

## SUMMER SAFETY TIPS

Recently, Jo Ann Lawer, Deputy Secretary for Children, Youth and Families at the PA Department of Public Welfare, sent a letter to all Pennsylvania child care facilities with reminders about summer safety. The highlights of the letter were:

### Heat Precautions

- Use sunscreen with parent's consent.
- Offer children liquids on a regular basis.
- Avoid mid-day sun activities.
- Provide shady play areas and frequent cooling-off periods.
- Ask parents about children's individual heat tolerances.

### Water Activities

- Check state regulations regarding all water activity (including ratios, lifeguard, and water safety training).
- Wading pools can spread germs. (*ECELS suggests sprinklers and individual water play containers instead of wading pools.*)
- Never leave children unattended near any water, even for a moment.
- Make sure in-ground pools are fenced so children can't get in without an adult; above-ground pools should be inaccessible too.
- Remember ... during their inspections, DPW licensing staff will check that pools are inaccessible to children.

(Continued on page 2)

## HEALTH AND SAFETY CALENDAR

Use the calendar to plan ahead.

### August

- ◆ **Friendship Day:** August 1<sup>st</sup>. Celebrate inclusion of children with special needs. Plan activities where children of all abilities share their similarities. Invite foster grandparents to help! Check out information on the Foster Grandparent Program on page 6.
- ◆ **Summer Food Safety:** Keep cold food cold (40° F.) and hot food hot (140° F.) until eaten. Use a food thermometer to check temperatures. For a summer snack flier, use the order form on page 7.

### September

- ◆ **Back-to-school with Child Health Assessments:** Make sure kids' check-ups, immunizations, and screening tests are up-to-date according to the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics. Post the "Immunize By 2" flier included with this newsletter in your parent information center. For additional copies, contact the PA Department of Health at 800/986-KIDS.
- ◆ **National Farm Safety & Health Week:** September 20-26, 1998. This year's theme is "Precision Farming Includes Safety & Health." For a free educational packet, contact the National Safety Council 800/621-7615 or visit the website at <[www.nsc.org](http://www.nsc.org)>. Also, check out the Children and Farm Safety article on page 7.
- ◆ **SAFE KIDS Injury Prevention Conference:** September 15 & 16, 1998 at the Penn State Conference Center Hotel. Learn about playground safety, violence prevention, airbags/car seats, farm safety and more. For information, call 800/683-5100.

### October

- ◆ **Child Health Month:** The American Academy of Pediatrics continues its 3 year substance abuse prevention observance. This year's theme is alcohol abuse prevention. For the American Academy of Pediatrics' policy statement on fetal alcohol syndrome, use the order form on page 7.
- ◆ **Staff Health:** Influenza vaccine may be given any time during flu season, but for maximum protection, get the vaccine in October. For a brochure on adult immunization, use the order form on page 7.

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### Supervision

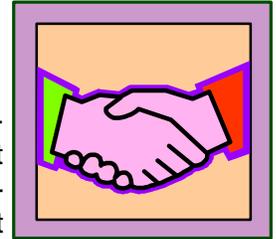
- Maintain required ratios.
- Staff members should be able to name and account for all the children they are supervising at any time.
- Each child should be supervised by a designated staff member at all times.

### Volunteers

- Do not count volunteers in the staff:child ratio.
- Volunteers can help during swimming activities, but cannot be counted as a staff person for purposes of the staff:child swimming ratio.

DPW and ECELS are working to help you keep child care safe during the summer ... and all year long!

### **LMA's and ECELS Team Up!**



ECELS staff recently contacted Local Management Agencies (resource and referral organizations) throughout the Commonwealth to find out how they were using the *Healthy Kids* magazines ECELS sends them. The LMAs responded that they:

- ⇒ Place a copy in the lobby for parents to read.
- ⇒ Include a copy in the resource library.
- ⇒ Organize an article file on topics parents ask LMAs about.
- ⇒ Distribute copies to legally unregulated providers.
- ⇒ Create monthly quizzes for parents based on tips found in *Healthy Kids*.
- ⇒ Recruit a parent volunteer to select topics from *Healthy Kids* to share at parent conferences.

