow older.



As a child care provider, you have an excellent opportunity to equip the children in your care with conflict resolution skills that will benefit them both now and in their future relationships.

Why Children Engage in Peer Conflict

Children engage in conflict with their peers for a variety of reasons, some of which include:

- Self-Centeredness** – Developmentally, young children tend to be self-centered and, therefore, have difficulty seeing the perspective of others. This can lead to conflicts over objects (e.g., toys), space (e.g., "That's my chair!"), and rules (e.g., taking turns).
- Limited Social Skills** – Due to their stage of development and lack of experience, many children haven't refined their social skills (e.g., communication and problem-solving) to the point that they are able to prevent simple disagreements from turning into more serious arguments.
- Unmet Needs** – Some children, due to unmet physical, social, and emotional needs, simply want attention from adults or others in their peer group. Engaging in conflict, even if it brings negative attention, is one way to become noticed.

- **Tiredness/Fatigue** – Being tired or fatigued due to the lack of sleep or an illness is another basic reason why children engage in conflict.
- **Poor Adult Role Modeling** – Some children grow up in homes or are surrounded by adults who fail to model appropriate ways to handle conflict. Often, these children tend to model whatever conflict resolution strategies are used by the adults in their lives. Unfortunately, this sometimes involves negative strategies such as yelling and hitting.

Positive and Negative Consequences of Conflict

Positive

Should all conflict between children be viewed negatively?

Certainly not. In fact, conflict is an inevitable part of any close relationship.

It is through conflict that children develop the social and emotional skills they will need to negotiate future relationships (e.g., work, friendship, marriage). Through conflict, children learn to identify and express emotions in healthy ways. They learn to balance their wants and needs with those of others by developing empathy (i.e., the ability to see things from another's perspective). They learn how their actions impact others in positive and negative ways. Dealing with conflict also helps children develop important problem-solving skills, which can be applied in other situations and later life circumstances.



Negative

Conflict becomes negative when it is handled poorly and/or escalates to a point where children are emotionally or physically hurt. Some of the negative consequences associated with conflict may include physical violence (e.g., pushing, hitting, kicking, biting) or injury, emotional outbursts (e.g., yelling, screaming), fear, name calling, isolation from peers, teasing, bullying, and hurt feelings. Depending on the situation, another potential consequence of conflict is avoiding it all together. This can be unhealthy in the sense that children may develop a tendency to allow others to take advantage of them instead of working toward solutions that benefit all those involved.

An Inside Look at Children's Peer Conflicts

Researchers have found that children's conflicts tend to fall into three basic categories (Wheeler, 1994):

- control of the physical or social environment (e.g., play areas, toys, type of games played);
- morality (e.g., individual rights); and
- social order (e.g., rules for activities).

Depending on their age and developmental stage, during conflict children are likely to use a variety of physical and/or verbal strategies, which may or may not be aggressive. The strategies that children rely on are closely related to the type of issue under consideration and the age of the child. For example, object conflicts involving young children tend to involve physical resistance; whereas, verbal protests are used more frequently as children grow older. Regardless of the tactics used, children's conflicts will typically end up in one of the following ways:

- The situation will remain unresolved.
- An adult will impose a solution, not allowing the children to learn how to manage conflicts themselves.
- One child will submit to the other, in which case the submissive child could end up in an unfair situation.
- The conflict could be resolved by implementing a mutually agreed upon solution in which both children gain from the interaction.

It is through play that children develop fine and gross motor skills, learn about rules of socialization, and enhance their cognitive skills. However, many of the conflicts that arise between children take place during play activities. Researchers have found that children's conflicts during play are influenced by the play setting, children's prior relationships with each other, and whether or not adults are present. Conflicts during play times tend to be more common when children are confined to small play areas with only a single entrance. Some other interesting facts related to children's conflicts and play include:

- Children playing together before conflict are more likely to resolve disputes.
- Children engaged in cooperative play use less aggression than children engaged in solitary/parallel play.
- Children are more likely to take responsibility for interactions and generate their own solutions when adults are not physically present in the play area.

Conflict Mediation Model

Due to a variety of reasons (e.g., developmental variations among children, cultural differences), there isn't an "ideal" model of conflict resolution that can be applied to all children in all circumstances; however, there are some helpful models that include steps to work with the children in your care to resolve conflicts in an effective manner. The following model, which was developed by faculty at the University of Nebraska (Kostelnik et al.), can be adapted and utilized with both younger (preschool) and older children (school-age).

