

THE CHILD CARE PROFESSIONAL

The Newsletter of the Child Care Resource & Referral at WKU

Western Kentucky University

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Bowling Green, Kentucky 42101-3576

Environment Rating Scale: Personal Care Routines

Taylor Tucker, Quality Coordinator

The second subscale in the Environment Rating Scale is Personal Care Routines. This subscale covers the routines like diapering and toileting, meals and snacks, arriving and departing as well as health and safety practices. The scales look at how these activities are handled by the staff as well as the environment in which they occur.

Arriving and departing, the first routine that is examined, should be a time used for staff to communicate with the parents. Both the parent and the child should be greeted in a warm welcoming manner. Information should be shared about the child so both the childcare provider and the parents can work together to best meet the needs of the child. Departing should be well organized so parents know where to find their child's belongings. To score an *excellent* in this area, providers should help the child become involved in an activity upon arrival as well as being busily involved in meaningful activity until departure.

Meals and snacks, a second daily routine, should be scheduled to meet the individual needs of the children in care. This means if you have young children they may not all be eating at the same time.

All sanitary conditions should be maintained. All staff and children, including young infants, should wash hands before eating. Food served should be nutritional and appropriate for the children in care. A pleasant social atmosphere where the staff sit with the children and have conversations with the children will get you a higher score.

To receive an *excellent* rating for this item, children should help with the meals and snacks. Child



size serving utensils should be used in order for children to serve their own food. Naptime for young children also needs to be individualized. This means that not all children will sleep at the same time. The atmosphere should be conducive for sleeping. Children should be helped to relax by playing soft music, and rubbing their backs.

Older children should be allowed to sleep with cuddly toys if desired.

Sanitary provisions should also be maintained during naptime. All cots and mats should be spaced at least 18 inches apart or to get an even higher score, the mats, cots or cribs should be spaced at least three feet apart or separated by a solid barrier. To score an *excellent* on this item, the Nap schedule must be

flexible to meet individual needs, meaning if a child gets tired early in the day he should be allowed to nap. Provisions must be made for early risers and non-nappers, meaning they should be allowed to get up and play quietly with activities set up for them.

Toileting and diapering, a third routine that is examined closely, should be scheduled in order to meet the individual need of the children. Sanitary conditions for the area must be maintained. Both staff and children must wash their hands and there must be basic provisions to meet these needs. Pleasant staff-child interactions should be taking place during this routine.

To receive an *excellent* rating on this item, the facility should have child sized toilets and sinks for the children's use. Caregivers should promote self-help skills as children are ready. In the area of health, adequate hand washing must take place by both staff and children. Hand washing means washing under running water for at least 10 seconds using soap.



Waterless antibacterial gel or wipes do not count as hand washing. The room must be well ventilated and have adequate lighting.

Staff should be good models of health practices for the children. This means the staff should eat only healthy foods in front of the children. To score *excellent* in this area, health information must be provided for parents. Health related books, pictures and or games must be used with the children. Individual toothbrushes must be properly labeled and stored, and must be used at least once during the day.

In the area of safety, there must be no major safety problems indoors or outdoors. There must be a phone and transportation available in case of an emergency. You must have a first aid kit that is well stocked and ready to use. Staff must explain safety rules to children as well as teaching children what the safety rules are. To score an *excellent* in

this area, the play space must be arranged to avoid safety problems. Safety information must be shared with parents as well.

Child Care Resource & Referral

The staff of the CCR&R at Western Kentucky University includes:

Connie Jo Smith, CCR&R Specialist

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Taylor Tucker, Quality Coordinator

Kim McIntyre, Professional Development Coordinator

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Amy Hood, Infant and Toddler Consultant

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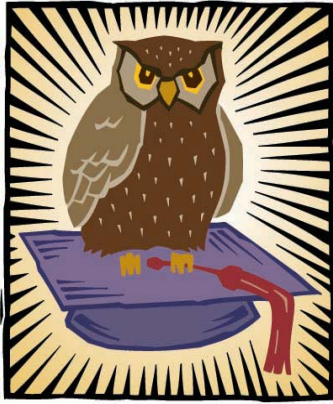
Fax us at (270) 745-7089

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Visit our website at www.ttas.org

If you want more information on the Environment Rating Scale or want a representative from the Child Care Resource and Referral to come to your facility and provide free technical assistance based on the Environment Rating Scale, contact Taylor Tucker at 1-800-621-5908 or e-mail taylor.tucker@wku.edu.