If you'd like copies of *Healthy Kids*, ask a local pediatrician to give them to you. They're free! Take a lesson from the LMAs and share the good information you learn today!

### **New Child Health Insurance Now Available**

Governor Ridge ordered elimination of waiting lists for the Commonwealth's Child Health Insurance Program (CHIP). In his 1998-99 state budget, he proposed expanding the Child Health Insurance Program so even more kids who don't have health insurance can get coverage. Key components of the Governor's plan, signed into law June 17th, are:

- Income eligibility increased to 200% of poverty (\$32,900 for a family of 4) with no family payment and 235% of poverty (\$38,658 for a family of 4) for subsidized insurance.
- Age eligibility increased through 18 years of age for health insurance.
- A link for Medicaid and CHIP through one toll-free access phone number, a joint application, and combined outreach and enrollment so families will have less trouble finding out what program works for them.
- Removal of the \$5 co-pay for CHIP-covered prescriptions.

Many uninsured children already qualify for Medicaid and CHIP, and their parents don't know it. Every child needs health insurance. If there are any families whose employers do not provide health insurance for dependent children, have them call 800/986-KIDS to find out if they can get insurance in the newly expanded programs. Remind parents that health insurance is not welfare; it is an investment to prevent costly medical bills in the future. If your family qualifies, sign up your kids. Many caregivers can get their kids insured this way.

## MOUTH INJURIES

As children begin to pull themselves up to try to walk, they frequently fall. Sometimes they get hurt. These injuries often involve the mouth. Injuries to baby teeth can affect the development of the permanent teeth. For school age children, injuries to young permanent teeth can have serious consequences as well.

Follow these guidelines to prevent and manage mouth injuries:

- Each child in the facility should have a dentist's name and contact information on record. Ask parents to make sure the dentist is willing to treat the child, before they list the dentist's name on enrollment forms. This is especially true for infants and toddlers. Not all dentists are prepared to care for very young children.
- After any serious fall involving the mouth (e.g. chipped tooth), suggest that parents take the child to a dentist who treats young children.
- If a child knocks out a baby tooth, do not put it back into the mouth. Contact the dentist as soon as possible. If you cannot find the tooth, make sure the parent takes the child to a physician or dentist to confirm that the tooth wasn't inhaled or pushed up into the gum.
- If a child knocks out a permanent tooth, gently rinse off the tooth, replace the tooth in the socket and hold it there with clean gauze or a wash cloth. If you can't put the tooth back in the socket, put it in a clean container of milk, saliva, or water. Refer the child to the dentist immediately. The faster you act, the better the chance of saving the child's tooth. Minutes count.
- If a child cuts the lip or tongue, and the bleeding won't stop with cold and pressure, refer the child to a physician or dentist who will determine the need for stitches.

To prevent or minimize dental injuries:

- ⇒ Use corner guards to cover sharp edges.
- ⇒ Keep electrical cords out of children's reach. Serious injury can result if a child bites an electrical cord.
- ⇒ Encourage the use of mouthguards when school-age children play sports.
- ⇒ Make sure kids under 4 years of age use a car seat and older kids use seat belts for every ride.
- ⇒ Use impact-absorbing surfacing material under indoor and outdoor play equipment. Make sure all areas for active play are safe. Use the *CPCS Handbook for Public Playground Safety* and ECELS' Active Play self-learning module. (To earn 2 hours of training credit, call 800/24-ECELS to borrow the Active Play self-learning module.)

