Primary Reference

This fifth edition of *Healthy Young Children: A Manual for Programs* aligns with and contains content adapted with permission from *Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards; Guidelines for Early Care and Early Education Programs*, 3rd edition, by the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, and National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education (Elk Grove Village, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics; Washington, DC: American Public Health Association). References to the scientific evidence supporting the performance standards and guidelines contained in *Caring for Our Children* appear at the end of each of its chapters.

*Caring for Our Children* is available in print from the American Academy of Pediatrics bookstore at www.aap.org, from the National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education at www.nrckids.org, and from the National Association for the Education of Young Children bookstore at www.naeyc.org/store/. It is also available in PDF and HTML formats at www.nrckids.org/CFOC3/.

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Background

The origin of this manual was a handbook called Health Power, written by Hannah Nelson and Susan Aronson, MD, FAAP, for Head Start. Subsequently, Abby Shapiro (then Kendrick) adapted the material for use in Massachusetts and then collaborated with the Georgetown Child Development Center and NAEYC to adapt the material for a national audience. Further revisions and updates were the work of Karen Sokal (then Gutierrez), MD, MPH, and Susan Aronson, MD, FAAP, for the 1995 and 2002 editions respectively. These correspond with the publication of the first and second editions of Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards—Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care Programs by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Public Health Association, funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, in 1992 and 2002.

Any undertaking of this magnitude necessarily involves many people with expertise in different areas. NAEYC acknowledges the hundreds of people who have been involved in the preparation of previous editions of Healthy Young Children. The Association gratefully acknowledges the American Academy of Pediatrics for its cooperative efforts and permission to quote specified text from Caring for Our Children.
## Contents

Preface vii

**Chapter 1. This Manual and the Integration of the Health Component into the Early Care and Education Program** 2
  - Major Concepts 2
  - About This Manual 3
  - The Purpose of the Child Care Health Component 3
  - Suggested Activities 4

**Chapter 2. Preventing Infections** 6
  - Major Concepts 6
  - Reassuring Families 7
  - Working Together to Reduce the Risk of Infectious Disease 7
  - 1. Prevent Infections from Spreading 7
  - 2. Require Certain Immunizations and Routine Health Supervision Services 13
  - 3. Report Some Illnesses 14
  - 4. Exclude Some Children and Staff Members for Illness 14
  - 5. Prepare—Don’t Wait Until an Outbreak Occurs! 16
  - Diseases Spread Through the Respiratory Tract 17
  - Diseases Spread Through the Intestinal Tract 19
  - Diseases Spread by Direct Contact or Contact with Surfaces with Germs on Them 21
  - Infectious Diseases Spread through Blood 22
  - Vaccine-Preventable Diseases 24
  - Noncontagious Infectious Diseases 26
  - Notification of Exposure to Communicable Diseases 27
  - Controlling the Spread of Infection Through Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfecting 27
  - The Role of Ventilation, Temperature, and Humidity in Resistance to Infectious Disease 31
  - Staff/Child Turnover and Infectious Disease 32
  - Suggested Activities 32

**Chapter 3. Preventing Injuries** 34
  - Major Concepts 34
  - Program Planning for Safety Inside the Facility 35
  - Safety Beyond the Classroom 41
  - Special Safety Tips for Infants and Toddlers 47
  - Supervision 51
  - Safety Education and Hazard Checks 51
  - Suggested Activities 52

**Chapter 4. Ready for Emergencies and Injuries** 54
  - Major Concepts 54
  - Prepare for Emergencies 56
  - Getting Help 57
  - Emergency Evacuation 58
  - Closings Due to Power Failure or Natural Catastrophe 59
  - Security and Handling Persons Who Pose Security Risks 60
  - Suggested Activities 62

**Chapter 5. Promoting Health with Good Nutrition** 64
  - Major Concepts 64
  - The Nutrition Consultant 65
  - Obesity 65
  - National Standards and Recommendations for Nutrition in Early Care and Education Programs 66
  - General Approaches to Eating 67
  - Feeding Infants 69
  - Feeding Toddlers and Preschool-Age Children 74
  - Feeding School-Age Children 75
  - Basic Nutrition Facts 75
  - Food Habits Are Learned: Nutrition Education 75
  - Food Safety 78
  - Activity and Physical Exercise Affect Appetite 79
  - Common Nutritional Concerns 79
  - Dietary Guidelines for Young Children 85
  - Community Nutrition Resources 85
  - Running a Food Service 85
  - Storing Nonfood Supplies 87
  - Cleaning and Caring for Equipment 87
  - Insect and Rodent Control in Food Areas 87
  - Suggested Activities 87

