



The Latest from Child Care Licensing

Fall 2010 Edition

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Regional Licensing Manager

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A Message from the Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing

I hope you all enjoyed the exceptional weather this summer and are making the most of the autumn season.

In this newsletter, I would like to bring your attention to the food safety article written by our resident EHO and mother of two - Angela Wheeler. Angela would like you to know about a new Food Safety course, developed by the Ministry for Healthy Living and Sport. When I reviewed the online course, I thought that caregivers may find the content and format is such that it could be shared with the children in their care. As noted in Food Flair, letting children help make meals and snacks is an excellent way for them to learn about the food they are eating and to assist with the acceptance of new foods. We have also included information on the importance of kitchen safety which is equally important when children are helping in food preparation.

I would also like to take this time to welcome Kathy Basaraba to our licensing team in Prince George. You may be well acquainted with Kathy already as she has an extensive background in the ECE community as a care provider and having managed the CCRR program and the Make Children First program in Northern Health. We are thrilled to have her join us despite having had to say good bye to Tracey Itani. Tracey will be missed as a field officer however we have managed to keep her on staff to develop print and media tools which will help us promote the important role that quality child care settings play in early child development.

I hope you enjoy this edition of the newsletter.

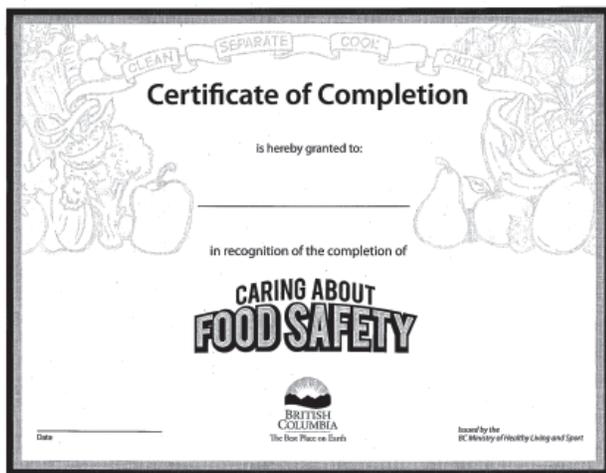
Sharlene Lively
Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing

CARING ABOUT FOOD SAFETY

Most of you have heard about FOODSAFE, some of you may be FOODSAFE certified, some of you as a requirement because you operate/work in a day care that is a permitted food establishment.

FOODSAFE level 1, is an eight hour course designed to train food handlers on safe food handling practice in order to reduce food borne illness. While this course offers a great deal of information on safe food handling practices and provides valuable food handling skills it isn't mandatory for all people who prepare food for others, including most day care operators.

The Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport in recognizing the importance of providing food safety information to people who prepare and serve food in child care and care home settings has developed a short (1.5 hrs!) course to provide safe food handling instruction to people who prepare and serve food to people outside of their immediate family. Caring About Food Safety is a self guided course that will provide you with tools to assist you in serving food safely to the young children in your day care. The course can be found at the following link: <http://www.hls.gov.bc.ca/protect/food-safety-module/files/home.htm>



Food Safety Tips:

- Wash your hands before preparing food
- When buying food look for cracks, dents or broken packages, make sure frozen foods and perishables are kept cold
- Store frozen food first, cold food second and dry goods last
- Store cleaning products separate from food
- Store raw meat products below ready-to-eat items
- Keep frozen foods at -18°C and cold foods at 4°C
- Keep hot foods above 60°C
- Cool food quickly
- Reheat foods to 74°C
- Use separate cutting boards for raw meats and ready-to-eat foods
- When cleaning: wash, rinse and then sanitize

KITCHEN SAFETY

Children over the age of two can learn to help in the kitchen based on their physical ability and their ability to follow step by step instructions. Safe food handling is important not only for care providers, but for young children who may be helping with food preparation as well. Kitchen safety is also important to ensure good outcomes when cooking with children. We have included some quick tips that you can use - for more information on kitchen safety please refer to pages 80-82 of the Food Flair Resource.



Quick Tips

- Use child sized tools when working in the kitchen.
- If the counter is too high, then use a sturdy step stool or have children sit at the kitchen table. Use a large, stable cutting board.
- Keep sharp objects out of sight and reach of toddlers.
- Under close supervision, preschoolers can use serrated dinner knives or strong plastic picnic knives.
- When cutting foods, limit groups to two or three children.
- Cut large fruits and vegetables into portions that children can easily cut into smaller pieces.
- Do not leave children holding knives if they are not cutting.
- Keep children away from the stove; keep pot and pan handles pointed away from the edge of the stove.
- Only adults should put things in or take things out of an oven or microwave.
- Thoroughly mix food and beverages that have been heated in a microwave and take their temperature before tasting.

CONTINUOUS SUPERVISION

A few words about supervision . . .

