

Chatham Child Care News

Monthly Newsletter

March 2002

Study: New Playground Safety Regulations Reduced Injuries

From the UNC-Chapel Hill news service

Regulations North Carolina adopted in 1996 to improve safety on childcare playgrounds appear to have contributed to fewer injuries serious enough to send children to doctors or hospitals across the state, according to a new University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill study.

The study, commissioned by the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services' Division of Child Development and conducted by the UNC School of Public Health faculty, documented a 22 percent decline in the estimated rate of serious injuries between 1997 and 1999 at state childcare centers. The rate of injuries in licensed homes dropped 31 percent.



"To our knowledge, this is the first time anyone in the United States has been able to associate a real decline in the risk of child injuries with strengthening regulations for reducing hazards on childcare playgrounds," said Dr. Jonathan B. Kotch, professor of maternal and child health in the School of Public Health.

"Common sense told us that these rules would make a very real difference," said Peggy Ball, director of the N.C. Division of Child Development. That's certainly why we worked hard to make them reality. Now, we have real data that shows the rules are dramatically improving the lives of North Carolina children in childcare."

Kotch, the principal investigator, carried out the study with colleagues in maternal and child health. They presented it to state officials late last year and released it publicly on January 17. After presenting results at an international injury conference in Montreal in May, the scientists plan to publish them in a professional journal.

"We reviewed and analyzed all 5,402 reports of medically attended injuries in regulated childcare settings in North Carolina over the three and a half years from 1997 to June 2000," Kotch said. "We also conducted 294 playground safety inspections in late 1998 in randomly selected centers, repeated the inspections in 91 centers in August 2000 and surveyed 178 center directors in the fall of 1999.

Of the injuries, almost 91 percent happened in childcare centers, 3.5 percent occurred in homes offering care, and it was unknown where the remaining 5 percent took place, he said. Boys were injured most often and by bumping into or being hit

SAVE THESE DATES!

April is Child Abuse Prevention month, and the Week of the Young Child is April 7 – 13. Here are some of the activities planned in Chatham County for April. Look for more details next month.

- A "signature ad" in the newspaper, with the names of people who support making services for young children a priority. For more information, contact George Friday at 542-7449, ext. 31.
- Displays of children's art work at local banks, businesses, and CCN's offices. If you want your children to participate in this project, call Marilyn Grubbs at 542-6644, ext. 21, or Tammy Morris at 542-7449, ext. 21.
- TWO community events on Saturday April 13: a Family Fun Day at Central Carolina Community College in Pittsboro, and a Multicultural Festival at Bray Park in Siler City.

by something. Most injuries happened in the morning on playgrounds and involved cuts and scrapes to the head or neck.

N.C. centers rated highest for safety had largely eliminated sharp points, corners or edges and minimized pinching, crushing and tripping hazards, the pediatrician said. Among safety features still needing attention were inadequate playground surfaces and structures or surfaces from which children might fall.

“The decline in injury rates coincided with implementation of new playground safety rules first promulgated by the North Carolina Child Care Commission in January, 1996,” Kotch said. “Repeated playground safety inspections demonstrated improvements in eight of 10 playground safety concerns and 12 of 18 playground safety features between 1998 and 2000. Our conclusion then is that the declining injury rate probably came from a combination of playground safety enhancements, increased teacher awareness of injury and better supervision.”

Serving Diverse Groups of Children

Chatham County has become much more ethnically diverse over the past few years. This gives us a wonderful opportunity to learn from people of different cultures, as they begin entering all parts of the community, including child care programs.

Along with the opportunity, we understand that there may be special challenges associated with serving children from other cultures. For example, some providers feel uncertain how to serve children or families who do not speak English fluently. The staff at Child Care Networks can help you overcome these obstacles. Florence Simán and Ginny Lewis of our Latino Project can serve as Spanish interpreters by phone (please schedule the time in advance if possible). As far as children are concerned, language isn't much of a barrier to communication (babies can communicate just fine without any words, and young children pick up a new language amazingly fast).

There are many providers in Chatham County who have done a wonderful job of serving Latino families without any special training, just the willingness to learn and work with families. In future

issues of this newsletter we will highlight the experiences of some of these providers.

Lastly, we need to remind you that while you can decide which ages of children you want to serve, you can not refuse to serve children or families because of racial or ethnic background, language, special needs, or other personal characteristics. This is true for any provider listed with us for referrals as well as anyone receiving subsidy or Food Program payments.