Child Care Provider Loan Forgiveness Program

Kim McIntyre, Professional Development Coordinator

The Department of Education has announced the continuation of the Child Care Provider Loan Forgiveness (CCPLF) Program, through which some child care providers may have a portion of their student loans forgiven for continued work in certain child care facilities.

You may qualify for the Child Care Provider Loan Forgiveness (CCPLF) Program if you received an Associate or Bachelor's degree in the field of early childhood education since October 7, 1998; obtained student loans during that time; and have been working full-time for two consecutive years in a child care facility or home that serves a low-income community.

Program Requirements

The CCPLF Program specifies that your loan may be eligible for forgiveness if:

- The loan was made on or after October 7, 1998 under the Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) or the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) student loan programs, and
- You have been working in a child care facility in which at least 70 percent of the children receiving child care at the facility are from low-income families that earn less than 85 percent of the State median household income.

For example, a child qualifies as coming from a family earning less than 85 percent of the State median household if he or she is receiving services under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 or under the Head Start Program. For more information on the CCPLF Program, please contact:

Mr. Don Watson
U.S. Department of Education
830 First Street NE, Washington, DC 20202-5346
(202) 377-4008
<http://fr.cos.com/cgi-bin/getRec?id=20020829a17>

If you would like to receive a CCPLF Program application, please contact:

Child Care Provider Loan Forgiveness Program
P. O. Box 4639
Utica, NY 13504-4639
1-888-562-7002 (Toll-free Support Desk)

You may also download the application form in Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) from the web at <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/Students/>. For additional information on Federal Student Aid from the U.S. Department of Education, which provides over \$60 billion a year in grants, loans, and work-study assistance, visit the Federal Student Financial Assistance website at <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/Students/>.

Building Assets

Connie Jo Smith, CCR&R Specialist

Kentucky Child Now, established in 1998, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring that Kentucky meets the needs of its children. Kentucky Child Now is sponsoring a public awareness campaign called *Great Kids- It's Just a Matter of Time* to help everyone see that they can help build great kids by building their assets. According to Kentucky Child Now, assets are powerful and Kentucky children do not have enough of them.

Great Kids campaign information tells us that national research has identified 40 assets. These assets are things that have proven to be essential for young people's achievement. Kentucky children average only 19 of the 40 assets. Furthermore, the Campaign literature says that research proves positive adult influences make a huge difference and provide a strong foundation for children as they grow up. Therefore, we must invest our time in connecting with young people and nurturing assets if we want to ensure the well-being of Kentucky children.

The 40 assets identified by the *Great Kids* campaign are divided into eight categories, including:

Empowerment
Boundaries and Expectations
Constructive Use of Time
Commitment to Learning
Positive Values
Social Competencies
Positive Identity

What are the individual assets and how do you nurture them? We will include updated information in our newsletters and you can check out the Kentucky Child Now web page at www.kychildnow.org. The web page provides valuable information, including newsletters for staff and parents.



Safe Sleeping

Connie Jo Smith, CCR&R Specialist

In October, shoppers will begin to see pamphlets, posters, and workshops about the hazards of putting babies in adult beds. The Consumer Product Safety Commission agrees with the safety messages given during the campaign, but it is being funded by baby crib companies. Much debate has surfaced about the safety of children sleeping in the bed with their parents. Although the information provided by the campaign can be valuable, the values and issues around it are causing some questions to arise. Safety considerations about safe sleep for infants are important, so remember to:

- Always place a baby on his/her back.
- Make sure the crib and mattress fit without gaps and place it away from a wall.
- Remove all soft bedding like pillows, and comforters.
- Remove shard cords, plastic bags, and other potentially dangers from the sleep area.
- Avoid sleeping with babies if you have used medicine or alcohol that may limit your alertness.
- Do not place babies on sofas, chairs, or water beds to sleep - with or without adults.

Market Rate Survey: Watch for It!

Sherri Meyer, CCR&R Coordinator

Another form to fill out? No one likes to complete forms, but this is important information that will be gathered very soon across the state of Kentucky. The Child Care Resource & Referral will soon be sending a Market Rate Survey to all licensed and certified child care facilities. *It is important that you complete and return the survey to our office.*

This survey will share information that will not only update your file with us but will also allow your program to be represented when compiling a report for the Cabinet for Families and Children. The Cabinet will then use the report in reviewing the amount that is currently set for the Market Rate on which state child care subsidy(CCAP) payments are based.

