

ECE Insider

From the Directors Desk

Happy Self Care Awareness Month! Most of us are busier than we've ever been, and it is becoming the "norm" to skip over self-care to get to other things on our never-ending to-do lists! During Self-Care September, we want to challenge you to pause for a moment every day to do the following:

- Take note of something you did well, no matter how small
- Let go of self-criticism and speak to yourself kindly
- Give yourself permission to say no to more obligations
- Focus on basics, eat well, exercise and get plenty of sleep
- Ask for help...when you're struggling, ask for support

We know that self-care can often seem like just another thing you have to do and the idea that it must be extravagant to count, but that is simply not the case. Caring for children is an extremely demanding role. The work you do is not easy, and you give so much of yourself to the tiny humans you care for. Take a few minutes each day to pour into yourself so you can continue pouring into them.

As always, everyone at DCC is so grateful for your dedication to Kentucky children and families! YOU are amazing!

Sincerely,
Andrea Day
Director
Division of Child Care

Directors and Administrators

Did you know there is a team of passionate individuals who are available to child care providers for support and guidance? If you do not already have a relationship with your regional Child Care Aware team, we want to make sure you have all the information you need so that you know who to go to for support.

Child Care Aware of Kentucky will be featured during this month's DCC Provider Town Hall. The Town Hall will take place on September 12th at 1:00PM EDT. Join us to learn more about all the wonderful services that are available to you.

Visit their website at: www.childcareawareofky.org



IMPORTANT DATES

Hispanic Heritage Month

Baby Safety Month

National Self-Care Awareness Month

National Childhood Injury Prevention Week September 1st-7th

Patriot Day and National Day of Service and Remembrance September 11th

Labor Day September 4th

National Teddy Bear Day September 9th

National Grandparents Day September 10th

National Online Learning Day September 15th

National Playdough Day September 16th

National Seat Check Saturday September 30th



Family and Community Partnerships: Car Seat Safety

September is Baby Safety Month, a time to refresh on safety guidelines and responsibilities for parents and caregivers to create safe spaces for babies to grow and play. A lot of us use car seats every day, so taking a few minutes to ensure your child's car seat is safe and secure is vital to keeping children safe.

Car seat safety starts with bringing a baby home from the hospital and continues as a toddler moves into a booster seat. Here is a resource from Kentucky Transportation Cabinet for the specifications for car seat safety in Kentucky.

<https://transportation.ky.gov/HighwaySafety/Documents/ChildSeat%20UPDATE.pdf>

According to Safekids.org a properly fitted 5-point harness gives the best protection for a child. Most infant/toddler car seats are made with 5-point harnesses. It's important to make sure the child is properly fitted in the harness by not adding more space with heavy coats or blankets when buckling and that the child's weight/height is within the recommendation from the car seat manufacturer. See more car seat tips from ucsg.safekids.org.

Car seat safety also includes making sure a child is never left unattended in a hot car. Create a reminder by leaving your cell phone, purse, or anything else you may need at your destination in the back seat close to the car seat. Child care providers should implement wellness calls to parents or guardians when a child has an unexpected absence for morning drop off.

Hispanic Heritage & Grandparents Day

September boasts several important opportunities to celebrate your families!

Hispanic Heritage Month - September 15th through October 15th

It is a time to recognize and celebrate the many contributions, diverse cultures, and extensive histories of the American Latino community. These citizens have ancestors who came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central and South America. You can partner with families who share in these cultures to find activities that complement the honor of Hispanic Heritage Month. Additionally, you could host a parent/family event with cultural dishes, crafts, reading, etc. The following link provides several ideas for food, books and activities that can be modified for all ages to enjoy: <https://www.teachingexpertise.com/classroom-ideas/preschool-hispanic-heritage-month-activities/>



Grandparents' Day – September 10th

The family celebrations continue Sunday, September 10th ...Grandparents' Day! This day is meant to honor all the grandparents to our children. Studies have shown that children with involved grandparents are more resilient and have better coping skills to face life's challenges. If you've participated in a KY Strengthening Families training, you know that healthy grandparent relationships can serve as protective factors against adverse childhood experiences! This is another opportunity to get families involved with crafts, activities and reading geared towards extended family. While there are many fun crafts to make, the intention behind the holiday was to encourage the intergenerational relationships. Working with families to include grandparents could be a valuable and enlightening experience for the children and grandparents, alike.



