

PRACTICE GUIDE

SAFETY IN OTHERS' CARE

CHILD CARE

2 Months-Introduce

6 Months-Reinforce

A safe and healthy child-care environment is important for infant development. Quality childcare can be as nurturing as parental care, but it requires responsive, loving caregiving by a few consistent adults. Respect the choices that parents make regarding work while educating them about the needs of their children. Know what constitutes good-quality childcare and be aware of potential advantages and disadvantages of at-home parenting and out-of-home childcare for children, families and communities so that you can advise parents.

Assessment

- Are you planning on returning to work?
- What are your plans for childcare?

Anticipatory Guidance

- Discussion of Childcare/work plans
- Selection of a childcare provider is an important decision. Ask your friends and neighbors if they have any recommendations. Be sure to get references for your childcare provider and to ask lots of important questions while making your decision:
 - Do you hold the baby when feeding?
 - How long would you let the baby cry before picking them up?
 - What activities do you do with the babies?
 - What do you feel is most important for babies of this age?
 - What are your hours?
 - What happens if I am late to pick the baby up?
 - Do the children watch television? How much?
 - Is there any smoking?
 - What safety features exist?
 - How big is the group of infants? How many caregivers?
 - Does the childcare have an “open door” policy so that I can drop in at any time?
 - Are criminal background checks done on the employees there?
 - Is this childcare center licensed and accredited?
- Know the number of local child care resources and referral services

SAFETY IN OTHER'S CARE

2 Months-Introduce

6 Months-Reinforce

3 Years-Reinforce (gun safety)

As children spend increasing amounts of time in others' care, it is important for parents to ensure their children are safe in those situations. Parents need to feel comfortable assessing their child's safety when they are not around. Just as parents need to make sure that all medications are in childproof containers and that cleaners and pesticides are locked up in homes, they also need to be sure that the person who is watching their child is able to safely do so. Encourage parents to choose babysitters and caregivers who are mature, trained, and responsible and are recommended by someone they trust.¹ Also, parents need to be aware that over 40% of households have guns. It is not enough for parents to assume that children will follow rules about not touching guns given considerable research that shows that this is not the case.

Assessment

- Do any of your friends or relatives whom your child visits keep guns in their homes? Do you know if they store them unloaded in a locked place, with bullets locked up separately?

Anticipatory guidance

- Ask your friends or neighbors if they have a gun before sending your child to play. If the answer is yes, make absolutely sure that all guns are stored unloaded in a locked place, with bullets locked up separately.
- It can be really hard to ask people about this. Try including the question along with other things you might normally discuss before sending your child to someone's home, such as seat belts, animals, or allergies. You can also use the facts—that over 40% of homes with children have a gun and many of those guns are left unlocked and loaded. Always present your concerns in a respectful manner, and emphasize that you're just trying to make sure your child is playing in a safe environment.
- Ask your babysitter what they do in situations when the baby is crying and they can not seem to get her to stop.
- Make sure the babysitter has been trained in CPR (infant and adult if necessary).

¹Green M, Palfrey JS, eds. 2002. Bright Futures: Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children, and Adolescents (2nd ed., rev.). Arlington, VA: National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health.

PARENT EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

Babysitter Reminders

This sheet, created for The Injury Prevention Program (tipp®) can be given out to parents when discussing babysitting. The sheet offers suggestion of things that parents should be thinking about when they are choosing a babysitter. The sheet also gives some reminders of things that babysitters need to remember.

A Parent's Guide to Choosing Safe and Healthy Child Care

Produced by the National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care, this comprehensive, easy to follow checklist lays out 13 guidelines for parents to think about when choosing a child care program.

“Choosing Child Care: What’s Best for Your Family” brochure

This brochure was created by the American Academy of Pediatrics in 2002. This brochure highlights the three different types of daycare and offers suggestions of questions parents should be asking when choosing the best type of care for their child. It also offers tips on how to prepare your child for daycare. Finally, the brochure offers a list of child-care and early education resources for parents.

Local Child Care Connection sheet

If parents are having problems finding local child care providers, or want more information on what to expect from providers, this can be given out to assist them. The sheet provides information on the Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) organization in their county and offers some questions for a parent to ask their local CCR&R.

OFFICE MARKETING TOOLS

“The Choice You Make Today Will Last a Lifetime” Poster

These posters, developed by Healthy Child Care America for pediatric offices and community programs, support pediatricians in their efforts to help families make good choices about quality out-of-home child care. They should be placed in waiting and exam rooms and can be a prompter to discuss this topic with parents.

MODERATE INTERACTIVES/TANGIBLES

Support Magnet

Use the Support Magnet that you may have given out when you were encouraging parents to use friends and family for their support system. However, this magnet also has emergency information on it and parents can point it out to the babysitter, so that they would know where emergency numbers are if needed.