**Chapter 6. Promoting Health with Physical Activity** 88
  - Major Concepts 88
  - National Standards for Physical Activity for Children in Group Care 89
  - Assessment of Children’s Nutrition and Physical Activity 91
  - Playing Outdoors 92
  - Teachers’ Views of Active Play 93
  - Encouraging and Modeling Physical Activity 94
  - Physical Activity for Children with Asthma 94
  - Structured Physical Activities 94
  - Suggested Activities 95

**Chapter 7. Promoting Health through Oral Health, Mental Health, and Health Education** 96
  - Major Concepts 96
  - Oral Health 97
  - Mental Health 101
Contents

Health Education for Children, Staff Members, and Families 106
Suggested Activities 109

Chapter 8. Medical Care—Clinical Health Services for Children 110
Major Concepts 110
Health Care 111
Assessing Health Status 113
Tracking and Advocating for Preventive Health Care 120
Communicating with Families 123
Suggested Activities 124

Chapter 9. Staff Members and Consultants for Safe and Healthy Child Care 126
Major Concepts 126
Program Responsibilities of All Personnel 127
Health and Safety Concerns in Recruiting, Selecting, and Retaining Staff Members 127
Adult Health Needs—Occupational Risks 133
Infectious Disease Risks for Adults 135
When Not to Come to Work 136
Breaks 137
Child Care Health Consultants 138
Suggested Activities 143

Chapter 10. Facility Design and Support Services for Safe and Healthy Early Care and Education 144
Major Concepts 144
Space and Structural Design 145
Equipment and Furnishings 146
Air Quality, Ventilation, Heating, and Cooling 147
Lighting 147
Noise Levels 147
Electrical Items 147
Plumbing 148
Fire Warning and Safety Systems 149
Maintenance of the Facility 149
Transportation 153
Suggested Activities 157

Chapter 11. Caring for Children with Short-Term or Chronic Health Needs or Disabilities 158
Major Concepts 158
The Daily Health Check 159
Care of the Mildly Ill Child 160
Setting Policies for Care of Ill Children 162
Special Considerations for Programs That Do Not Exclude Mildly Ill Children 162
Giving Medication in a Child Care Program 163
Common Illnesses and Chronic Health Conditions 165
Suggested Activities 169

Chapter 12. Inclusion of Children with Special Needs 170
Major Concepts 170
Inclusive Care 171
Benefits of Inclusion 171
How Is Inclusion Carried Out? 173
Inclusive Education: The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 173
Modifying an Early Education Program to Accommodate Children with Special Needs 176
Medical Procedures 178
Emergency Planning Considerations for Children with Special Needs 179
Resources to Plan Care for Children with Special Needs 180
Suggested Activities 181

Chapter 13. Child Maltreatment (Abuse and Neglect) and Administration of the Health Component 182
Major Concepts 182
Child Maltreatment (Abuse and Neglect) 183
How Programs Can Help Abused Children and Stressed Families 185
Preventing Maltreatment in Programs for Young Children 187
Administration of the Health Component 187
Suggested Activities 190

Appendices 195
Appendix A. Forms and Checklists 196
Appendix B. Acronyms Used in This Book 230
Appendix C. Links to Internet Resources in This Book 231
Appendix D. Crosswalk of Healthy Young Children and NAEYC Early Childhood Accreditation Criteria 233