Early Care and Education Professionals: National Injury Prevention Week

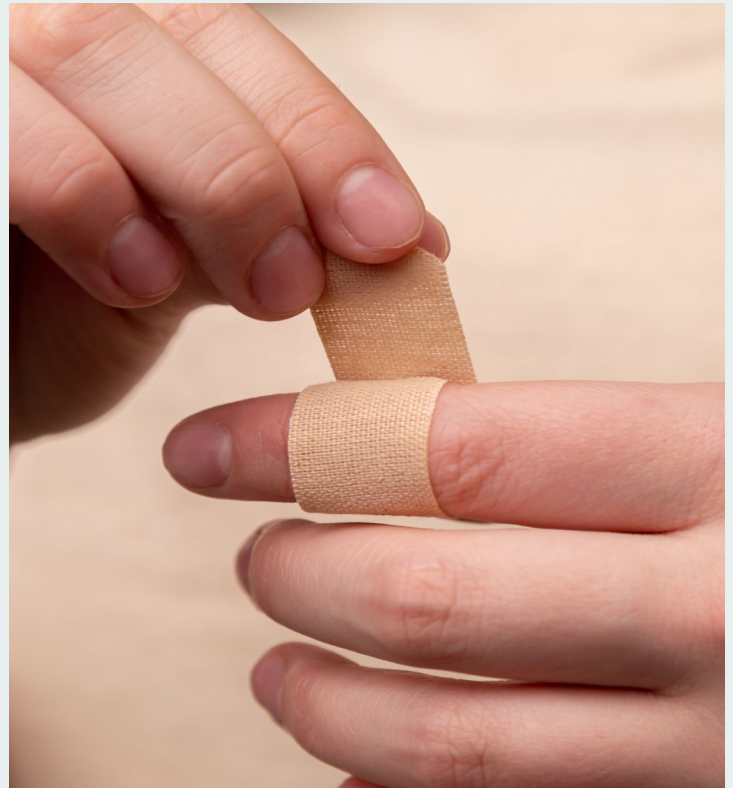
The most common type of injury among children are falls. These falls are often because toddlers, preschoolers and school aged children are curious and adventurous! As these age groups continue to grow and develop, so will their depth perception and coordination. Be firm with expectations like walking feet inside and climbing only on appropriate outdoor equipment.

Injuries like choking, suffocation and strangulation occur when children are unable to breathe. Supervision and age-appropriate materials will decrease the likelihood of a child encountering these types of injuries. Knowing that infants and toddlers often explore their curiosity by putting things in their mouth, it's important to always be aware what objects are within their reach. Pre-school and school age children like to be on the go, so it's important to establish clear sitting and eating expectations to prevent choking incidents.

Safe sleep guidelines should always be followed to prevent possible strangulation and suffocation situations. Keep soft objects, toys, and loose bedding out of a baby's sleeping area to prevent suffocation and strangulation. When the baby is reaching toddler age and learning to pull up, remember to remove any hanging decorations from above the sleeping space. If the sleeping area is near a window, be sure that all blinds, blind cords, and curtains are tied up out of reach.

SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) is an unexplained death that occurs under the age of one, often associated with sleep. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services the

number one way to prevent SIDS is to place infants on their backs to sleep for all sleep times, in a separate sleep area designed for a baby, with no soft objects, toys, quilts, pillows or blankets. (<https://safetosleep.nichd.nih.gov/about>)



Supervision Safety Tips

Supervision is one of the best ways to ensure safety while in child care. Be sure that you are always positioned to clearly see all children that are under your supervision. Remain in voice range so that you can hear all children, and all children can hear you. Active supervision allows for you to intervene quickly if necessary.

Below is the supervision ration chart provided in Kentucky Administrative Regulation 922 KAR-120 <https://apps.legislature.ky.gov/law/kar/titles/922/002/120/>:

Age of Children	Ratio	Maximum Group Size*
Infant	1 staff for 5 children	10
Toddler (12-24 months)	1 staff for 6 children	12
Toddler (24-36 months)	1 staff for 10 children	20
Preschool (age 3-4 years)	1 staff for 12 children	24
Preschool (age 4-5 years)	1 staff for 14 children	28
School age (5-7 years)	1 staff for 15 children	30
School age (7 and older)	1 staff for 25 children (for before and after school)	30
School age (7 and older)	1 staff for 20 children (full day of care)	30

*Maximum Group Size shall be applicable to Type I child-care centers.





Family Child Care—Baby Safety Month

The Family Child Care Network knows that the most important goal of child care providers is to create a safe environment for all children. September is Baby Safety Awareness Month, a campaign to educate parents and caregivers on the importance of the safe use and selection of juvenile products. The Family Child Care Network encourages child care providers to participate in Baby Safety Month by reviewing the safety and compliance of the child care products in their homes.

Each home has unique qualities that impact the risk of harm that children could encounter. Providers can find areas to assess for risk in regulations under the category titled, Premises. Providers will need different child safety equipment to remedy the risks they find in their homes. Here are some tips to consider when using and selecting child safety equipment:

*Always read and follow product guidance and assembly instructions, including weight and height restrictions.

