

Child Care News

A quarterly newsletter from The Children's Resource Center, Catawba County's Child Care Resource and Referral Agency

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Winter 2011/2012

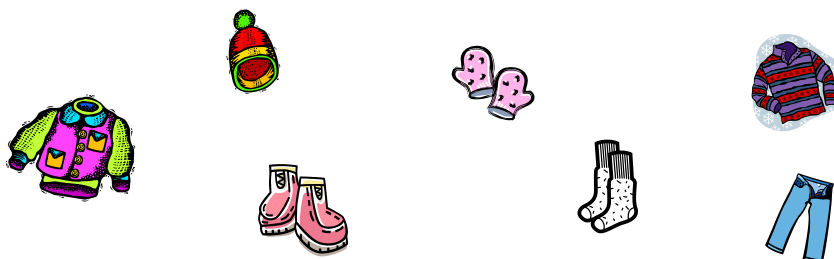
Winter Outdoor Play

Playing outside everyday is, not only fun for children, but important to their health and development. Children cannot get sick by going outside in cold weather, in fact, going outside can actually keep children healthier. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, cold weather is not the cause of either the flu or a cold. Germs and illnesses can pass easily from one person to another when long periods of time are spent together indoors. By going outside, children do not have to re-breathe the germs of the entire group, thus, decreasing the chance of spreading germs. Washing hands frequently and teaching children to sneeze or cough into their elbows help reduce the spread of germs, also. Children of all ages enjoy and benefit from playing outdoors.

Winter here in North Carolina can vary and can sometimes be unpredictable. The weather can change from bright and sunny to extremely cold with rain, sleet, or snow! Therefore, children should always be dressed appropriately to play outdoors safely. Some essentials that are needed include: a coat, mittens/gloves, warm pants/snow pants, boots, and a hat, as much of a person's body heat escapes from their head. Hats, mittens, and boots are especially important because ears, fingers, and toes are parts of the body that most easily become frostbitten. Scarves and hoods with strings are not recommended as they could potentially cause strangulation or other serious injuries on the playground. In cold weather children generally need one more layer of clothing than an adult needs to stay warm.

Parents of children in childcare play a big role in making it easier to get children outdoors. Providing the right clothes for weather conditions is essential, such as layers for cold weather, boots and rain coats for the rain. It is very helpful to leave some of the following extra clothes at your child's daycare:

- Jacket/Winter coat
- Rain Coat
- Hat
- Mittens/gloves
- Boots/rain boots
- Socks and shoes
- A change of clothes



* As the seasons change and children grow, be sure to check the extra clothes regularly to make sure they are still the right size and appropriate for the time of year.

Resources: Health and Safety Bulletin and ND CCR&R Health Consultant Team

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Subsidy Update

The waiting list for Child Care Subsidy remains in place; however, we are moving children quickly at this time. We mailed letters to 550 families and approved 300 children in the past 3 months. As of December 29th, there are 187 children on the list. Protected categories are still being served (CPS, Foster Care, Work First, Teen Parents).



Catawba County Department of Social Services

Save the Date!

What: John McCutcheon Concert

When: April 28th, 2012

Where: SALT Block Auditorium

The featured artist, John McCutcheon, is a Grammy nominated American folk music singer and multi-instrumentalist. Mr. McCutcheon is a master of a dozen different traditional instruments, most notably the rare and beautiful hammered dulcimer. His songwriting has been hailed by critics and musicians around the globe.

Proceeds from the concert to support early childhood initiatives of the
Catawba County Partnership for Children



Active Play – Each and Every Day!

Routines and Transitions Movement activities during daily routines and transitions enhance the children’s experience and offer children an appropriate way to get their “wiggles” out. Basic routines, a big part of the childcare day, include toileting, hand washing, room clean up, and eating. Routines provide chances to develop independence, and competence. For example, serving family style meals help children develop language skills as well as fine and gross motor skills. Active participation in clean-up teaches item recognition and promotes social responsibility. Through active participation children develop a sense of security and take ownership of their classroom environment.

The National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education (NRC) has developed a series of videos for early educators. *Motion Moments* provide simple ways to weave physical activity into early childhood programs working with infants, toddlers or preschoolers. Visit www.nrckids.org and add movement activities during daily routines and transitions. ~HEALTH AND SAFETY BULLETIN • FALL 2011

For Infants

By providing engaging, warm, and interactive routine care an early educator promotes development in all areas. Making routine care a time for active movement promotes gross motor skills and large muscle development.

