I am ready to succeed.

ARIZONA STATE BOARD ON SCHOOL READINESS
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Child Care Health Consultants

Child Care Health Consultants are partners for child care providers–they are health experts prepared to assist programs in becoming safe, healthy places ready to help children become ready to succeed. They work in partnership with child care center staff and families to focus on developing comprehensive and coordinated services in child care settings through improving policies and practices about physical, oral, and emotional and behavioral health; immunizations; nutrition; and children's access to health care insurance and treatment.

Child care providers are entrusted with young children for many hours every day. They must keep all children safe and protected from injuries and potentially serious infectious diseases. Child care staff work with parents to promote good social, emotional and physical health for children as well as center staff—all generally without benefit of onsite medical expertise. Center staff may call multiple resources to answer health related questions, if they can find an appropriate resource. Child Care Health Consultants provide a one-stop health resource by aligning a nurse with a number of child care centers (ideal ratio is 1:50) to improve the health and safety of children and staff through:

- Onsite and telephonic advice
- Staff training
- Reviews of health, safety, and nutrition practices
- Assistance in developing and implementing health policies and practices
- Linkages and referrals to community resources
- Parent information

The Child Care Health Consultant's primary role is to consult with child care staff to improve the health and safety of the center. The Child Care Health Consultant will provide advice on issues involving a single child, but with the view toward training the child care staff to implement interventions to prevent future occurrences and/or to intervene appropriately in future cases.

Child Care Health Consultants, generally nurses with specific child care health consultation training following the National Training Institute (NTI) Child Care Health Consultation curriculum, take a proactive role in training child care staff to talk with families about health topics such as oral health, overweight and obesity prevention, developmental screening, the value of physician well-child exams and immunizations.

Funding a statewide Child Care Health Consultation (CCHC) system makes sense as a strategy to improve the health of young children so that they are ready to succeed as they start school. Funding a Child Care Health Consultation system also makes sense economically[1]. Since more than half of Arizona households use out-of-home child care in order to participate in the labor force, and an ASU study (2004) projects the 0-5 year old population in Arizona will increase 72% by 2020, the need only increases for quality child care. CCHCs improve the quality of child care, a significant factor in improving the productivity of parents who are employed[2,3].

CCHCs Positively Impact Children's Health:

- *Child care health consultation improves the quality of the child care environment with even a minimum of 10 hours of contact per year with a Child Care Health Consultant (CCHC).*
- *A study in North Carolina indicates Child Care Health Consultants have positive effects on health policies and practices, immunizations, and children's access to health care.*
- *In Utah, immunization rates were 84% in centers working with a CCHC–14% higher than the Utah state average for 2 year-olds.*
- *In Utah, Oregon, and New Jersey, surveys show child care staff rate themselves as more competent due to CCHC consultation.*

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[1] Rolnick, Art and Rob Grunewald. March 2003. *Early Childhood Development: Economic Development with a High Public Return*. Fedgazette.

[2] Bell, David M. et al. April 1989. *Illness Associated with Child Day Care: A Study of Incidence and Cost*, American Journal of Public Health 79:4:479-483.

[3] Friedman JF, Lee GM, Kleinman KP, et al. 2004. Child care policies and practices for management of ill children. Ambulatory Pediatrics 4(5)455-460.

Child Care Health Consultation Program to Build on Pima County Model

Currently, there is only one Child Care Health Consultant in the state. She is a public health nurse employed by the Pima County Health Department, with partial funding through Title V Maternal Child Health funds through the Arizona Department of Health Services (DHS)/Office of Women's and Children's Health.

The Pima County Child Care Health Consultant has made an average of 300 visits/year to child care centers and homes, affecting more than 1,750 children each year. An additional 50 training sessions were delivered to 850 child care providers.

The long term goal is to be able to first offer consultation to any licensed child care center in Arizona, then to any out-of-home child care setting. Child Care Health Consultants would operate statewide from regional area bases like County Health Departments, Community Health Centers, or Indian Health Service clinics that could provide malpractice insurance and physician oversight for the CCHC as well as medical consultation, quality assurance review, standing orders, and requested training in specified health care methods and techniques.

Funding to implement a statewide system may come from federal or state funds, grants, private philanthropy, and fees paid by child care centers. The Child Care Health Consultation system in many other states also experience this hodge podge of funding sources.

Child Care Health Consultation Impacts Quality

Child Care Health Consultation positively impacts quality (see box on page 1). The Arizona Quality Rating System for child care providers will include criteria related to staff training and practice on health and safety. Child care staff knowledgeable about appropriate health practices can also contribute to reduced child absenteeism and improved parent work productivity.

Diabetes is an example of a health care condition that requires a child to be monitored by trained caregivers; it is not a health condition that should limit the child's life experiences, including preschool. The CCHC helps the family, medical provider, and child care staff to develop a Plan of Care. A written Plan of Care identifies training needs for the child care staff and any special equipment or policies needed to make the child care experience safe and rewarding for everyone.

Suggested Performance Measures

System

100% CCHCs trained to consult on *Arizona Health & Safety Policy Manual for Child Care Providers* *Arizona Health & Safety Policy Manual for Child Care Providers* in use in 95% Centers 1 year after CCHC initial visit

Child Outcomes

90% of children in Centers utilizing CCHC are fully immunized as possible by age 3 years
80% of children in Centers utilizing CCHC have an EPSDT/well-child visit
Children in Centers utilizing CCHC have, in aggregate, fewer absences 1 year after CCHC initial visit

Child Care Provider Outcomes

90% of Center staff report increased confidence in their competence to care for children 1 year after CCHC initial visit
90% of staff has received at least one training offered by CCHC 1 year after CCHC initial visit
Center staff reports high level of satisfaction with CCHC as important part of Center quality

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