



Mark Parkinson, Governor
Roderick L. Bremby, Secretary

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND ENVIRONMENT

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Division of Health

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Dear Child Care Provider:

I am writing you today to ask for your help. For many years, Good Beginnings Last a Lifetime has been a central theme for the CCLR program. Positive child care experiences help to guide a child's success in later years, supports working families, and benefits child care providers.

Tragically, in the last three years, 29 children have died while in a Kansas child care setting. Twenty-one of these deaths occurred in day care homes: 8 in registered family day care homes, 7 in licensed day care homes, 4 in group day care homes and 2 in day care homes that were operating illegally. In day care homes, most of the children who have died were less than 2 years old. Many of these children died within the first days or weeks of care.

In investigating these deaths, we discovered that the majority occurred during nap time. We found that safe sleep practices are not consistently followed. Some children were placed on their stomach to sleep or placed on an adult bed or in a car seat. Children were not checked on regularly. Some napping children were not checked on for 1 to 3 hours. In other cases, the provider did not supervise children who were awake and left children unsupervised in a different room or on another level of the home. In several cases, too many children were in care, compromising the provider's ability to provide adequate supervision.

The death of a child is devastating, altering forever the lives of the child's family, the child care provider and the other children and families served. While not all deaths are preventable, there are a number of things that child care providers can do to reduce the risks of serious injury or death of a child in care. Two documents are enclosed for your use. The first is a list of actions that you can take now to enhance the safety measures that you already have in place. The second is "Back to Sleep" a brochure on the prevention of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

Following the attached recommendations, providing adequate supervision, limiting the number of children in care, assessing your child care environment, and communicating with parents can go a long way to prevent deaths or serious injuries and can reduce the risks associated with SIDS.

If you have questions or need assistance, your local licensing surveyor is available to answer questions and to provide consultation and technical assistance. The child care resource and referral agencies, other child care partners in your area, and the Safe Kids Kansas website, www.kansassafekids.org/child_care.htm are excellent sources of information and training.

The work you do to support Kansas children and families is invaluable. By all of us working together we can have more Good Beginnings that Last a Lifetime.

Sincerely,

Christine Ross-Baze, Director
Child Care Licensing and Registration Program

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