



KEEPING IN TOUCH

CHILDMINDING MONITORING ADVISORY & SUPPORT

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Napping & Rest in LINC Childminding Programs

Naptime is rarely found in the limelight with hot topics, buzz words or controversial subjects. A nap is about a short sleep; rest. It is a common occurrence in programs for young children. So, why is naptime in childminding programs in the news?

Consider this story about a young child recently enrolled in a childminding program. He seemed to be settling in well. Then, one afternoon when the children were

napping, he suddenly woke up and started to scream. He screamed and he screamed and could not be comforted. A program staff dashed down the hall to get his mother. The mother returned and quickly stooped next to the child on the cot. They did not exchange words. They just looked at each other. That was enough for him. He settled back on the cot. The mother stayed until he fell back to sleep.

What was that about? Many children wake dur-

ing their naps in similar ways. But was it the same for this child? Had this child experienced separation, war, hunger or deprivation in his country of origin? This story reminds us that we cannot be so casual about seemingly ordinary activities when working with newcomer children -- even when putting children down for a nap. We cannot assume that taking a nap is a common experience for all children. We cannot assume that all children have

learned how to sleep alone without their parent(s). For some immigrant families, the concept of children napping is not familiar and is not practiced.

In LINC Childminding, naptime is optional. Naptime is not mandatory. Childminding staff have the choice of scheduling naptime and determine naptime practices based on the length of the program and the needs of the children and their families.

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Allergy Awareness: Sabrina's Law

Tragic deaths of children and teenagers due to severe allergic reactions have prompted new legislation in Ontario called Sabrina's Law. This law, which took effect January 1, 2006, is named for Sabrina Shannon, a teenager who died from anaphylaxis.

What is anaphylaxis? It is a rapid, life-threatening allergic reaction to food (nuts, peanut butter, fish, some kinds of fruit), drugs, insect stings or latex. The reaction involves more than one part of the body.

Staff of childminding programs should review

their policies and procedures to ensure that all adults working with children are aware of:

- (1) the risks posed by food allergies,
- (2) the symptoms of anaphylaxis (allergic reaction), and
- (3) how to respond quickly and appropriately.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Contact your local health department and/or these websites:

www.anaphylaxis.ca

Allergy / Asthma
Information Association

www.aaia.ca

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If program staff choose to schedule naptime, they should consider the following:

- ✓ Childminders should anticipate insecurities with newcomer children at naptime. Some children may become fearful as they may be used to sleeping with their mothers beside them and may feel abandoned as they rest on a cot by themselves.
- ✓ Children who do not nap need to be offered quiet and restful activities. This time may give newcomer children opportunities for more language learning as childminders are able to work with them individually or in small groups.
- ✓ Arrange the room so that children who don't need to nap can play quietly together with a variety of materials. Encourage non-napping children to talk softly.
- ✓ Ensure that there is enough lighting in the room during naptime. Newcomer children may be apprehensive or feel insecure by having to lie on a cot when lights are turned off and the room is darkened. Dim lighting will give children the ability to see others around them as well as being seen by childminding staff.
- ✓ Keep in mind this article is focused on toddler and preschool aged children. Programs that provide infant care are unique in all respects particularly regarding flexible naptime.

Remember: Begin and maintain a dialogue with parents. During enrolment, find out about the practices of the family regarding rest time. Communication about this basic routine is yet another way of discovering rather than assuming the values and practices of our newcomer population.

From CMAS ...

Just a note to let you know that assessments are starting soon. If you need support before our visit, please contact us and ask for your consultant. Keep in mind that support documents are available in both French and English. Call us if you want copies.

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IMPORTANT ... SMOKE DETECTORS!!

Effective March 1, 2006, a new law requires that all homes (single family, semi-detached, town homes) have at least one smoke detector per floor. Tenants of rental units are encouraged to contact the rental company if they do not have the required smoke alarms.

Ontario fire statistics indicate that in 50% of fatal home fires, the victims had no smoke alarm warning. To increase your chances of surviving a home fire, make sure to:

1. Test your smoke alarms once a month.
2. Change the batteries every year.
3. Never remove the batteries from the smoke alarms.
4. Develop a fire escape plan and practice fire escape routes. Smoke alarms are priced from \$5 and up.

March 1st is not far off!

Being Resourceful ...

Two informative books ... Take a look!

The Kids Multicultural Art Book by Alexandra M. Terzian, Williams Publishing Co., Vermont, 1993

Cultural Awareness for Children by Judy Allen, Earlene McNeill and Velma Schmidt, Addison Wesley Publishing, New York, 1992

Do you have questions about children's health?

The following websites offer a wealth of information on health and safety issues.

Health Canada:

www.canadian-health-network.ca

Healthy Kids, Healthy Care:

www.healthykids.us

Upcoming PD Conferences / Workshops

February 18, 2006

London/Sarnia Branch AECEO,

Winter Recharge 2006

The Early Years A Healthy Start, London, Ontario

www.ls-aeceo.org/

May 31-June 3, 2006

AECEO 56th Annual Provincial Conference,
Toronto

www.cfc-efc.ca/aeceo