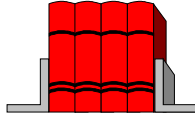


Foster Parents Needed

Therapeutic foster parents are needed to provide care for children with behavioral and/or emotional problems. In addition to basic care, therapeutic parents provide mentoring, advocacy and structured activities to assist the child to grow in a healthy, nurturing environment. A generous stipend of up to \$70 a day is provided along with training and support. Must have a flexible schedule. Couples or individuals without young children are preferred. Contact Katherine Hudson, Treatment Families for Youth, OPC Area Program, 919-913-4369.



**CHILD CARE NETWORKS RESOURCE LIBRARY
FEATURE OF THE MONTH**



This month's feature:
HELLO AMIGOS!
 By Tricia Brown

Meet Frankie Valdez, a young Mexican-American boy. Frankie lives in San Francisco's Mission District with his mother, father, three brothers, and four sisters. Today is special - it's Frankie's birthday. He can barely contain his excitement as he gets ready for school. When he comes home, his family and friends will have a big meal of his favorite foods, sing along with a mariachi who is a friend of his father's, and then Frankie will get to break the piñata.

Our Resource Library is available to Chatham County child care providers. To check out items, call Brenda Foxx at 542-6644, extension 16 or Marilyn Grubbs at extension 21. We may be able to deliver items if you have trouble coming to pick them up.

Items in the Resource Library were purchased with funding from the Chatham County Partnership for Children.



In addition to the training listed here, we have information about workshops in nearby counties sponsored by other agencies. Call Marilyn Grubbs at 542-6644, extension 21 for this information.



CPR AND FIRST AID

CACFP Workshop

Title: Color Me Healthy



CPR or First Aid classes are taught by Sue Morrow, RN, monthly at Child Care Networks. Here is the upcoming schedule:

- March 5 First Aid \$15*
- April 4 CPR \$22*

**Classes are \$3 each for programs currently on contract to upgrade their quality. Funding for this reduced fee is provided through Chatham County Partnership for Children.*



All classes begin at 6:00 p.m. at our office, 117 E. Salisbury Street in Pittsboro. **Call Brenda Foxx to register for classes. Register early, since classes fill up quickly.**

Survey Prize Winners

The **NC Rated License Assessment Project** sent out surveys in November 2001 for feedback from childcare providers in North Carolina who had completed the assessment process. Over 1,582 surveys were mailed out along with gift certificate entry cards to be entered into a drawing for those first to complete the survey by mid-January. Here are the winners.

Grand Prize: Jo Stanton (Grace Christian Child Care) of High Point NC won a \$75.00 gift certificate to Target.

1st Place: Dreema Taylor (Dreema Taylor's Day Care Home) of Marion NC won a \$50.00 gift certificate to Target.

2nd Place: Evon Watt-Wilkerson (Reidsville High School Early Childhood Center) of Reidsville NC won a \$25.00 gift certificate to Target.

A big THANK YOU goes out to all childcare providers who took the time to complete the surveys. The information you provided will assist us in improving the assessment process across the state of North Carolina.

Thank you,

The NCRLAP staff

Presented by: Glennie Beasley, Extension Agent, Family and Consumer Education, Chatham Co.

Cooperative Extension; Rhonda Lee, Food Program Specialist, CCN

Date: Saturday, March 16, 2002

Time: 9 a.m. – 12 noon

Place: Cooperative Extension Building (behind the Courthouse Annex in Pittsboro)

To register: Call Rhonda Lee or Pat Alston at 542-6644 extension 13

Paperwork

All paperwork (attendance sheets, menus, and enrollment forms) must be in our office by the 4th of each month. Food Program staff do not have time to call and remind you that we haven't received your forms.

Incomplete menus

Please check you menus before you mail them to us. Incomplete or incorrect forms may cost you money.

Suspension from CACFP

A provider may be suspended and ultimately terminated from the CACFP for claiming more meals than were actually served. The provider will be held financially responsible for overclaims.

The Child and Adult Care Food Program is operated in accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture policy. The USDA prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 2050-9410 or call (202) 720-5964.

CHATHAM CHILD CARE NEWS is a resource publication for caregivers, parents, and other persons interested in child care. It is published monthly by Child Care Networks. Suggestions, information, and articles are welcomed and printed as space permits. Mail information to:

Marilyn Grubbs, editor
Chatham Child Care News
P.O. Box 1531
Pittsboro, NC 27312

or call (919) 542-6644, extension 21.

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