HEALTH AND SAFETY CALENDAR

October

Cold and Flu Campaign: Be sure all children and adults involved in group care receive flu vaccine. For informational materials, contact American Lung Association, (800) LUNG-USA, info@lungusa.org, or www.lungusa.org.

National Dental Hygiene Month: Oral health care begins in infancy for good teeth throughout life. See p. 4. For materials, contact American Dental Hygienists’ Association, (800) 243-ADHA, media@adha.net, or www.adha.org.

National Fire Prevention Week: For materials, contact National Fire Protection Association, (800) 344-3555, custserv@NFPA.org, or www.firepreventionweek.org, Request ECELS Self-Learning Module on Fire Safety for lesson plans to teach children fire safety skills.

November

American Diabetes Month: Prevent obesity that may lead to diabetes. For materials, contact American Diabetes Association, (800) 232-3472, or www.diabetes.org.

December

National Hand Washing Awareness Week: Hand washing and immunization are the two best ways to prevent infection. For materials on hand washing, contact Henry the Hand Foundation. (513) 769-3660, dr.will@henrythehand.com or www.henrythehand.com

Safe Toys and Gifts Month: Contact Prevent Blindness America, (800) 331-2020, info@preventblindness.org, or www.preventblindness.org

(Continued on page 2)
organizations, immunization coalitions, etc. to inform them of the new regulation and to enlist their support and assistance in making this regulation work effectively for PA infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.

In September 2003, pharmaceutical company representatives and public health staff distributed thousands of printed fliers across the Commonwealth. Other media vehicles (i.e., web pages, newsletters, bulletins, etc.) were also utilized to inform 1) child care providers that, as a licensed child care provider, they are required to submit the immunization status of each child enrolled in their facility to the DOH annually; and 2) health care providers to ensure that infants and children, who receive medical care from their practice, are up-to-date with all immunizations, parents are advised about the new child care requirements, and the Child Health Assessment Form (CY-51) or an Immunization Record is made available to parents.

In January 2004, a cover letter and an Immunization Data Collection Form (form) were sent to 4,493 child care providers with instructions on how to complete and submit immunization records of children under their care. The DOH only asks for the number of doses for each required vaccine, based on a child's age. No individual or personal data is requested. Child care providers were given six weeks to submit the form. In addition, more than 1,500 non-reporting facilities were contacted by the DOH in March 2004 to offer assistance and encourage compliance with the child care regulation. A preliminary review demonstrated that of the 4,492 facilities, 3,184 (71%) submitted the form, which included over 100,000 immunization records.

The final data is being analyzed for the immunization coverage rates by each age group, by each required vaccine, by county, by child care facility, etc. Specific data will be included in the winter HealthLink issue. Follow up activities include: 1) a joint letter from the DOH and the DPW will be sent to all non-reporting child care facilities; 2) a meeting among stakeholders will be held to identify best practices and lessons learned, and 3) promote educational outreach activities in areas of low immunization coverage.

The child care immunization reporting will be conducted in January annually. DOH's goal is to increase immunization coverage rates as well as to decrease the incidence of VPDs among infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. The DOH plans to work closely with its partners and stakeholders to make this reporting process as time saving and cost effective for parents, health care providers, and most importantly, child care providers. For more information, please contact the Division of Immunizations at (717) 787-5681.

(Article prepared by Phouc Tran and Alice Gray of the PA Department of Health.)

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**ECELS Helps Early Educators Keep Children (and their Health Records) Up-to-date**

- Use the enclosed **NEW 2004 Edition** of the Immunization Dose Counter
- Come for training by ECELS at the PACCA conference on September 28 in Harrisburg. See www.pacca.org for details.
- Use your computer and your link to the Internet to find and track which children need updated immunizations and screening tests. Easily generate reminders for parents. Get training credit too! See www.wellcaretracker.org to view a demonstration of the tool and for information about the limited offer of free subscriptions to WellCareTracker subsidized by a grant from the PA Department of Public Welfare.
- Contact ECELS for technical assistance: E-mail: ecels@paaap.org Phone: (484) 446-3003
ECELS Q & A

Q: Is baby powder safe to use in an infant's diaper area?