References 239
Index 240
List of Figures

2.1 Hand Hygiene: The First Line of Defense Against Infectious Diseases, 9
2.2 Handwashing Poster, 10
2.3 Procedure for Changing Diapers, Disposable Training Pants, and Soiled Underwear, 12
2.4 Deciding When a Mildly Ill Child Can Stay, 15
2.5 Conditions/Symptoms Not Requiring Exclusion, 16
2.6 Conditions for Which Temporary Exclusion Is Recommended, 18
2.7 Preventing Exposure to Blood and Body Fluids, 23
2.8 Daily Sanitizing and Disinfecting Solutions, 28
2.9 Clean, Sanitize, Disinfect: What Are the Differences?, 30
3.1 Using Playdough and Other Manipulative Art or Sensory Materials, 40
3.2 How to Choose Art Supplies, 41
3.3 Basic Playground Safety Rules, 42
3.4 Minimum Compressed Loose-Fill Surfacing Depths, 43
3.5 Safe Sleeping for Infants, 49
4.1 Emergency Medical Procedures, 56
4.2 Inventory for First Aid Kits and Emergency Supplies, 57
5.1 Categories of Food Offered, 68
5.2 Guidelines for Storing Human Milk, 71
5.3 Ideas for Nutritious Snacks, 76
5.4 Sources for Nutrition Education, 78
5.5 Dietary Sources of Calcium, 82
5.6 MyPlate Mini-Poster, 84
6.1 Physical Activity Guidelines, 90
7.1 Dental Referral Criteria, 100
7.2 Pyramid Model for Promoting Social and Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children, 105
8.1 What Early Educators Can Do to Help Families Use a Medical Home, 112
9.1 Caring for Our Children Training Standards, 132
9.2 Wise Moves to Avoid Injury in Child Care, 134
9.3 Protect Your Back, 136
9.4 Child Care Health Consultants, 140
10.1 Transportation Safety Rules, 154
11.1 Items to Include in the Daily Health Check, 159
11.2 How to Take a Child’s Temperature, 166
12.1 Examples of ADA Information Available, 172
13.1 What Is Child Abuse and Neglect?, 184
A.1 Diapering, 196
A.2 Selecting an Appropriate Sanitizer or Disinfectant, 197
A.3 Routine Schedule for Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfecting, 199
A.4 Sample Letter to Families about Exposure to Communicable Diseases, 201
A.5 Safety Checklist for Active Play Areas, 202
A.6 Incident Report Form, 209
A.7 Emergency Telephone List, 210
A.8 Recommended Daily Meal Patterns for Breakfast and Lunch/Supper, 211
A.9 Weekly Meal Pattern for Regular Snacks, 212
A.10 Behavioral Data Collection Sheet, 213
A.11 Special Care Plan for a Child with Behavioral Issues, 214
A.12 Developmental Health History, 216
A.13 Observation and Symptom Record, 218
A.14 Situations that Require Medical Attention Right Away, 219
A.15 Medication Administration Skills Checklist, 220
A.16 Care Plan for a Child with Special Needs in Child Care, 222
A.17 Adaptive Equipment for Children with Special Health Care Needs, 223
A.18 Recognizing Child Abuse and Neglect: Signs and Symptoms, 225
A.19 Conceptual Model of Child Neglect, 229
Here, in one convenient manual, you will find answers to many questions about keeping young children healthy when they participate in group programs.

- What are the most effective methods of preventing the spread of disease?
- How do we create a safe and healthful environment to prevent injury and illness?
- What is recommended for routine preventive care for children, and why is it so important?
- How do we help children develop healthful eating habits?
- How do we ensure that children have the amount and type of physical activity they need to prevent obesity and keep their bodies healthy?
- What do we do to prepare for the types of emergencies that might occur?
- How do we inform families about possible exposure to contagious diseases?
- How do we include children with special needs?
- When do we exclude children or adults who are ill from the program? When can they return?
- How do we promote the well-being of adults who are involved with the program?
- How do we prevent and handle suspected maltreatment of children?
- How do we integrate the activities for the health component with all the other tasks involved in operating a quality program?

Healthy Young Children is a manual for teachers, directors of early care and education programs, health professionals who work with programs that care for children in group settings, and other individuals who give technical assistance to early education professionals. The manual is not only a tool for those who work in group care settings but also a guide for those who are preparing to enter the field. It may be used as a textbook to support coursework on this topic. Using the manual will help implement national standards and guidelines for the health component. For those working on accreditation of a center or family child care home, the manual provides information related to compliance with health and safety criteria.

Healthy Young Children: A Manual for Programs was first published by NAEYC in 1988 and has been extensively reviewed and updated. This, the fifth edition, reflects the most current recommendations from health professionals available at the time of writing for keeping children healthy and safe in group care. In many places in the manual, the reader will find links to information posted on the internet. Be sure to use these links, as the internet provides information on companion documents for this manual that may be updated more frequently than print material.

Healthy Young Children is one of a set of resources that early educators will find helpful in integrating health and safety effectively with the child development, administrative, and other components of the program. The manual is compatible with and is an implementation tool for Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards; Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs, 3rd edition, published in 2011. Caring for Our Children is more than a compendium of detailed requirements for care of children in center- and home-based group settings. Its standards document procedures for protecting health and safety, the rationale and implementation strategies for each requirement, and the references to the scientific literature that justify the standard. The extensive appendices provide many useful forms, handouts, and tools.
Caring for Our Children is published collaboratively by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the American Public Health Association, and the National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care. The work involves many contributors. The National Resource Center is funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau of the Health Resources and Services Administration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The authoring organizations and NAEYC offer the print publication for sale in their respective bookstores. In addition, PDF and HTML versions are available on the website of the National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education (www.nrckids.org). Updates to the standards and clarifying comments will appear on this website. Be sure to check the site periodically for notices of updates.