For more information on dental emergencies and other topics such as thumbsucking, sealants, fluoride, and more ... check out the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry's website at <[www.aapd.org](http://www.aapd.org)>

-- Connie Killian, DMD



## ECELS Recognizes Bert Smith

At the 10<sup>th</sup> ECELS Advisory Committee meeting in March, Director Susan Aronson, MD presented pediatric nurse practitioner and health consultant Herberta Smith with a plaque commemorating Bert's lifelong commitment to child advocacy. After receiving the award, Bert wrote:

"On March 19, 1998, I was pleasantly surprised with an award from the PA Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. While I was deeply honored to receive such an award, I felt all of you who have labored in love for the children in your care over the years also deserve recognition. Without your cooperation, the Health Advocacy Training Project of the 1970s and ECELS would have been only a dream. I applaud you for your efforts, but our work as advocates for children is never done.

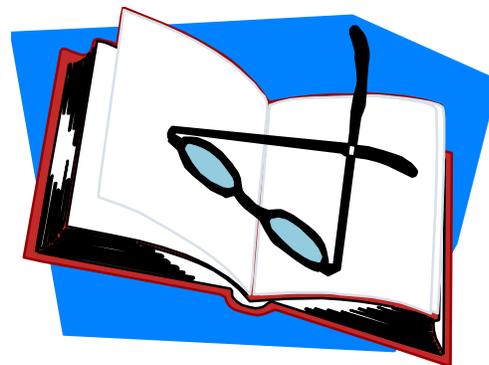
Health consultants aren't being used as they should in child care. ECELS has a registry of health professionals who are willing to assist you in:

- ☞ reviewing and updating your health policies
- ☞ identifying hazards in your facility
- ☞ educating parents and staff
- ☞ checking children's health records
- ☞ handling exclusion issues

When your program uses a health consultant, your parents will feel more confident about choosing you as their child's caregiver. A simple phone call to ECELS is the first step in getting your facility linked to a health consultant.

I am semi-retired now and am happy to have had this opportunity to thank all of you who have made working in child care a rewarding experience."

**Sue Aronson and Bert Smith**



### ECELS BOOK REVIEW

Often, ECELS staff get calls from caregivers asking about a situation where they suspect child abuse. Some callers aren't sure what constitutes child abuse; other want to know who to contact and whether they will get into trouble for reporting. Some just want to run their suspicions past a trusted listener.

The book, *Caregivers of Young Children: Preventing and Responding to Child Maltreatment* covers all these issues and more. Although the book has no pictures, the text gives clear information on:

- recognizing physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect
- how to deal with cultural differences
- observing children over time
- talking with the child and the parents
- reporting laws
- minimizing the risk of abuse within the child care program
- facility policies dealing with
  - ⇒ unusual marks or injuries
  - ⇒ disciplining children
  - ⇒ touching children
  - ⇒ responding to child abuse allegations

Caregivers can get one free, bound copy of this publication by contacting an Information Specialist at the Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect, P.O. Box 1182, Washington, DC 20013-1182 or call 800/394-3366.

### **QUITTING SMOKING**

Quitting smoking should be a goal for any parent or caregiver who smokes. Nevertheless, quitting isn't easy. Cigarettes are addictive and the smoking habit involves many self-comforting behaviors that smokers use to reduce stress. Some smokers remember making unsuccessful attempts at quitting in the past.

The PA Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics operates a program for the PA Department of Health called **Clean Air for Healthy Children**. This program recommends viewing *any* reduction in smoking or *any* positive change in the smoker's attitude as a success. Friends and relatives want to help loved ones to quit smoking, but nagging doesn't work. Instead, suggest that smokers follow the Smoking Cessation Pyramid while trying to quit. Success is moving up the pyramid one step at a time to the next harder level.