Routine Care

As the infant is lying on the changing table, grasp an ankle in each hand and “bicycle” her legs in a forward and back rotation. Then stretch out her arms: Up over her head, across the chest, straight up in the air. Describe the actions. Movement, interaction and language development have enriched the diaper changing routine.



Transitions

To signal the end of feeding time, draw the infant’s hands over his head and say “How big is... (child’s name)?” and then answer “So big!!” Repeat two or three times at the end of each feeding. As the infant grows older, he will respond to the verbal cue and stretch his hands overhead.

For Toddlers

Toddlers like to move and to help, and they like routines. Use their natural interests to involve them in daily routines.

Routine Care

Actively involving toddlers in routines such as diapering and handwashing, supports their self-care skills. Toddlers can climb up and down the stairs to the changing table. They can learn to pull their own pants up and down when appropriate. With supervision and frequent reminders about the steps of handwashing, toddlers are able to wash their hands. With practice toddlers become increasingly more capable and independent.



Transitions

As they wake from nap gently lead toddlers through stretching their muscles. Clench hands and then make fingers into a “starfish.” Scrunch up faces and then expel a big gust of air. Stretch like a cat, rounding backs and stretching arms overhead. This creates a pleasant transition to the next activity. When everyone is awake, sing “Shake Your Sillies Out” together.

Preschoolers

Preschoolers are learning to take care of themselves and their environment. Physically stronger and more confident they take pride and pleasure in contributing to their environment.

Routine Care

Preschoolers can set and clear the table for meals and snacks. Pouring from pitchers and carrying plates encourage independence and develops motor skills. Use a chart to show assigned jobs. Have a child pick a body movement, such as spinning around. Photograph the child doing the movement. Add Velcro to the back of the printed photo. Children put their photo next to the job when they complete their task. Then they do their movement! Rotate jobs so children eventually do each task.



Transitions

Mark the end of center time and free play with a song and a movement. Each day pick a gait that goes with the song: huge marching steps, bouncing on toes... Children sing and move as they put toys and materials away.



LET'S MOVE! Childcare

“Early childhood settings, including both child care centers and informal care, present a tremendous opportunity to prevent obesity by making an impact at a pivotal phase in children’s lives.”

-Solving the Problem of Childhood Obesity Within a Generation: a Report to the President from the Childhood Obesity Task Force.

The Facts:

- Obesity rates among preschoolers ages 2 to 5 have doubled in the past four decades.
- One in five children are overweight or obese by the time they reach their 6th birthday.
- Over half of obese children first become overweight at or before age two.
- Only 25% of children ages 2 to 11 years consume three servings of vegetables a day, and less than 50% consume two daily servings of fruit.
- Preschool children spend over four hours a day watching television and videos, including time in child care.
- 60% of children under 5 are in some form of child care, spending an average of 29 hours/week in that care.
- A 2008 survey by the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies reported that 93% of parents thought existing health and safety standards for child care should be improved.

Making Changes for Our Youngest Children:

Recognizing the importance of child care settings in helping our youngest children get off to a healthy start, public and private child care providers across the nation are making changes. Approximately 1,600 centers serving 280,000 children will implement new practices to encourage healthy eating and physical activity and limit screen time as a result of new commitments from the Department of Defense, General Services Administration and Bright Horizons.

Let's Move! Child Care

Join the centers and home-based providers that have already committed to the **Lets Move! Child Care Checklist** by signing up at www.HealthyKidsHealthyFuture.org

- ✓ **Physical Activity:** Provide 1-2 hours of physical activity throughout the day, including outside play when possible.
- ✓ **Screen Time:** No screen time for children under two years. For children age two and older, strive to limit screen time to no more than 30 minutes per week during child care, and work with parents and caregivers to ensure children have no more than 1-2 hours of quality screen time per day, the amount recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics.
- ✓ **Food:** Serve fruits or vegetables at every meal, eat meals family-style when possible, and no fried foods.
- ✓ **Beverages:** Provide access to water during meals and throughout the day, and do not serve sugary drinks. For children age two and older, serve low-fat (1%) or non-fat milk, and no more than one 4-6 ounce serving of 100% juice per day.
- ✓ **Infant feeding:** For mothers who want to continue breastfeeding, provide their milk to their infants and welcome them to breastfeed during the child care day; and support all new parents in their decisions about infant feeding.