While there is no guarantee that subsidy rates will increase, the information that is gathered will allow the Cabinet for Families and Children and the state policy makers to know what your program charges as well as some of your expenses.

Your time is valuable and we greatly appreciate your time in completing this survey. Watch for it to arrive in mid October. Once you receive it if you should have any questions, please feel free to contact Sherri at 800-621-5908 or 745-2216 or e-mail sherri.meyer@wku.edu.

Fire Safety

Check out this web page about fire safety (<http://firesafety.buffnet.net/>). It includes fire safety tips and activities to do with children beginning age three. Examples of activities include using milk cartons to create fire engines and making fire prevention badges with children.

Telephone Training

Please plan to join us on November 7, 2002 for the first of a series of telephone training calls for Directors. The topic is STARS for KIDS NOW and we would love to have you participate. You can call from your home or center or anywhere and listen in and ask questions. Look for the registration form in this newsletter.

October is.....

October 6th-12th is National Fire Safety Week

October 10th is World Mental Health Day

October 14th-18th is Eye Care Awareness Week

October 14th-18th is Natural Nutrition Week

October 14th-20th is Health Education Week

October 16th is National Boss' Day

October 16th is World Food Day

October 23rd-31st is Red Ribbon Celebration
(Prevent Child Drug Abuse)

October 26th is Make a Difference Day
(America's day of doing good)



Does Child Abuse and Neglect Really Affect Infants and Toddlers?

Amy S. Hood, Infant & Toddler Consultant

A happy, cuddly, bright eyed infant, adventurous toddlers with no worries, no problems – this is the way it should be! Sadly, all too often, this is not the case, but the topic of child abuse and neglect is so very difficult to discuss that child-care providers do not always receive the necessary information needed to properly care for children.

This article is written to remind early childhood professionals that abuse and neglect is **not** a myth! The article is written to help child-care providers become more aware of the reality that child abuse and neglect is real and is a major cause of harm to the very young children under their care.

What is child abuse and neglect?

Child abuse and neglect are terms used to define the harm that adults pose on infants and toddlers. The term *child abuse* is defined as an injury inflicted on a child by an adult in a physical, emotional, or sexual manner. The term *neglect* refers to the failure of an adult to meet a child's basic needs regarding environment, medical, or emotional (Spivack, 2002).

In the United States, there are over one million reports of child abuse and neglect that are substantiated each year. Abuse and neglect is the number one cause of death in children who are between the ages of six months old and two years old. The number of children who die is alarmingly high – 1,500 to 4,000 children die each year as a result of abuse and neglect.

Why does this number have such a large range? Many times the cause of death of a child is not recorded as abuse or neglect since there may be no previous record of abuse or neglect for this particular child and there may not be other children in the home to protect. The exact cause of death is often times not identified as a result of abuse.

Who is more at risk for child abuse or neglect?

Infants and toddlers (up to three years old) are more likely to be abused than older children. This stems from the fact that infants are totally dependent upon their caregiver for all their needs, from diaper changes to feeding times to focused attention, the caregiver must do everything for them.

Also, since young children do not have the language or communication skills to disclose the abuse to others, they are more vulnerable for abuse and neglect and since they are not usually seen outside the family home, physical marks, and other evidence go unnoticed. Young children cannot run away or protect themselves from the adults who are hurting them.

All of these developmental factors surrounding infants and toddlers make them more at risk for life threatening abuse or neglect. These factors also explain how many young children die from abuse and neglect but because of developmental skills the cause of death is undetermined.

Why do caretakers abuse young children?

The probability of abuse occurs when stress is increased within the caretakers of children. The very nature of young infants raises the level of stress within the adults: young infants will cry for long periods of time if they have chronic illnesses or colic; the stress level can also sky rocket if there are multiple births with the families; typically abusive adults have had some type of violent behaviors in the past or have been exposed to domestic abuse; and stress levels are increased among low-income families who are worried about their finances and how the addition to the family can impact their budgets.



Adolescent parents are also at very high risk for abusing children, with their lack of parenting skills. Other factors leading to the abuse or neglect of young children include fatigue, anytime a caretaker is tired, the impulse control they have can trigger abusive action when frustrated. Caretakers suffering from mental illness or substance abuse are also potential abusers.

What type of abuse or neglect is more prevalent among infants and toddlers?