A: No. Even when you try to be very careful while you are using baby powder, some of it gets into the air. For infants, the distance between their bottoms and their faces is very short, making inhalation of the powder likely. Also, keeping powder around invites a child to play with the container, an activity that could easily lead to breathing in the powder. Talc is the primary ingredient in baby powder and is known to cause lung damage when inhaled. Note that the label on most commercial "baby powder" containers makes this danger clear. The label usually suggests keeping the product out of the reach of children.

Q: Do all children with middle ear infections need antibiotics?

A: No. While ear infections produce pain and fever, it is not always necessary to treat them with antibiotics.

A recent study checked out what happens if parents of a mildly ill child with an ear infection have an antibiotic prescription to use if their child gets worse. The children in the study had a temperature of less than 101.5 degrees F. and received pain medication. Only 1/3 of the children received antibiotics. More than 3/4 of the parents said that the pain medicine was effective.

Since antibiotic-resistant germs are becoming a big problem, doctors are more willing to wait to use these valuable drugs. By checking the child's symptoms resolve and having the doctor check the ears to see if they have healed without having to use antibiotics, less medicine is used. Even when antibiotics are needed, it may be possible to adjust the times of day medication is given, so the child may receive the doses at home and not while attending child care.

Health Education Curricula—2 Reviews

Review #1: The Great Body Shop: A Curriculum to Teach Health and Safety to Children

The Great Body Shop is a multi-level health education curriculum available to child-care providers. The Pre-K kit includes activities on health, illness, injury prevention, substance abuse prevention, violence prevention, nutrition, fitness, growth and development, environmental health, emotional health, and family life. The topics are intended for use over a 10-month period.

The learning goals support socio-economic, cognitive, literacy, physical and aesthetic components. The teaching strategies include inquiry, experimentation, observation, guided learning, play, exploration, art, music, dialogue, movement, and individual and group experiences. Topics are integrated with circle time, parent/child activities, and interest area activities.

The cost is by unit purchased. For example, the teacher's guide costs $45.00, and the Pre-K student materials are $6.50. For more information and purchase of the curriculum kit, contact the Children's Health Market, Inc., Nancy Grace, President, PO Box 7294, 300 Danbury Rd. Suite 102 Wilton CT 06897, (203) 762-2938, (800) 782-7077

(Continued on page 6)
Insect Bites

Insect bites can transmit diseases. Mosquito bites are spreading West Nile disease. Ticks bites can put the germs that cause Lyme disease and Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever into the blood through the skin. The risk varies with the season and geographic location.

When properly used, insect repellents discourage biting insects from landing on treated skin or clothing. However, these helpful chemicals may be toxic if misused. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) suggests how to choose and apply insect repellents safely. Visit the EPA website, www.epa.gov/pesticides. For telephone information, call the Region 3 office of the EPA responsible for Pennsylvania at (800) 438-2474 or (215) 814-5000.

For specific medical information about the active ingredients in repellents and other pesticides, call the National Pesticide Information Center (NPIC) at (800) 858-7378. Their web address is www.npic.orst.edu.

Dental Caries: Watch what you drink!

A recent study in the medical journal, Pediatrics, showed that the increase in consumption of sugary beverages (e.g. soda) is related to an increase in dental cavities. Regular powdered beverages and 100% juice were also associated with an increase risk in cavities. This study supports recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics:

• Have 2 or more servings of dairy foods a day
• Limit the amount of 100% juice to 4 to 6 ounces a day
• Restrict other sugared beverages (such as soda, or reconstituted powdered beverages) to occasional use

Children 6 years and older should brush their teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste. Children 2-6 years should brush with non-fluoride toothpaste, and children younger than 2 years should have their teeth wiped with a soft, damp cloth twice a day.

And remember, the AAP recommends dental visits by age 3 years, sooner if there are any dental concerns.

Safety on the Internet

A number of valuable educational programs and resource materials have been developed to help parents and professionals keep children safe while using the Internet. The FBI’s Crimes Against Children Program publishes A Parent’s Guide to Internet Safety. It is available online at www.fbi.gov/publications/pguide/pguide.htm. This resource describes signs that children might be at risk while they are online. It gives steps to take if a caregiver or parent suspects that a child might be communicating with a sexual predator online, and what can be done to minimize the risk of online victimization. On this useful website, you’ll find several frequently asked questions, as well as some basic definitions of terms related to using the Internet.