For free tools and resources go to HealthyKidsHealthyFuture.org. Sign-up for updates and webinars and share your success stories.

www.letsmove.gov



Now that the holidays have come and gone and the toys are here to stay, here are a few tips to help keep children safe while they play.

Did you know that an estimated 181,900 toy-related injuries occur each year in children under five years old.

Safe Kids North Carolina recommends the following toy safety tips:

- Ensure that children play with age-appropriate toys, as indicated by safety labels.
- Keep devices with [coin-sized button batteries](#) out of sight and out of reach. These batteries are a choking hazard when swallowed by children. Keep loose or spare batteries locked away.
- Look for well-made toys. Check toys regularly for damage that could create hazards. Repair or discard [damaged toys immediately](#).
- Make sure that discarded toys are out of children's reach.
- Supervise children while they play. Be aware of potential dangers like small parts, cords and strings, moving parts, electrical or battery-powered cords, or wheels.
- Do not allow riding toys near stairs, traffic or swimming pools.
- Teach children to put toys away after playing. Toys intended for younger children should be stored separately from those suitable for older children.
- Make sure toy chests are open (have no lid) or have safety hinges.
- Return warranty and product registration forms for new toy purchases to the manufacturers to ensure that you will be notified of and recalls.
- Sign up to receive the Consumer Product Safety Commission's Recall Alert for toys and childhood items.

Resource: www.ncdoi.com/OSFM/SafeKids/

Safety Alert—The Battery Controlled

Launched by Energizer and Safe Kids USA, The Battery Controlled, is a partnership to raise awareness about the dangers of coin-sized lithium batteries. Button sized batteries are dangerous to children and can cause severe injuries when swallowed. In 2010, more than 3,400 swallowing cases were reported in the US. Once swallowed the battery gets stuck in a child's throat, saliva then triggers an electrical current which may create a chemical reaction that can severely burn the esophagus, leading to extremely painful injuries and even death. Mini remote controls, small calculators, watches, key fobs, flameless candles, and even greeting cards are examples of items that may contain the button sized batteries. To learn more about how to protect your children from battery burns visit: www.safekids.org/safety-basics/safety-spotlight/battery-safety/.



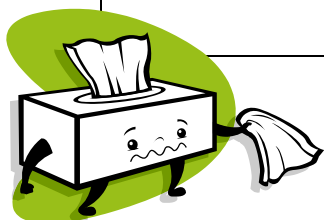
Cold and Flu Season

Cold and flu season is now upon us and according to The Center for Disease Control an average of 20,000 children under the age of 5 are hospitalized each year because of flu related complications. Influenza causes more hospitalizations among young children than any other vaccine-preventable disease. Thus, suggesting that the single best way to protect against the flu and its potential complications is for children ages 6 months and older to get a seasonal influenza vaccine every year.

Flu viruses are thought to spread mainly from person to person through coughing, sneezing, talking or breathing in germs of someone with the flu. They may also spread when people touch something with the virus on it and then touch their mouth, eyes, or nose. People infected with flu may be able to infect others beginning 1 day **before** symptoms develop and up to 5-7 days **after** becoming sick. Meaning you may be able to spread the flu to someone else before you even know you are sick as well as while you are sick.

The Center for Disease Control suggests taking the following precautions to help prevent the spread of cold and flu germs to others:

- **Get a flu vaccination every year.**
- **Cover your nose and mouth** with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue away after use and wash your hands. If a tissue is not available, cover your mouth and nose with your sleeve, not your hand.
- **Wash your hands often with soap and water**, especially after you cough or sneeze. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.** Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you or your child gets sick with a respiratory illness, like the flu, stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.)
- While sick, limit contact with others as much as possible to keep from infecting them.
- If an outbreak of flu or another illness occurs, follow public health advice. This may include information about how to increase distance between people as well as other measures.



