
INSTRUCTOR'S GUIDE

Staff Health



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California Childcare Health Program
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This *Instructor's Guide* is a supplement for trainers of the California Training Institute's curriculum for Child Care Health Advocates.

INTRODUCTION TO THE STAFF HEALTH MODULE

This *Instructor's Guide* provides trainers with an outline for the teaching of the *Staff Health* module. Participants will learn about occupational hazards in the early care and education (ECE) setting. They will learn how to prevent illness and injury, how to reduce exposure to toxins and how to help staff effectively manage stress in the ECE setting. ECE providers spend their days doing the hard work of caring for young children, with little time to care for themselves and protect their own health and safety. This *Instructor's Guide* provides an outline for the trainer to instruct Child Care Health Advocates (CCHAs) about what they should know and do to perform one of their main functions—the promotion of staff health.

Learning Objectives:

1. To describe five major occupational hazards in ECE programs.
2. To describe measures that prevent and manage occupational hazards.
3. To list three ways a CCHA can assist ECE programs in developing and implementing staff health and safety policies.
4. To identify staff health and safety resources to assist and support ECE providers and families.

Primary Messages:

1. ECE professionals get diseases at higher rates than adults who have less contact with children.
2. ECE professionals are at high risk for injuries, stress and exposure to chemicals.
3. CCHAs can assist in developing policies, practices and training to reduce occupational risks and promote wellness.
4. There are legal requirements such as those from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to protect ECE professionals from injury and illness.

Materials and Equipment Needed:

1. Copy of module: *Staff Health*
2. Copy of *Instructor's Guide: Staff Health*
3. Flip chart/whiteboard and markers, or chalkboard and chalk
4. Masking tape for posting flip chart paper
5. LCD projector or overhead projector
6. Computer for PowerPoint slides
7. CDs of slides or transparencies
8. Handouts
 - a. Handouts in the *Staff Health* module
 - i. Handouts from California Childcare Health Program (CCHP), Oakland, CA

Handout Title	Page Number in Module
<i>Fact Sheets for Families: Vaccines Aren't Just for Children</i>	21
<i>Health and Safety Notes: Influenza and You—What You Need to Know</i>	23
<i>Health and Safety Notes: Latex Allergy and Sensitivity in the Child Care Setting</i>	25
<i>Health and Safety Notes: Standard and Universal Precautions in the Child Care Setting</i>	27
<i>Staff Illness and Exclusion Policy</i>	29

- ii. Handouts from other sources

Handout Title	Page Number in Module
<i>Cal/OSHA: Safety and Health Protection on the Job</i>	30
<i>Cal/OSHA: Work Smarter, Not Just Harder: Think Ergonomics</i> (handed out as a poster separate from this module)	—
<i>Child Care Staff Health Assessment</i>	31
<i>Major Occupational Health Hazards</i>	32
<i>Material Safety Data Sheet (Clorox Company)</i>	33
<i>Recommended Adult Immunization Schedule by Vaccine and Age Group</i>	35

- b. Handouts in the *Instructor's Guide*

Appendix Title	Appendix Number
<i>Using the Staff Health Module</i>	9A

SUGGESTED TRAINING OUTLINE

Outline	Method	Time (Minutes)
I. Introduction to the Staff Health Module	—	10
A. Assessment of Group Knowledge	Questioning	5
B. Introduction/Rationale to Staff Health	Lecture and Discussion	5
II. The Role of the CCHA in Promoting Staff Health	—	60–70
A. Occupational Hazards in the ECE Setting	Lecture and Discussion	10
B. The Role of the CCHA	Large Group Activity	15
C. Staff Health Assessment	Handout Review	10
D. Stress Reduction	Small Group Activity	10
E. Staff Health Stories	Small Group Activity	15
<i>F. Optional: Advocating for Staff Health</i>	<i>Small Group Activity</i>	<i>10</i>
III. Summary and Closure	—	10–20
<i>A. Optional: Using the Staff Health Module</i>	<i>Small Group Activity</i>	<i>10</i>
B. Next Steps for the CCHA	Large Group Discussion	5
C. Summary and Closure	Brief Closing Activity	5