For younger children (as well as teens) check out the NetSmartz Workshop, the online program that uses original animated characters with age appropriate Internet lessons (www.netsmartz.org). Also look at the section on this website that gives relevant information on Internet safety for parents and educators.
Scheduling Workshop Training on Health and Safety

Here are some tips for providers who want ECELS to schedule on-site workshops on health and safety. Please schedule well-ahead of time, especially if you want to be eligible for PA Pathways grant funds for your training. Grant funding is available for a limited time on a first come, first served basis. Call (866) 697-3574 to schedule.

When scheduling:
- Allow adequate time (at least 4-6 wks) to schedule a training.
- Speak slowly when you leave a message. Leave your area code and phone number for the Training Scheduler on the message.
- If you are a family child care provider, ask your local Service Delivery Area (SDA) office to help you network with other family and group providers to organize a group for an ECELS workshop.
- Check the length of the workshop. Most are 2 hours in length except First Aid (4-5 hours), Safe Medication Administration (3 to 4 hours) and Infant/Toddler Health and Safety (3 to 4 hours.)
- Check the PA Pathways online training calendar for training dates and topics: www.papathways.org
- Send the registration fee to ECELS by the date specified by the ECELS Training Scheduler

On the day of training:
- Confirm the number of participants. If the number is less than the minimum number required, contact the trainer and the ECELS Training Scheduler right away.
- Have adult-sized chairs and tables if at all possible. You may need to meet at a location near your center to have adult-sized seating.
- Designate a “host” to greet the trainer and provide orientation to the facility.
- Make sure the Registration of Training form is filled out completely. Without all the required information, your training may not be correctly entered into the PA Pathways statewide database. Please keep your copy of the Registration of Training Form as proof that you have successfully completed the workshop.

Note: First aid training is valid for three years.

Health Consultation in Early Education and Child Care Settings

Health Consultants are working across Pennsylvania to help providers improve quality. Many are nurses, but some are pediatricians, health educators, nutritionists, oral and mental health professionals, environmental health professionals and many other types of experts. These professionals help address health concerns raised by child care staff and parents. They also can make skilled observations to prevent problems. The basic reference manual used to inform child care practices in health and safety is Caring for Our Children, the National Performance Standards: Guidelines for Health and Safety in Out-of-home Child Care. 2nd Edition, 2002. The manual is available in print from the American Academy of Pediatrics, the National Association for the Education of Young Children, and the American Public Health Association. You can also access it on the website of the National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care at http://nrc.uchsc.edu.

Typical problems addressed by a health consultant may include:
- How to prevent illness and injury
- Who to exclude and what to do when children become ill
- How to keep children up-to-date with vaccines and screening tests
- How to care for children with special health needs, (e.g. asthma, allergies)
- How to administer medication safely
- How to deal with staff health issues
- What to do when different doctors disagree about what providers should do
- How to reduce hassle when using community health resources

Some funding for health consultation may be available for Keystone STARS designated providers through the Keystone STARS Technical Assistance System. Non-STARS providers caring for infants and toddlers or children with special needs may have access to limited funding for health consultation through ECELS. For more information, contact your local CCRD or ECELS.
Review #2: I am Amazing!

Revised in 2002 by HealthyCHILDCare, this early childhood curriculum kit has a wealth of activities. The materials include colorfully illustrated learning materials, posters, reproducible parent letters, and songs on cassette. The lessons use five learning centers: creative arts, dramatic play, language arts, science & discovery, and table games. The topics the curriculum addresses are:

1. My amazing body (name, location, and function of body parts)
2. My five senses (what the senses are and how they are used to reveal the world)
3. Amazing me (appreciate differences and build self-esteem)
4. Our families and friends (different types of families and their role in providing love and care)
5. My feelings and yours (child’s feelings and the feelings of others)
6. Healthy Habits
7. Healthy Foods (encourages healthful eating)
8. Safety First (skills for outdoor play in the program and in the neighborhood)
9. Safe at home (safety practices in the home)

For more information, contact HealthyCHILDCare, (877) 258-6178

Identify a Health Advocate To Remind Everyone About Health and Safety

Studies in Pennsylvania and in California show that assigning and training one staff member — one most interested in health and safety issues — to be a Health Advocate makes a difference in the quality of the program. The Health Advocate usually has other duties, but is the point person to mentor others and raise health and safety as part of every planning discussion. Having someone designated to advocate for health and safety is a practical and inexpensive way to improve performance. The Health Advocate does not need to do all the health and safety tasks. Instead, this person reminds those whose role should include these functions about their importance. The Health Advocate can be a teacher, a director, or other staff member — but should be interested in health.

