1-21-2008

Chittenden County Child Care Providers & Conflict Implementing Sick Child Guidelines

Shahin Foroutan

Joanna Gell

Hui-Shan Hsu

Elena V. Simon

Justin Smith

See next page for additional authors

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.uvm.edu/comphp_gallery

Part of the Community Health and Preventive Medicine Commons, and the Health Services Research Commons

Recommended Citation

Foroutan, Shahin; Gell, Joanna; Hsu, Hui-Shan; Simon, Elena V.; Smith, Justin; Threlkeld, Kirsten; Weinberg, Nicholas; Flanders, Meghan; and Sullivan, Jillian, "Chittenden County Child Care Providers & Conflict Implementing Sick Child Guidelines" (2008). Public Health Projects, 2008-present. 24.

https://scholarworks.uvm.edu/comphp_gallery/24

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Public Health Projects, University of Vermont College of Medicine at ScholarWorks @ UVM. It has been accepted for inclusion in Public Health Projects, 2008-present by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks @ UVM. For more information, please contact donna.omalley@uvm.edu.
Introduction
Nationwide, 61% of children under age five are enrolled in a form of non-parental care (1). Problems arise when a child becomes sick and is not able to attend day care or has to be sent home. Parents must either miss work to care for their child or find someone else to care for them. Since there is stress surrounding taking time off, and because the criteria used to exclude children from care can be ambiguous, parents may feel that their child doesn’t need to be sent home (2). Each child care provider has set up exclusion criteria that meet state licensing requirements. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) developed exclusion guidelines specifically for childcare settings in 2006 (3), but most day care providers and pediatrics are unaware of its existence (1). Conflicts occur when there are differences in opinion on the child’s health status between the child care provider and the parents or the child’s pediatrician (4).

Objectives
- Determine whether day care providers in Chittenden County are aware of the AAP exclusion guidelines
- Investigate conflict experienced by child care providers when excluding children from care.

Methods
- This cross sectional study surveyed all child care providers within Chittenden County Vermont known to Child Care Resource as of September 2007 (N=349).
- A 12 question survey was compiled by the members of our group. Anonymous, self-administered surveys were collected from October to November 2007.
- Due to incomplete questionnaires, for specific questions, the sample size varied from 42 to 91. Statistical analysis was performed using Fisher’s two-tailed exact testing (p = 0.05).

Results
Study demographics:
Survey respondents included licensed centers and registered homes with a range of experiences in child care (Table 1).

Table 1. Demographics of Chittenden County Child Care Providers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provider Type</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Mean years of operation (n=33)</th>
<th>Mean number of children per day (n=33)</th>
<th>Mean number of healthy children per day (n=33)</th>
<th>Providers with AAP exclusion guidelines (n=33)</th>
<th>Providers with Vermont licensing regulation only (n=33)</th>
<th>Providers with AAP guidelines and Vermont licensing regulation (n=33)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Licensed Center</td>
<td>80 (40%)</td>
<td>18 (1.0)</td>
<td>6.3 (0.9)</td>
<td>31.4 (3.4)</td>
<td>38 (97.5%)</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered Home</td>
<td>51 (50%)</td>
<td>13 (1.1)</td>
<td>1.0 (0.3)</td>
<td>7.4 (0.9)</td>
<td>47 (95.9%)</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>38 (97.5%)</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Guidelines used to create sick child exclusion criteria:
The majority of child care providers were not familiar with AAP exclusion guidelines for excluding sick children from care (Table 2a). Nineteen percent of providers indicated that they used AAP exclusion guidelines as their own illness guidelines (Table 2b).

Table 2a. Familiarity with AAP Illness guidelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provider Type</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Familiarity</th>
<th>Provider uses AAP guidelines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Licensed Center</td>
<td>80 (40%)</td>
<td>Never heard of AAP</td>
<td>11 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Heard of AAP, but unfamiliar with guidelines</td>
<td>47 (57%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Somewhat familiar with guidelines</td>
<td>25 (28%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Familiar with guidelines</td>
<td>7 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>38 (97.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2b. Source used as illness guidelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provider who sent children home</th>
<th>Licensed Centers (n=33)</th>
<th>Registered Homes (n=33)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provider sent children home because of illness</td>
<td>27 (82%)</td>
<td>21 (64%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific medical care</td>
<td>21 (64%)</td>
<td>15 (45%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vermont Licensing Regulation only</td>
<td>15 (45%)</td>
<td>11 (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAP guidelines</td>
<td>10 (30%)</td>
<td>6 (18%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other**</td>
<td>8 (24%)</td>
<td>6 (18%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total n</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Other included: the health department, on site nurse, National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), health providers, school policy, and Women, Infants & Children (WIC).

Exclusion from child care:
Of the subset who responded, greater percentages of licensed centers than registered homes refused care for children when each reason listed in the survey question (see Table 3).

Conflicts between child care providers and parents:
Child care providers experience conflict with parents more often because parents were unable to pick up the child, or because parents could not provide care for the child due to their own work obligations (Figure 1). Less common reasons for conflict included parents disagreeing with the decision to send children home and pediatrician clearance (64 and 79%, respectively) (Figure 1).

Discussion
- The majority of respondents have insufficient awareness of AAP illness guidelines.
- Licensed child care centers:
  - Experience significantly more conflict with parents when excluding children from care
  - Are more likely to refuse care for children because of specific medical care (p = 0.00)
  - Fear of spreading disease
  - Needs which could not be met by staff
- Pediatrician clearance infrequently causes conflict.
- Conflict is more often due to parents’ work obligations.

Areas for future study:
- Comparison of child care provider exclusion criteria to AAP guidelines.
- Identification of factors amplifying exclusion from care among licensed centers.
- Clarified questionnaires to increase sample sizes.
- Improving awareness of AAP guidelines among child care providers.

References