*Monitor child's growth and development and discontinue using products as baby reaches the age or development limits defined by the manufacturer.

*Secondhand products should not be used for babies as they may not meet the latest safety standards. However, if it is necessary, make sure all parts are available, the product is fully functional, not broken, and has not been recalled.

Providers can visit the link https://www.jpma.org/page/baby_safety_month# to learn more safety tips for keeping babies safe. This would be a great link to share with the parents in your program to encourage safer products and practices at home.

Health and Safety Regulation Link: <https://apps.legislature.ky.gov/law/kar/titles/022/002/120/>

Transitional Support: Comfort Items and Young Children

September 9th is National Teddy Bear Day! For many young children, their best friend can be a teddy bear, some type of lovey or other item they have carefully chosen to provide emotional support.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, 'Security objects ... are part of the emotional support system every child needs in [their] early years.' This means that to the young child who is upset that their blanket is being taken away from them, it is more of the emotional distress of having their personal support system taken away. Young children often rely on these transitional items for support when parents are not present, they do not feel well, they are tired, etc. Children often choose these items between the ages of eight-twelve months and can keep it for many years after that.

Many of us have worked with children who have this item and have been challenged on how to balance keeping up with the item while the child is in our care and ensuring they feel safe and secure. If you have children in your care that rely on a chosen comfort item, blanket, lovey, special toy, etc. work with

the family and child to create a routine that works for everyone. Simply taking the item from a child can cause distress and instill a lack of trust towards the adult who is removing the item from the child's possession.

Tips:

- Work with families to encourage a duplicate of the item if possible.
- Create a routine for the child to ensure they have access to their item whenever they need it throughout the day.
- Do not use their comfort items for punishment, bribery, or part of a consequence for negative behavior.
- Help other children understand and support their friends by caring for and respecting comfort items.



Toys and Furnishings

922 KAR 2:120. Child-care center health and safety standards.

Section 13. Toys and Furnishings.

(1) All toys and furniture contacted by a child shall be:

(a) Kept clean and in good repair; and
(b) Free of peeling, flaking, or chalking paint.

(2) Indoor and outdoor equipment shall:

(a) Be clean, safe, and in good repair;

(b) Meet the physical, developmental needs, and interests of children of different age groups;

(c) Be free from sharp points or corners, splinters, protruding nails or bolts, loose or rusty parts, hazardous small parts, lead-based paint, poisonous material, and flaking or chalking paint; and

(d) Be designed to guard against entrapment or situations that may cause strangulation.

(3) Toys shall be:

(a) Used according to the manufacturer's safety specifications;

(b) Durable; and

(c) Without sharp points or edges.

(4) A toy or another item that is considered a mouth contact surface by a child not toilet trained shall be sanitized daily by:

(a)

1. Scrubbing in warm, soapy water using a brush to reach into crevices;

2. Rinsing in clean water;

3. Submerging in a sanitizing solution for at least two (2) minutes; and

4. Air dried; or

(b) Cleaning in a dishwasher if the toy or other item is dishwasher safe.

(5) Tables and chairs shall be of suitable size for children.

(6) Chairs appropriate for staff shall be provided to use while feeding, holding, or playing with a child.



Online Learning – Link Tree

Celebrate National Online Learning Day by checking out some of these online learning platforms!

Remember that while online learning is a great tool, it shouldn't replace face to face learning interactions. It's also important to limit screen time according to the regulations per age group:

Preschool-Aged Youth 3 – 5:

<https://www.vroom.org/about>

<https://www.sesamestreet.org/>

<http://bedtimemath.org/minimath-app/>

<https://teach.starfall.com/>

(App) <https://learn.khanacademy.org/khan-academy-kids/>

School-Aged Youth 6-12:

<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/>

<https://www.prodigygame.com/main-en/>

<https://www.codemonkey.com/>

<https://www.funbrain.com/>

<https://www.khanacademy.org/>

Additional Resources

Division of Child Care

<https://www.chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dccs/dcc/Pages/default.aspx>

Division of Regulated Child Care (DRCC)

<https://www.chfs.ky.gov/agencies/os/oig/drcc/Pages/default.aspx>

National Highway Traffic Safety Association

<https://www.nhtsa.gov/campaign/heatstroke>

Child Care Aware Tips and Tools

<https://www.childcareawareky.org/tips-and-tools/>

Child Care Health Consultants

<https://www.kentuckyccchc.org/>

Family Child Care Network

<https://www.fccnky.com/>

Division of Child Care (DCC)

WEBSITE

<HTTPS://WWW.CHES.KY.GOV/AGENCIES/DCBS/DCC/PAGES/DEFAULT.ASPX>

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