There are four types of child abuse: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect. Unfortunately infants and toddlers have been victims of all of these (Kentucky Cabinet of Families and Children, 2000). Physical abuse takes the form of an adult inflicting injury onto a child that may result in bruises, burns, broken bones, and death. Neglect in infants and toddlers results in inappropriate supervision and failure to thrive. In recent years, awareness of the form of abuse known as Shaken Baby Syn-

drome (SBS) has been raised. The rate of SBS is actually on the rise across the United States, with thousands of infants and toddlers affected annually. This type of abuse occurs when an adult violently shakes a baby, thus causing the brain to move back and forth against the skull, which inflicts major injuries even death. Victims of SBS can suffer from blindness, developmental delay, paralysis, brain damage, seizures, fractures and even death.

Anyone lending care for young children is at risk of shaking a baby. SBS often occurs when the adult who is caring for the child shakes the baby due to frustration or anger when the baby cries chronically. Studies have indicated that at least two-thirds of the SBS perpetrators are male, 37% have been fathers and 20% have been the mother's boyfriend. Males however, are not the only gender who shake babies; studies have indicated that 12% of the perpetrators were the children's mother and 17% were the female babysitter (Starling, 1995). These same studies have demonstrated that 25-50% of the caregivers do not know that shaking a baby could cause such serious or fatal injuries.

How can early childhood caregivers help?

Early childhood caregivers have a huge responsibility to these children in their care. Many times these caregivers have received little training in adequate care for children. Caregivers must be given some core knowledge in order to protect the children from harm. This core knowledge must allow the caregivers to:

- *Be aware of the signs/symptoms of child abuse and neglect.* Caregivers need to be knowledgeable of the signs and symptoms that will alert them to possible abuse or neglect. They need to participate in regular training sessions that outline ways to recognize abuse and neglect. This training should also include information on the definition of child abuse and neglect, strategies designed to help prevent abuse, and ways for staff to maintain safe environments for the children in their care (National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1997).

- **Be knowledgeable of reporting laws.** Kentucky has its own regulations concerning the reporting of child abuse and neglect. Caregivers need to understand that the state law requires *anyone* with reasonable cause to believe abuse or neglect is occurring *must* report that suspicion *immediately* to the appropriate authorities. It is *not* the responsibility of the caregivers to investigate or conduct follow-up to the alleged incident, but rather it *is* the responsibility of the authorities.
- **Be aware of the resources available for parents who are at-risk for abusing their children.** Every community has resources available for families who are at-risk for abusing their children. Caregivers need to be aware of the resources that are available and be able to access them as necessary. These resources can be accessed by the early childhood community and can be presented during parent meetings, home visits or individual meetings with parents as necessary.
- **Be in tune with the children and families you serve.** Caregivers need to realize that positive relationships between themselves and the parents help build a solid foundation for young children. Often times caregivers who have good relationships with their families will be more likely to recognize changes within the family structure and be able to identify potential problems and can access help prior to the harming of young children.
- **Be aware that abuse does occur in young children.** Caregivers need to be aware that they too are at risk for shaking babies or for inflicting other forms of abuse and neglect. These caregivers need to be aware of their own limitations and know how to access support and resources.

No matter how difficult the topic, caregivers of young children should not live in a fantasy world. Early childhood caregivers need to know and understand that young children are being abused and they need to face the responsibilities to help and protect the children who make up our future.

References

Kentucky Cabinet of Families and Children, (2000). *Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse.*

National Association for the Education of Young Children (1997). *Position Statement on the Prevention of Child Abuse in Early Childhood Programs and the Responsibilities of Early Childhood Professionals to Prevent Child Abuse. Young Children.*

Spivack, B. (2002, May 9, 2002). *Recognition of Child Abuse and Neglect, Lexington, KY.*

Starling, S. (1995). *Abusive Head Trauma: The relationship of perpetrators to their victims. Pediatrics, 95, 259-262*

Child Care Credential Scholarships Available

Due to the tremendous success of the first *Kentucky Commonwealth Child Care Credential (CCCC)* training sessions, the CCR&R at WKU will offer another CCCC training hour program beginning in January. Sign up all staff who are interested as soon as possible to receive the 60 approved clock hours of FREE training offered between January 2003 and June 2003!

Scholarships will be awarded on a first come-first served basis. Upon completion of the 60 required training

hours, participants will be awarded the new *Kentucky Commonwealth Child Care Credential* and a \$100 milestone achievement award.