Healthy Young Children contains some information taken directly from Caring for Our Children. The fifth edition of Healthy Young Children is being published around the same time as the third edition of Caring for Our Children so that readers can use these two publications together.

Other tools that will help meet the standards in Caring for Our Children include the following:

- A six-videotape series called Caring for Our Children, videotaped in 1995 in center- and home-based child care programs across the United States, shows what child care looks like when it meets national standards. Because the series is based on the second edition of Caring for Our Children, a few items illustrated in the videos have changed since its publication. For example, new vaccines have been added to the routinely recommended schedule of immunizations that all children and teachers should have. Also, putting infants down to sleep on their backs without soft bedding or toys in their cribs is now required in order to help prevent sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). Although some new standards and updates are not shown in the video series, most of the information is still useful and appropriate.

- To help programs implement the standards for written health and safety policies in Caring for Our Children, the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (PA AAP) publishes Model Child Care Health Policies. These policies originated from best practice submissions of policies from many child care programs. The Early Childhood Education Linkage System-Healthy Child Care Pennsylvania is the program of the PA AAP that updates this document from time to time. The fill-in-the-blank policy statements provide an easy starting point for programs to customize policy statements to serve their needs. After adapting the model policies that meet national standards to fit a specific facility’s characteristics, the site-specific written policies become a useful tool to orient staff members and parents and describe expectations for program operation. At the time of this writing, Model Child Care Health Policies is being updated to be released in its fifth edition. It will correspond with standards for written policies in the third edition of Caring for Our Children. For online access to the most current edition and ongoing updates of Model Child Care Health Policies, go to www.ecels-healthychildcarepa.org.

- To help early educators know how to deal with infectious diseases in group care, the American Academy of Pediatrics publishes Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools: A Quick Reference Guide. The most recent update of this book, the second edition, was published in 2009. It is based on the AAP’s widely used health professional reference book on infectious diseases in children called The Red Book. Infectious disease is the most common cause of illness among young children. Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools demystifies medical jargon and dispels widespread, strongly held misperceptions about what causes these illnesses, how to prevent them, and how to manage them when they occur among children in group care.

The book is largely made up of a set of one- or two-page Quick Reference Sheets about specific types of infectious illnesses. You may photocopy individual sheets to share with parents and staff members when needed. Each Quick Reference Sheet contains a brief description of the condition, the signs and symptoms, the incubation and contagious periods, how the illness is spread, how to control it, the roles of the teacher and the family in managing the illness, when/whether exclusion from group care is needed, when readmission is appropriate if the child is excluded, and comments that provide additional information. The information is in parent- and educator-friendly language.

In addition to the Quick Reference Sheets, the book includes chapters about keeping children healthy, how infection spreads, measures to control infection, teacher health, recognizing a child’s illness, the health consultant’s role, immunization schedules, outbreaks/epidemics and other infectious disease emergencies, sample letters and forms, and a glossary of terms. The book is available in both e-book and print form from the AAP bookstore (www.aap.org).
Determining whether records of children’s and staff members’ vaccines and other health services are up-to-date is a tedious and complex but essential task. Staff members must check records against the recommended schedule for the individual’s age and special conditions. Several tools are available to accurately evaluate records. The Centers for Disease Control has tools to look at an individual child or adult record at www.cdc.gov/vaccines. The PA AAP developed a software tool called WellCareTracker™ to track children’s preventive care records for both vaccines and routinely recommended screening tests. This tool is described more fully in Chapter 8. To view a demonstration of how it works, go to www.wellcaretracker.org.

These tools are helpful to all who work with children in group care settings—whether full-day or part-day, full-year or part-year; whether in child care centers, preschools, family child care homes, Head Start programs, before- and after-school programs, or other types of group care where families share the responsibility of care and education for their children with trusted teachers.

**Note:** Throughout this manual, various terms are used interchangeably to refer to programs serving young children ages birth to 8, including early childhood programs, early care and education programs, child care centers, and group care settings. These and other terms used refer to any program in which young children are cared for and educated in a group setting, including family child care homes.

The term teacher is used in this manual to refer to any adult responsible for the direct care and education of a group of children in any early childhood setting. Included are not only classroom teachers but also infant/toddler caregivers, family child care providers, assistants, and specialists in other disciplines who fulfill the role of teacher. The terms director and administrator are used to refer to professionals with oversight responsibilities for programs.

**For Your Convenience**

You may copy any part of this manual for staff members, families, health consultants, or community agencies, but be sure to acknowledge the source of the material each time you use it.