For example, the Health Advocate asks about ways to keep children’s immunization and screening test records up-to-date. The Health Advocate helps raise awareness about hygiene and sanitation. She finds and brings songs and games about health topics as well as materials that can be shared with parents. She works with a Health Consultant (see p. 5) and the program’s director/administrator on planning for improving the health component of the program.

Health and safety is an important part of everyday practice. Making sure everyone practices hand washing with soap and flowing water reduces respiratory illness and diarrhea for all children and staff in the program. This means fewer absences of children, fewer children who become sick during the day, and a reduction in staff illness. Frequent reminders about how and when to wash (and to use hand lotion to prevent chapping) comes best from those who are actually working in the program everyday. When there is less illness, there is less stress for everyone.

(Article adapted with permission from Sherman M. Training in Health and Safety Practice is Just the Beginning, Child Care Information Exchange: March/April 2004)
NEW Book!

Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools

This easy-to-use reference guide identifies infections common to children in group settings and their caregivers. It informs readers about how diseases spread, and recommends what to do about them in child care. The content comes from the premier source of information on infectious diseases: the 2003 Red Book. Four-color photographs illustrate some of the most common infections found in out-of-home child care settings. The book includes a table for quick reference and a full set of updated Fact Sheets that provides information on each type of infectious disease. The Fact Sheets have a brief description of the disease, followed by when to exclude and when to readmit children and staff. The medical information is presented in a non-technical and easy-to-understand style and tone. It is a “bridge” publication to allow pediatricians and teacher/caregivers to “speak the same language.”

This new book replaces the Preparing for Illness booklet. Through a generous grant from the PA Department of Welfare, ECELS has purchased a copy of the book for each licensed child care center in Pennsylvania. If you work in a child care center, look for your copy to arrive in the mail. Others who wish to purchase copies of the book may order it from the American Academy of Pediatrics, (866) 843-2271, or www.aap.org. The cost is about $36 plus shipping.

REQUESTING PRINTED MATERIAL AND ADVICE ON HEALTH AND SAFETY

ECELS ORDER FORM

(Pennsylvania Child Care Providers & Pennsylvania Health Consultants Only)

To receive the handout listed below, check the box and return the form with a mailing label that can be applied to a large envelope. Return the order form to the new address for ECELS:

ECELS-HCCPA, Rose Tree Corporate Center II, Suite 3007. 1400 North Providence Road, Media, PA 19063.

Handouts: Enough copies for each enrolled family while supplies last — Remember to send a mailing label for a large mailing envelope. This item is a brochure.

☐ Children and Emergency Situations: ________ number of brochures requested

Health & Safety Training Opportunities:

Four Self-Learning Modules are now available on the ECELS web pages at www.paaap.org. ECELS also offers many on-site workshops to providers who arrange the site, and request training for a group of participants. Please see the ECELS training brochure enclosed with this newsletter for both workshop and self-learning training opportunities. See p.5 for tips on how to schedule workshop training.

Many useful materials are located on the PA AAP website, ECELS-Healthy Child Care PA page. To find ECELS-Healthy Child Care PA on the PA AAP website, sign on to the Internet, type into the internet address box on your computer screen “http://www.paaap.org” or “http://paaap.org”. When the PA AAP web page opens, use your mouse to put the cursor on “ECELS-Healthy Child Care PA” in the left border or frame of the page, and then click on it. You can also make requests by email: ecels@paaap.org or by Fax: 484-446-3255.
A Minute For Kids

The website of the American Academy of Pediatrics has a link that offers one minute audio shorts on many different topics such as ear piercing, bunk bed safety, and commonly asked sports questions. Access the website content at www.aap.org

New Emergency Brochure

Thanks to the good work of Western PA health and emergency professionals, and the PA Department of Health, the enclosed brochure is available to remind everyone about some of the essential points involved in emergency preparedness. Use the order form on page 7 to request more copies from ECELS.

ECELS-Healthy Child Care PA Website Being Renovated

Through a federal grant, ECELS–Healthy Child Care PA is designing new web pages to make it easier for users to find and for ECELS to update useful materials. Make a note to check the web site of the PA Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics around October, and then at least once a month to explore the many helpful materials posted there. Go to www.paaap.org, then click on ECELS-Healthy Child Care PA.

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