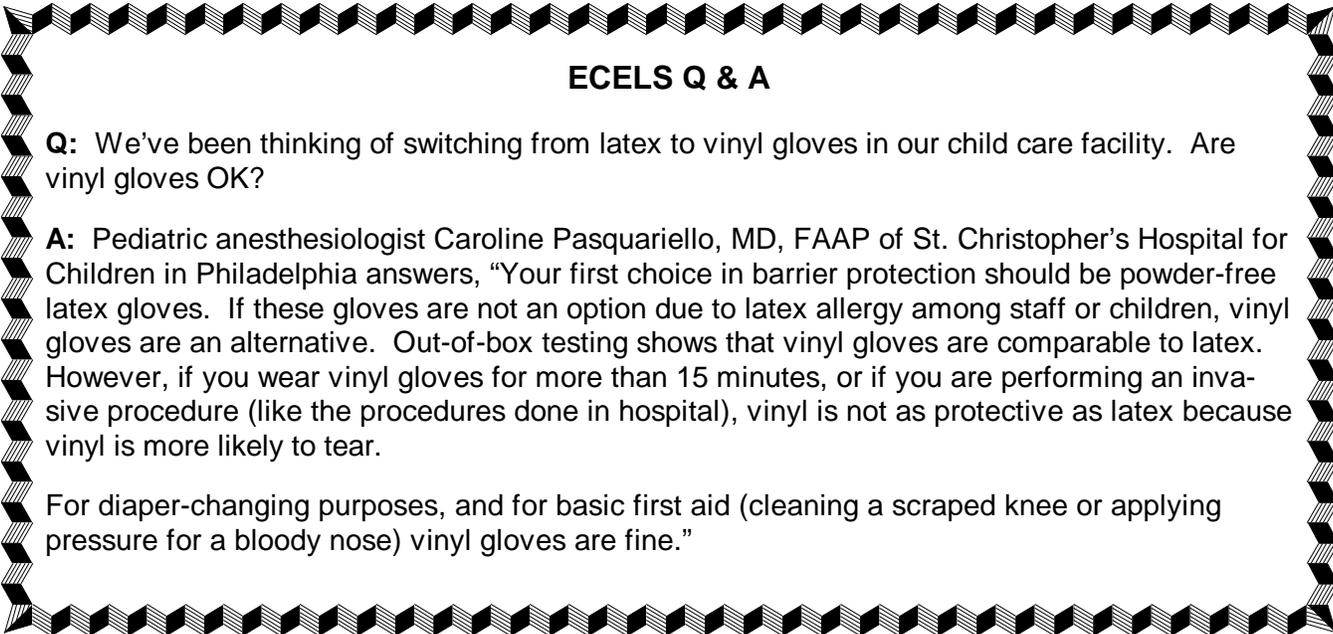
— *Patti Dobroski, Clean Air For Healthy Children*

### Neighborhood News

- ◆ Looking for extra help at your child care or Head Start facility? Call the Foster Grandparent Program! Since its inception in 1965, the Foster Grandparent Program has provided young and old a chance to grow together. Today, foster grandparents give care and attention every day to more than 80,000 children. The following counties sponsor Foster Grandparent programs: Allegheny, Beaver, Berks, Blair, Butler, Cambria, Delaware, Erie, Luzerne, Montgomery, Philadelphia, Snyder, Union, Wyoming, and York. For contact information in a participating county, check off the order form on page 7.
  
- ◆ Philadelphia family and group child care providers! This is for you... The Mayor's Business Action Team helps home based providers who want to start or expand their current operations. The City of Philadelphia will provide funding to qualified applicants for the following licensing and permit fees:
  - Business Privilege License
  - Family Child Care License
  - Zoning Permit
  - Use Registration Permit
  - Preparing and Serving Food License
  - Certificate of Occupancy

For more information, contact the Mayor's Business Action Team at 215/686-7300.

- ◆ Lehigh and Northampton county caregivers: are you caring for a child with disruptive or aggressive behavior? Unconditional Child Care can help. Unconditional Child Care is a program of Child Care Information Services, Inc. (resource and referral agency of Northampton county). Unconditional Child Care was developed in 1993 in response to the needs of families who were asked to withdraw their children from child care because of the child's behavioral and emotional problems. Unconditional Child Care will bring services and resources to the child care provider and family, rather than have the child removed from care. The Wrap Around Team will come to the child care program to observe the behavior that's a concern, perform a needs and strengths assessment, and work out a plan of care for the child. For more information, contact Betsy Roberts or Shelbi Golden at 610/820-5333.