The model focuses on conflict mediation and was designed to help children learn skills (e.g., communication, compromise, ability to consider perspective of another) to reach peaceful

solutions with their peers. The adult mediator (i.e., the child care provider in this case) serves as an instructor and supports children as they learn problem-solving procedures and a new vocabulary. Children are not expected to learn the model immediately, but over time, they will become increasingly capable of solving problems for themselves. The model, as presented below, has been slightly adapted to account for age differences in children.

Step 1: Initiating the Mediation Process

- *Stop aggressive behavior.* Position yourself between the feuding children so that the children begin to focus on you rather than one another.
- *Focus and calm the children.* Conflict can become very emotional, especially if someone feels threatened or gets hurt as a result. Give attention/comfort to each child; however, children who are “victims” need your attention first. Wait for children to be moderately settled before moving on.
- *Define the problem.* Who was involved? What events precipitated the conflict? How did the children respond to one another (e.g., physical aggression, name calling, etc.)? Has this problem happened in the past?

Step 2: Clarifying Each Child’s Perspective

- *Allow each child to share his/her perspective.* Children, like adults, tend to see things from different perspectives. It is important to provide each child with an opportunity to share their “version” of the conflict. Obviously, very young children will be limited in terms of their verbal skills; therefore, you will need to be more involved in helping them express their feelings.
- *Do not interrupt.* As each child goes through this process, try not to interrupt. Likewise, encourage the children to simply listen when it is not their turn, reminding them that they will also have an opportunity to share their views on the situation.
- *Paraphrase each child’s point of view.* After the children have had a chance to share their side of the story, succinctly paraphrase each child’s point of view. Check with each child to see if you have correctly understood their viewpoint.

Step 3: Summing Up

- *Define the dispute in mutual terms.* Help children understand that conflict is a shared problem. Children will be more likely to cooperate with you and their peers if they know that they cannot move forward unless they work together.
- *Make sure each child has responsibility for both the problem and the solution.* While cases do exist in which one child seems to be entirely innocent, there is usually enough blame to go around. Children need to be taught that they both have a responsibility for dealing with the problem and coming up with a workable solution. For example, Billy may hit Johnny after Johnny calls Billy a derogatory name. In this case, Billy and Johnny both did something wrong. Billy needs to admit that he shouldn’t have hit Johnny. Johnny needs to admit that he was wrong when he called Billy a bad

name. Once they acknowledge their part in the conflict, they can move to the next step.

Step 4: Generating Alternatives

- *Solicit input from children.* Consider the ages and developmental stages of the children involved. For younger children (i.e., under three years of age), you will need to take an active/directive role in helping them come up with alternative solutions (e.g., What if we give Sarah 5 minutes to play with the toy? After her time is up, it will be your turn to play with the toy for 5 minutes.). For older children, encourage them to come up with their own ideas.
- *Brainstorm possible solutions.* Ask children to come up with many possible solutions. Avoid offering advice on the merits of each solution. The important thing at this stage is to simply have the children think about alternatives.
- *Ask each child if the solution will work.* In many cases, there won’t be a single solution to a problem. Instead, children will likely come up with several ideas that might resolve the conflict. After a solution is offered, ask each child if the solution could possibly work.

Step 5: Agreeing on a Solution

- *Create a mutually satisfying plan of action.* All parties involved should come to consensus, not only on the solution, but also on the course of action that will lead to the solution. If children are not satisfied with the plan of action, they will be less inclined to follow through with the terms of the agreement.
- *State exact details of the agreement.* Children should have a clear understanding of the details of the agreement. How you go about doing this will depend on the age and developmental stage of each child. For younger and older children, you will need to use language and/or terms that can be clearly understood. After stating the details, make sure that the children understand what is expected of them. Have them repeat back to you the basics of the agreement to see if they have grasped the concepts.

Step 6: Reinforcing the Problem-Solving Process

- *Praise children for agreeing on a solution.* Compliment the children for their ideas. Let them know that you are proud of them for being willing and able to work toward a solution to their problem.
- *Process is as important as arriving at the solution.* In working through conflict with children, you are not only helping children resolve an immediate conflict, but you are also teaching them a process that can be applied in future settings. Initially, the process may not run as smoothly as you would like; however, be patient and



children will soon learn that following these simple steps actually work.

