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 UVM ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Public Health Projects, 2008-present by an authorized administrator of UVM ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@uvm.edu.
Authors
Shahin Foroutan, Joanna Gell, Hui-Shan Hsu, Elena V. Simon, Justin Smith, Kirsten Threlkeld, Nicholas Weinberg, Meghan Flanders, and Jillian Sullivan

This article is available at UVM ScholarWorks: https://scholarworks.uvm.edu/comphp_gallery/24
Introduction
Nationally, 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 daycare 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 to 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 daycare providers and pediatricians 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 daycare 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 Fischer’s two-tailed exact testing (p = 0.05).

Results

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 guidelines as their own illness guidelines (Table 2b).

Table 2a. Familiarity with AAP illness guidelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>n (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never heard of AAP</td>
<td>11 (12%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heard of AAP, but unfamiliar with guidelines</td>
<td>47 (52%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat familiar with guidelines</td>
<td>25 (28%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiar with guidelines</td>
<td>7 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When children were sent home from child care, significantly more licensed centers than registered homes reported experiencing conflict with parents in the previous month (41% and 14%, respectively; p=0.042).

Table 2b. Sources used as illness guidelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>n (%):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child care providers which used each source*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vermont Licensing Regulation</td>
<td>65 (89%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAP exclusion guidelines</td>
<td>15 (19%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other**</td>
<td>13 (18%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total n = 91

*Respondents indicated multiple sources if more than one source was used.
**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 as for every reason listed in the survey question (see Table 3).

Table 3. Reasons why child care providers exclude children from care.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Provider who used child care home: n (90)</th>
<th>Licensed Centers (n=50)</th>
<th>Registered Homes (n=40)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For fear of others becoming sick</td>
<td>27 (55%)</td>
<td>21 (42%)</td>
<td>6 (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because provider could not provide specific medical care</td>
<td>12 (48%)</td>
<td>8 (16%)</td>
<td>4 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because children’s needs could not be met</td>
<td>21 (74%)</td>
<td>13 (26%)</td>
<td>8 (20%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Respondents indicated multiple answers if applicable. 
**p=0.035

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

References