Call the WKU CCR&R Professional Development Coordinator, Kim McIntyre, for more information and to obtain an application at (270) 745-2216 or 1-800-621-5908 or email kim.mcintyre@wku.edu.



Late Breaking News

JUST FOR PARENTS

Fall is here! Autumn is a great time for activities with the children. It is not too hot nor too cold for outdoor activities. Fall is a busy time with pumpkins, changes in the weather and changes in leaves. The activities that follow are great for autumn gatherings with friends and families who also have young children. The activities are designed for the children to experience a variety of materials and opportunities. Enjoy the season!



Visit a Farm

This time of the year, farms and orchards are full of learning experiences. Animals have had their young and children can learn the different names of the animals (cow for the female, bull for the male, and calf for the baby), and will be able to compare sizes and colors as well. Farms and orchards also have wonderful fruits to taste and purchase. Apples are wonderful to use in cooking and in conversations to compare colors and how they each taste. Encouraging children to talk about their experiences builds language skills.

“Decorate” a Pumpkin

Some families want to set out a pumpkin on their front steps to celebrate the season of autumn. After a pumpkin has been cut into it does not last for much longer than a week so an alternative to carving a pumpkin is to decorate it. Use paints that are non-toxic and allow even the youngest child to help paint it. Be sure that if the paint is washable, which it should be, that the pumpkin is kept out of the rain so that the pumpkin decorations will last. Have your child talk about what he/she wants the pumpkin to look like. Draw the design on paper first to make the plan. Do not worry if the plan is not followed, after all the pumpkin experience is for the child. Search the house for hats, scarves, etc. to further decorate the pumpkin. Have fun and let their imagination run free.



Carve a Pumpkin

Some families may enjoy the experience of actually carving a pumpkin. Caution should be taken since a knife is needed to cut through the pumpkin. Since families may not want young children close by when actually cutting, provide children the opportunity to draw or vote on the face that the pumpkin may want. After opening the pumpkin top, allow children to assist in pulling out the insides of the pumpkin, noticing the texture of the seeds, the texture of the inside walls of the pumpkin, and how it feels on their hands. You may want to bake the seeds and eat them after they cool. It is a great time to expose children to a food they may not have eaten before. It is not recommended that children under the age of three eat seeds or nuts due to choking hazards.

Make a Pumpkin Pie

Making a pumpkin pie is not difficult and can be great fun. Children learn a variety of skills and topics such as measuring and counting (“We need a full can of pumpkin, we need one teaspoon of cinnamon, we need two eggs,” etc.). Children will also learn about changes. The mixture will look differently from the time the ingredients are put into the bowl and then after they are mixed.



JUST FOR PARENTS

Allow your child to stir the pie mixture. This is great for the small muscles as they develop in the hands. Do be sure to be cautious of the hot stove and never allow children to play around or near it while it is heating and cooking.

Compare Sizes of Pumpkins

While at the grocery or the pumpkin patch, talk with your child about the different sizes and shapes that pumpkins are. This allows opportunities for your child to make comparisons and sort by size. Even the youngest child can point to the “big pumpkin.” It is a beginning to building math skills.



Notice Changes of Leaves

All families travel at some time in their day. As you drive or walk to child care or school take a few minutes to notice the changes that are occurring in our environment. Talk about the different colors of leaves that you see. Notice the change that occurs over time from the beginning of the week to the end of the week. Infants need to hear this language as well older children.

Rake Leaves

Raking leaves is a fun activity (hard work for the adult but fun for all). It is a great activity that does not require any special planning. Leaves have to be raked anyway so why not have fun while you do it? Rake a big pile and then allow the children of all ages to experience how much fun it is to run and jump in them. Be careful to limit the number of children jumping at a time - you don't want anyone getting hurt. Be a kid yourself and have fun jumping in the leaves with the children. Children develop physical motor skills and learn the importance of fun from their families.



Sorting Leaves

While you're outside take a few minutes to gather some leaves that have fallen to the ground. Encourage your child to notice the variety of leaves and then to sort them by colors, shapes or size. Make different piles and compare to see which has more or less.



Visit a Library

Visit your local library for books that talk about fall or autumn. Read to your child every day. Reading and understanding the spoken word will be intertwined in all that your child is involved in both as a young child and later as an elementary age child. All of the activities listed can be changed to meet the age(s) of your child(ren). Have fun with your child(ren). They are only young for a short time!

The Child Care Resource & Referral at WKU encourages you to copy and distribute this Special Message for Parents to all the families in your program or center.