References: The Center for Disease Control, www.cdc.gov
The Beacon, NC Family to Family Health Information Center



Bullying is NEVER OK

Did you know that 56% of students have personally witnessed some type of bullying at school? Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time be it face-to-face, by text, or on the internet and can cause long term, lasting harm to those affected by it. Definitions of bullying vary, however most agree that bullying involves:

- **Imbalance of Power:** people who bully use their power to control or harm and the people being bullied may have a hard time defending themselves
- **Intent to Cause Harm:** actions done by accident are not bullying; the person bullying has a goal to cause harm
- **Repetition:** incidents of bullying happen to the same the person over and over by the same person or group

According to preventchildabuse.org chronic bullying is an adverse experience that causes a “toxic stress” reaction in the child who is bullied, which creates harmful chemicals that damage the developing brain architecture. This results in long-term health and social consequences. It is also noted that as bullies grow into teens and adults, they are more likely to engage in risky and criminal behavior than their peers who do not bully others. Bullying can take many forms including:

- **Verbal:** name-calling, teasing
- **Social:** spreading rumors, leaving people out on purpose, breaking up friendships
- **Physical:** hitting, punching, shoving
- **Cyberbullying:** using the Internet, mobile phones or other digital technologies to harm others

In one study, 60% of boys who bullied others in middle school had a criminal conviction by age 24 (Olweus, 1993).

There are many warning signs that could indicate someone is involved in bullying and although these warning signs may indicate other issues or problems it is important to notice any change in a child’s behavior so that appropriate actions may be taken to keep them healthy, happy, and able to enjoy being a child.

Warning signs for those children who are being bullied may include but are not limited to:

- Comes home with damaged or missing clothing or other belongings
- Complains frequently of headaches, stomachaches, or feeling sick
- Has trouble sleeping or has frequent bad dreams
- Has changes in eating habits/Are very hungry after school from not eating their lunch
- Loses interest in visiting or talking with friends
- Is afraid of going to school or other activities with peers
- Loses interest in school work or begins to do poorly in school
- Appears sad, moody, angry, anxious or depressed when they come home
- Talks about suicide
- Feels helpless
- Acts differently than usual

Warning signs for those children who are bullying others may include but are not limited to:

- Becomes violent with others
- Gets into physical or verbal fights with others
- Has extra money or new belongings that cannot be explained
- Is quick to blame others
- Will not accept responsibility for their actions
- Has friends who bully others
- Needs to win or be best at everything

If you are a [parent or guardian](#), talk to the school administration or the adult that supervises your child’s community activities.

For more information visit: www.stopbullying.gov or www.preventchildabusenc.org

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Inspector's Spot – Winter 2011 – This month's topic:

Stay Safe & Warm

That cool nip is in the air meaning winter is quickly approaching. Your local fire departments want to remind you of a few safety tips to keep you safe and warm:

- **WATCH WHAT YOU HEAT!** Only burn seasoned fire wood and never use accelerants.
- Get your heating units serviced. **EACH YEAR** before you use your heat, have a licensed technician inspect and clean your heating units. *THAT INCLUDES YOUR CHIMNEYS TOO!!*
- **STAY AWAY!** When using heaters keep children and pets away. All heaters should be at least **3 feet** from anything that can burn.
- **PUT IT OUT BEFORE YOU GO OUT!** Before leaving the house or going to bed, extinguish all fire places and turn off all heaters.
- **Lookout for the SILENT KILLER**, because it can sneak up on you. Carbon monoxide is produced by any heating units using gas, oil, kerosene, wood or coal. **INSTALL CARBON MONOXIDE ALARMS** to keep you and your families safe.
- **Test your alarms**, to make sure they are working. With a lot of heating appliances being used this time of year, having working smoke alarms will keep you safe!!

For more information, or if your center would like fire extinguisher or safety training, contact the following:
Catawba County Emergency Services at 828-465-8238 Conover Fire Department at 828-464-1295
Hickory Fire Department at 828-323-7521 or 828-323-7522 Newton Fire Department at 828-695-4334

If you have questions for fire inspectors or educators, contact Terri Byers at 828-323-7521, or email: tbyers@hickorync.gov



The mission of The Children's Resource Center is to ensure that all children and their families in Catawba County have access to quality, reliable, child care and developmental opportunities. All services, programs, activities and employment practices of The Children's Resource Center are available to all people regardless of race, color, religion, age, national origin, sex, handicap, or political affiliation.
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