The Child Care Licensing Regulation states that children must be supervised at all times. We are frequently asked to provide more specific detail on this subject, specifically, “What exactly constitutes adequate supervision?” We have reviewed several sources of literature and find that the outcome based approach referred to in articles by Sonja Tansey for the National Childcare Accreditation Council fit best with the way that we practice licensing in Northern Health. We have taken some key ideas from this article.

Supervision is the most important element in the safe provision of child care. Supervision, together with thoughtful design and arrangement of children’s environments, can prevent or reduce the likelihood of accidents and the severity of injury to children. Children often challenge their own abilities but are not always able to recognize the potential risks involved. Child care providers need to actively supervise children to identify risks and therefore minimize injury.

Active supervision will also ensure that children’s play is enjoyable and their learning opportunities are promoted. By watching children closely, child care providers will be able to see opportunities for supporting and building on children’s play experiences. Child care providers will also notice when children wish to play independently of adult involvement.

Determining the required level of direct versus indirect supervision is a decision that only the child care provider can make. Effective supervision will only be achieved if staff are aware of the children and their environment. Child care providers need to assess the needs of every child and supervise according to the development of each child. For example, young children will require close monitoring at all times; however, for older children it is important to balance the need for close supervision with respect for their age developing independence.

Thoughtful consideration and good communication with families and among all staff is important to establish consistent and appropriate supervision. Policies and procedures should be reviewed regularly. Families should be invited to express their views about their children’s supervision. For more information, the complete version of Sonja Tansey’s article can be found at http://www.ncac.gov.au/factsheets/oshcqa_factsheet2.pdf Your licensing officer or Child Care Resource and Referral office may be able to help you find additional resources.

INFLUENZA

Influenza Season is Quickly Approaching!

Influenza is a viral illness that causes symptoms such as: sneezing, coughing, sore throat, fever, headache and muscle pain. Influenza is particularly dangerous for the elderly, infants and people whose immune systems may be compromised or not working well. Influenza viruses spread easily through sneezing, coughing and contact with infected people. Since influenza virus is transmitted from person to person, steps you can take to decrease the chances of children/adults getting influenza are:

- Get your yearly influenza vaccination.
- Practice and teach good hygiene. Do not cough or sneeze without covering your nose and mouth.
- Wash your hands frequently. Hand washing is the best single way to prevent the spread of germs from one person to another. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Do not share drinking glasses or utensils and never share toothbrushes.
- Influenza vaccine is safe, effective and has very minimal, if any, side effects. The good news is that influenza vaccine is available free and is highly recommended for the following people:
 - All children 6 to 23 months of age and household contacts of infants aged 0-23 months of age.
 - Those providing regular child care to infants aged 0-23 months of age.
 - Pregnant women in their 3rd trimester during influenza season.

Because of their immature immune systems, infants are at higher risk for complications related to influenza illness, so it is up to the people caring for them to be immunized as well.

Free influenza vaccine is available for those individuals listed above as well as other high risk individuals not mentioned in this article beginning in October. People not eligible for free influenza vaccine can purchase the vaccine through private clinics and/or their doctor's office. Please contact your local public health unit or family doctor if you have questions, to find out about influenza immunization clinics or to book an appointment for immunization. For more information on influenza visit Northern Health at www.northernhealth.ca, ImmunizeBC at www.immunizebc.ca, or call HealthLink BC at 8-1-1 to speak with a registered nurse.

WINTER SAFETY - Wear the gear, play safe and have fun!

General Winter Safety

- Wear proper winter clothing, including a hat or toque
- Dress in layers • Stay indoors if its colder than -25°C
- Remove drawstrings from clothing • Wear neck warmers instead of scarves • Children should play outside with a friend, not alone • Supervise children under 8 closely
- Teach children to play in a safe area away from driveways, snowplows and snowblowers • Children should not build snowforts or tunnels because they can collapse and cause suffocation

Hockey

- Wear a CSA approved hockey helmet with a full face mask and other safety gear • Wear skates with good ankle support • Play fair and follow the rules... illegal moves can cause serious injuries

Ice Skating

- Wear a hockey helmet • Make sure pond or lake ice is at least 6 inches (15cm) thick and 8 inches (20cm) thick for groups of people • Never skate alone on ponds or lakes and never skate on ice that has formed over moving water, like a river or creek

Tobogganing & Sledding

- Wear a helmet • Sled on a hill that doesn't have rocks or trees • Sit or kneel on the sled or toboggan... lying down increases the risk of head, neck and stomach injuries • Sled in the daylight... if you sled at night, make sure the hill is well lit

Skiing & Snowboarding

- Wear a helmet • Use wrist guards if snowboarding • Ski or snowboard with someone else, never alone • Take lessons and stay in control • Rest when you're tired
- Have your bindings checked yearly by a technician

Snowmobiling

- Wear a snowmobile helmet with face shield
- Wear proper winter clothing • Passengers should be at least 6 years old • Drivers should be at least 16 years old
- Watch for signs of frostbite or hypothermia



Wear the gear, playsafe, and have fun!