



SHARING THE NEWS

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This newsletter is for child care providers caring for children in the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program, a program which helps low-income families pay for regulated child care while participating in work activities.

- Lots of Kids in Care—Wisconsin Shares Continues to Grow
- Tax Forms Mailed in January
- Overnight Care
- Providers as Employers
- False attendance reporting risks License
- Providers Can Help Stop Diarrheal Illness

Lots of Kids in Care—Use of Wisconsin Shares Continues to Grow

In August, 2008, the program paid for 61,737 children to attend 5697 providers across the state. This compares to 57,382 children attending 5763 providers in August, 2007.

Tax Forms Mailed In January

By January 31, 2009, the Department will send tax reporting forms (1099s) to all non-corporate child care providers who received at least \$600 in payments from the Wisconsin Shares program in 2008. Child care providers receive a 1099 form if the provider is an 'individual/sole proprietor/partnership' in the child care subsidy system and has received at least \$600 in subsidy payments during 2008. If the provider is listed as 'corporation/non-profit/government', no 1099 form is issued.

Forms will be sent to the same address as checks or Electronic Funds Transfer advisory notices. If you are expecting a 1099 form and do not receive one, call 608-266-8749 to request a replacement.

Overnight Care— When does the next day start?

Providers whose certification or license allows them to care for children overnight may be confused about attendance reporting. If Johnny arrives at 7:00 p.m. on Monday and goes home at 5:00 a.m. on Tuesday, how should you report attendance?

The answer is that the day starts at midnight. In the example given above, you should report Johnny for 5 hours on Monday and 5 hours on Tuesday.

Providers as Employers

The Child Care staff continues to receive reports from parents who work for their providers and have concerns about the terms of their employment. Concerns reported include:

- Provider/employers who pay some or all of the parent's wages in cash and don't report the wages to tax authorities.
- Provider/employers who require the parent to sign their children into care even when they are not in care.
- Provider/employers who keep part or all of a parent's wages when there are concerns with subsidy or co-pay payments for the care of the employee's children.
- Other requirements or treatment that the parent finds unethical or unfair.

Providers who choose to become employers are subject to all employer laws, including New Hire Reporting, Equal Rights, minimum wage, Workers' Compensation, Unemployment Compensation, and tax withholding and reporting. The Department may require employers to verify compliance with these laws as part of finding a participant employed and eligible for the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy. In addition, parents' who complain about unfair treatment are referred to the agencies with the authority to investigate the employer for illegal practices.

Providers are businesses. Providers who hire others to assist them in their business are employers. All laws apply.

False Attendance Reporting Risks License/Certification

The Bureau of Early Care and Education (“the subsidy” and “certification”), and the Bureau of Early Care Regulation (“licensing”) work closely together to assure that public tax dollars in the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy are spent for child care arrangements that provide a safe and healthy environment for low income working families. In considering whether a provider is fit and qualified to operate a child care program, both licensors and certifiers may look at the record of complying with subsidy rules. Several providers in the state have lost their licenses in recent months due to over-reporting attendance in the Wisconsin Shares program.

Public Health Says Providers Can Help Stop Diarrheal Illness

As child care providers know, young children often carry diarrheal diseases, and these diseases can spread quickly through a child care program. Public Health staff say there have been recent outbreaks of shigellosis and other diarrheal illnesses in child care centers. Shigellosis is a highly infectious bacterial disease that causes stomach cramping, fever and mild or severe diarrhea that often contains traces of blood or mucous. Some infected children may not show any symptoms. The illness usually appears 1-3 days after infection and lasts 5 to 7 days.

Most *Shigella* infections are the result of fecal bacteria passing from the improperly washed hands of one person to the mouth of another person, often through handling contaminated objects or food. Toddler play can also spread the infection, since toddlers often put their hands in their own mouths and their friends’.

To keep Shigellosis and other diarrheal diseases from taking over your program, sickening children, staff and parents, and potentially closing your program, you can take the following steps:

1. **Handwashing is the single most effective means to prevent the spread of diarrheal illnesses.** Hands should be washed:

- Upon arrival and when moving from one child care group to another.
 - Before and after:
 - Eating, handling food, or feeding a child.
 - Giving medication.
 - Playing in water that is used by more than one person.
 - After:
 - Diapering.
 - Using the toilet or helping a child use a toilet.
 - Handling bodily fluid (mucus, blood, vomit), from sneezing, wiping and blowing noses, from mouths, or from sores.
 - Handling uncooked food, especially raw meat and poultry.
 - Handling pets and other animals.
 - Playing in sandboxes.
 - Cleaning or handling the garbage.
2. If possible, have food prepared and served by staff who do not diaper children.
 3. Children and staff should stay home until at least 24 hours after their diarrhea resolves. (Please note: Children and staff with some infections, including shigellosis, may need approval from the local health department before they return to the child care facility.)

If you notice an unusual number of children with diarrhea or you would like more detailed information about preventing and controlling communicable diseases you can contact your local public health agency for advice and direction. Find your local public health agency by going to this web site: <http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/localhealth/index.htm>.

For more information on health issues, see:

Division of Public Health Disease Fact Sheet Series:
<http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/communicable/factsheets/index.htm>

Healthy Kids, Healthy Care Website- Cleaning and Sanitizing/Diapering/Food Preparation/Handwashing:
<http://healthykids.us/cleanliness.htm>

Communicable Disease Wall Chart
http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/ccic/pdf/cd_chart.pdf).