Step 7: Follow Through

- *Help children carry out the terms of the agreement.* Resolving conflict with others can be extremely difficult, even for adults. Therefore, children shouldn't be expected to go through the process without mistakes. You will need to work with children to help them fulfill their commitments to a peaceful solution.
- *Remind children of the terms.* Frequent verbal reminders will be necessary, especially for younger children who have virtually no experience in how to resolve conflicts with their peers.

Step 8: Announce the Conflict is Over

- *Let children know that the conflict has been resolved.* Children need to know that when they follow through with their agreements and the conflict is successfully resolved, the incident is over. Encourage the children to learn from the experience of correctly handling the situation; however, don't allow them to dwell on the past.

Teaching these simple steps will help children resolve conflicts with their peers and ultimately equip them with the skills they need to effectively come up with solutions on their own. As a child care provider, you are laying a foundation for peaceful conflict resolution that will enhance the children's ability to build strong relationships both now and in the future.

Dr. Stephen Green is an Assistant Professor and Child Development Specialist with Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Texas A&M System. His areas of speciality include child development, early childhood education, and father-child relationships.

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Out on a Limb: A Guide to Getting Along. University of Illinois Extension. <http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/conflict/index.html>

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Resolving Conflicts – Promoting Peace. Child & Family Canada. Canadian Child Care Federation. Resource Sheet #55. http://www.cfc-efc.ca/docs/cccf/rs055_en.htm

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Summer Safety

Summer is just around the corner, and with summer comes a few safety topics to freshen up on:

Protection from Insects

With summer approaching, it is time to remind parents of appropriate summer dress to aid in reducing the risk of insect bites while at the same time keeping their child comfortable. Remind them that bright flowery prints as well as scented soaps, perfumes, or hair spray in their children may attract bees and wasps. If planning a nature hike in a wooded area, plan ahead so parents can dress their children in light-colored, lightweight, and loose-fitting clothing with long sleeves and pant legs. Try to avoid areas where ticks are known to occur, and be sure to stay on the trails. Tucking shirts into pants and pants into socks and shoes will also be helpful. Once home, examine the children frequently for ticks and if found, remove them promptly.

Avoid areas with standing water or wet grass, as these are areas where mosquitoes breed and live. Make sure to empty any containers left outside in your yard where water can collect.

Make sure window and door screens do not have any holes where insects can enter your home.

Proper use of insect repellent is also key in preventing bites from biting insects like mosquitoes, ticks, fleas, chiggers, and biting flies; however, it does not prevent bites from stinging insects such as bees, hornets, and wasps.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends insect repellents should contain no more than 30% DEET when used on children, and are not recommended for children younger than 2 months. DEET is a chemical that is used in insect repellents and is considered most effective against ticks, which can transmit Lyme disease, and mosquitoes, which can transmit West Nile virus and other viruses. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends using products with active ingredients that are registered with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Be sure to follow your state's licensing guidelines on the use and application of insect repellent for children in your care. Keep permission notes from the parents to apply insect repellent to their children current, as required by state licensing requirements. Make sure to follow the instructions on the label provided by the manufacturer. Insect repellent must be stored out of the reach of children.

According to the AAP and EPA, the following precautions are recommended when using insect repellents:

Insect repellents should only be applied on the exposed skin and outside of the clothing, not under clothing.

Do not apply to eyes or mouth, and use very little around the ear area, and do not use over any cuts or irritated skin.

If using a spray repellent, apply in an open area to avoid breathing in the repellent. Apply the spray directly at their face.

There are products that are a combination of sunscreen and insect repellent; these should be avoided because sunscreen needs to be reapplied every 2 hours, whereas insect repellent should not be reapplied.

Lastly, be sure to thoroughly wash your hands after applying insect repellent, and wash the child's treated skin after returning indoors with soap and water. If clothing has been treated, inform parents that it needs to be washed before being worn again.

Protection from the Sun

A great defense from the sun's harsh rays is protective clothing, e.g., hats with broad brims that shield the face and sunglasses (preferably glasses that block 99%-100% of ultraviolet rays). Loose comfortable clothing with a tighter weave protects better than clothing with a looser weave (the less light that shows through the clothing, the more protective it is).