#### ECELS Q & A

**Q:** We've been thinking of switching from latex to vinyl gloves in our child care facility. Are vinyl gloves OK?

**A:** Pediatric anesthesiologist Caroline Pasquariello, MD, FAAP of St. Christopher's Hospital for Children in Philadelphia answers, "Your first choice in barrier protection should be powder-free latex gloves. If these gloves are not an option due to latex allergy among staff or children, vinyl gloves are an alternative. Out-of-box testing shows that vinyl gloves are comparable to latex. However, if you wear vinyl gloves for more than 15 minutes, or if you are performing an invasive procedure (like the procedures done in hospital), vinyl is not as protective as latex because vinyl is more likely to tear.

For diaper-changing purposes, and for basic first aid (cleaning a scraped knee or applying pressure for a bloody nose) vinyl gloves are fine."

### Children and Farm Safety

Farm injuries usually occur when children are doing some activity beyond their mental, physical, or emotional ability. Toddlers and preschoolers develop motor skills as they explore their environment, but still have balancing problems, slow reaction time, and magical thinking. The Pennsylvania State University College of Agricultural Sciences says that toddlers and preschoolers should not be assigned **any** work tasks on a farm. Early elementary school age children (ages 5-9) can water plants, feed small animals, collect eggs, or help with hand tools.



Follow these strategies to prevent farm injuries:

- ★ Never let a child ride on a piece of farm equipment as an extra rider.
- ★ Use strong physical barriers such as locks and fences around ponds and manure pits.
- ★ Lock up chemicals.
- ★ Farm equipment looks fun to children. Store ladders and other equipment out of sight and reach.
- ★ Provide a fenced-in play area away from farming activities.
- ★ Supervise children at all times.

For a copy of the guide *Children and Safety on the Farm*, use the order form below. For other farm safety information, contact Farm Safety 4 Just Kids at 130 E. 1<sup>st</sup> Street, P.O. Box 458, Earlham, IA 50072 or call 800/423-5437. Be sure to check out their website too at <www.fs4jk.org> For safety tips, pick "Kids Side" from the menu choices. Have the school-age children in your care check out the "Dr. Danger" page. Older kids can even help you design a parent education flier on farm safety!

### ECELS ORDER FORM

(Pennsylvania Child Care Providers & Pennsylvania Health Consultants Only)

Please use this form to order any brochure listed below. Check the box beside the item you would like and return the form to PA AAP, ECELS, Rosemont Business Campus, 919 Conestoga Road, Bldg. 2, Suite 307, Rosemont, PA 19010-1353.

**Brochures/Handouts:**  
(One copy per organization)

**Self-Learning Module:**

- Summer snack flier
- Adult immunization brochure
- Fetal alcohol syndrome policy statement
- Foster grandparent information
- Children and Safety on the Farm
- Clean Intermittent Catheterization fact sheet

- Motor Vehicle Transportation Safety  
*See page 8 for description.*  
*Video must be returned to ECELS within 10 days.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_



## NEW TRAINING INFO...

✎ ECELS has just produced a new fact sheet to help providers who care for children with special health care needs. Some kids with spina bifida or spinal cord injury may need to use a catheter to empty their bladders. This process is called Clean Intermittent Catheterization. For a copy of the fact sheet on Clean Intermittent Catheterization, use the order form on page 7.

✎ Transporting children safely presents many challenges for child care providers and parents. Learn about car seats, seat belts, planning field trips, and educating staff, parents, and kids about transportation safety. ECELS' new Motor Vehicle Transportation Safety self-learning module includes loan of a videotape and print materials to keep. (Materials are from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the American Academy of Pediatrics.)

To earn 2 hours of training credit, caregivers will need to submit a self-test and car seat installation form. To order, check off the module on page 7.

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