Summer Safety Continued

Try to limit sun exposure between 10 am and 4 pm, as this is when UV rays are strongest. Babies younger than 6 months should be out of direct sunlight. Consider placing a canopy or shade tent in part of your outside play area so the children can be outside yet still be in the shade.

Sunscreen is instrumental in protection from the sun. Be sure to follow your state's licensing guidelines on the use and application of sunscreen for children in your care, and keep parental permission forms updated accordingly. Make sure to follow the instructions on the label provided by the manufacturer. Sunscreen must be stored out of the reach of children.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), sunscreen needs to have an SPF (sun protection factor) of at least 15. The higher the SPF number, the more UVB protection the sunscreen has. The label should say broad-spectrum – this will screen out both UVB and UVA rays. According to the National Cancer Institute, UVB rays are more likely to cause sunburn, whereas UVA rays pass deeper into the skin and may add to skin damage that can lead to premature aging and cancer. There is also a new UVA star rating system on sunscreen labels; 1 star is the lowest UVA protection, with 4 stars being the highest UVA rating available in an over-the-counter product.

The recommendation of the American Academy of Pediatrics for babies under 6 months is that a minimal amount of sunscreen can be applied to the infant's face (avoid the eye area) and to the back of the hands, if protective clothing or shade are not available. If an infant gets sunburned, they recommend applying a cold compress to the affected area.

For older children, AAP recommends applying sunscreen to all exposed skin areas (being careful to avoid the eye area) 30 minutes before going outside to ensure it is thoroughly absorbed into the skin, and it should be used even on cloudy days. Reapply sunscreen every 2 hours or after swimming or sweating heavily.

For areas such as the nose, cheeks, tops of ears, and shoulders that are extra sensitive, there are sunscreens or sunblocks with zinc oxide or titanium dioxide. These products usually stay visible after rubbing them in; however now some come in fun colors that kids will enjoy.

Even when wearing sunscreen and protective clothing, children should not be out in the sun for extended periods of time. Make sure children drink plenty of water before going outside, and have frequent water breaks, even if the child does not feel thirsty.

Protection from Food borne Illness

If an outside picnic is a favorite summertime activity, making sure to handle foods safely in the warm weather is necessary.

Keep perishable items in the refrigerator until it is time to eat. For trips or picnics, place these items in an insulated cooler with ice.

Keep cold and hot foods separate; do not mix them when serving or storing.

Keep raw meat away from cooked food or food that is ready to serve. Keep all utensils, etc., used to prepare the raw meat away from prepared food. During preparation, wash hands frequently or if on a picnic, bring disposable wipes for hand washing.

Cook meat to the recommended minimum internal temperature, which should be on the label of the meat, check for this before purchasing.

Cold food should be left out no more than 2 hours, if at room temperature. If the weather outside is 90 degrees or higher, this time is shortened to 1 hour. Any food left over should be discarded.

Common sources of food poisoning in summer include potato salad, cold cuts, pasta salads, and other egg or dairy-based cold dishes. Symptoms of food poisoning include vomiting, diarrhea, and loss of appetite. For healthy people, these symptoms may only be an inconvenience, but for young children or people with weaker immune systems, food poisoning can cause severe dehydration.

Taking a few safety precautions will go far in ensuring you have a safer and happier summer for your daycare children and yourself.

Dakota County Social Services

14955 Galaxie Avenue
Apple Valley, MN 55124

Phone: (952) 891-7400
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We're on the Web!!!
www.co.dakota.mn.us

Pass It On

From provider Nancy Truong:



Every time you go by a mirror...smile. It puts you in a good mood and reminds you to be nice to yourself

A provider has periodic days where the children make a meal, a dessert, etc for their parents/family. The parents buy the ingredients and bring them in when they drop off the kids. Everyone benefits!



Dakota County Child Care Licensor Directory

Hastings, Inver Grove Heights

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

Apple Valley and Burnsville L-Z

Cases distributed among other licensors

Farmington and West St. Paul

Bill Hess 952-891-7381
Bill.Hess@co.dakota.mn.us

South St. Paul and Rosemount S-Z

Maura Johnson 952-891-7362
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Lakeville & surrounding areas, Burnsville A-K, and Mendota Heights

Jan Kochendorfer 952-891-7363
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Website:

www.dakotacounty.us/HealthFamily/ChildCareProviders