Total time: 80–100 minutes

OUTLINE AND INSTRUCTIONS

Staff Health

I. Introduction to the Staff Health Module

A. **Topic:** Assessment of Group Knowledge

Method: Questioning

Instructions:

1. Ask participants several of the following questions, choosing questions most appropriate for your participants. Ask them to raise their hand if they:
 - a. Know their immunization status. Have they had cytomegalovirus (CMV) or fifth disease? Or the illness or vaccines for rubella or chicken pox?
 - b. Know what an occupational hazard is.
 - c. Know the most common physical injury for child care providers.
 - d. Have policies that promote staff health.
 - e. Have received training on environmental toxins in the child care setting.
2. Ask participants what job-related injuries and illnesses they have experienced. Write them on flip chart paper and try to address them during the presentation.

B. **Topic:** Introduction/Rationale to Staff Health

Method: Lecture and Discussion

Instructions:

1. State that CCHAs are responsible for putting policies and procedures into place in ECE programs to promote the health and safety of children and ECE staff. Although often ignored, staff health is an important part of providing a quality experience for children. ECE staff who are healthy and not stressed are able to provide responsive care to children. Even though many health and safety policies in ECE programs protect children and adults, some health and safety issues specific to adult staff are often neglected. Because ECE professionals rarely think of their own health, it is the role of the CCHA to promote staff health.
2. Ask participants to provide examples of staff not caring for themselves and placing the needs of children before their own health and safety.
3. State that ECE providers are exposed to illnesses and are at risk for injury because of the unique characteristics of the ECE setting and of caring for young children. CCHAs can provide education, training and support to help prevent illnesses, to reduce the risk of injury and of exposure to toxins, and to better support each other when stressed.

II. The Role of the CCHA in Promoting Staff Health

A. **Topic:** Occupational Hazards in the ECE Setting

Method: Lecture and Discussion

Instructions:

1. Ask participants to define *occupational hazard*: a working condition that can lead to illness, injury or diminished emotional well-being.
2. Ask participants to write down all the occupational hazards they can think of. Then ask them to go around the room and state them. The trainer can write them down into

four columns, without labeling these columns for the participants: illnesses, injuries, environmental exposures (toxins) and stress. Comment on how many there are and what a hard job ECE providers have!

3. Refer participants to the overview of occupational hazards on page 32 of the module.
4. Emphasize that general respiratory diseases, such as a cold or the flu, and common diarrhea are the diseases that caregivers are most exposed to. However, repeated exposures to viruses causing these diseases generally confer some immunity, and caregivers who have been working with children for a long time rarely get sick from common diseases.
5. Ask the participants to look at the four lists to see if they can name the categories: illnesses, injuries, environmental exposures (toxins) and stress. Provide them the titles of the categories if they cannot.

B. **Topic:** The Role of the CCHA

Method: Large Group Activity

Instructions:

1. State that there are several ways that the CCHA can promote and protect staff health. These ways directly relate to the four most common occupational hazards just listed. Refer to *Activity 1* on page 10 of the module. Ask participants to brainstorm the ways that CCHAs can assist ECE programs in improving staff health. Ask participants to be as specific as possible.
2. Go down the list written on the chart pad and put each suggestion into one of the following four categories (if there are items that do not fit into these categories, you can add a new category):
 - a. illness prevention
 - b. injury prevention
 - c. prevention of exposure to toxic materials
 - d. stress management
3. State that these categories are the four main tasks of the CCHA.
4. Make sure that each category has several methods of prevention and that the list includes significant content. If content has not been stated, the trainer may add it by saying, "I'd like to add something to this list." Then the trainer can add the content. Or, if the item is included but further elaboration is indicated, the trainer can add the required details by saying, "yes, and . . ." and add the necessary details.
5. Note to Trainer: This is the core section of this training, as it covers the four main tasks of the CCHA. In this method, the outline or skeleton is provided by the participants, but the trainer fills in any missing substantive points and provides information not given by participants themselves. Trainers should be very familiar with the content on pages 5 to 8 of the module, so that they may add the specific content after participants' comments. Following are the ways that the CCHA can promote and protect staff health:
 - a. Illness prevention:
 - i. Encourage health assessment.
 - ii. Encourage adult immunizations. Refer participants to *Handout: Fact Sheets for Families: Vaccines Aren't Just for Children* (page 21 in module) and *Handout: Recommended Adult Immunization Schedule by Vaccine and Age Group* (page 35 in module). For up-to-date immunization schedules, go to <http://www.cdc.gov>.

- iii. State that some illnesses have more serious symptoms in adults than children, and vice versa. For this reason, illnesses in adults have to be taken seriously. Discuss the illnesses that have serious consequences for pregnant women and fetuses.
 - iv. Develop exclusion policies. These policies apply to both staff and children, both of whom are susceptible to infection and capable of transmission. Refer participants to *Handout: Staff Illness and Exclusion Policy* (page 29 in module).
 - v. Ensure that pregnant staff know that they should consult with their health care providers for advice about immunizations and occupational hazards.
 - vi. Discuss standard precautions and other preventive measures.
 - a) *Optional: Ask participants to review Handout: Health and Safety Notes: Standard and Universal Precautions in the Child Care Setting* (page 27 in module).
 - b) Ask participants which standard precautions they are already practicing.
 - c) Refer participants to the *Preventing and Managing Illness in Early Care and Education Programs* module.
 - vii. Encourage self-care—good nutrition, routine exercise, sufficient rest and the maintenance of professional boundaries are all important in order to prevent illness.
- b. Injury prevention:
- i. Teach staff how to avoid injuries, especially back injury.
 - ii. *Optional: Give participants information about safe lifting. Refer to page 6 of the module. Tell participants that back injuries are the most frequently reported injury to OSHA. Therefore, it is helpful to teach proper lifting practices (e.g., bending with your knees and not your back) and ask participants to then practice the lifting technique with you.*
 - iii. Encourage staff to maintain good physical fitness by exercising regularly. Walking regularly is a fantastic way to get and stay fit.
- c. Prevention of exposure to toxins:
- i. Check the ingredients of the cleaning and art supplies to make sure they are not toxic.
 - ii. Ensure that the Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) on all supplies requiring them are available. Make sure that staff have access to the sheets and to the information on them (refer to *Handout: Material Safety Data Sheet* on page 33 of the module).
 - iii. Always use the least toxic option. Replace toxic cleaning and art supplies with less toxic products whenever possible.
 - iv. Ensure that arts and crafts materials have two labels: ASTM D-4236 and ACMI. Refer to page 7 of the module for more information.
- d. Stress management:
- i. Instructors can write down participants' ideas about how to manage stress more effectively into two categories posted on the flip chart in two separate columns: 1) change the workplace; and 2) teach providers how to manage stress. In addition to suggestions by participants in this section, state that you will be discussing this further later in the workshop.

C. **Topic:** Staff Health Assessment

Method: Handout Review

Instructions:

1. Transition the group by stating that there are many actions that the CCHA can take to promote staff health, and the group will focus more specifically on two of the main tasks: health assessment and stress reduction and management.
2. Ask participants to review *Handout: Child Care Staff Health Assessment* on page 31 of the module.
3. Ask participants whether they know their immunization status for each illness. Explain to participants that there are certain diseases that could be serious for adults or could jeopardize a pregnancy. If they have had these illnesses, they are now immune. If they have received vaccinations, they also are immune.
4. Refer participants to Part 2 of the *Child Care Staff Health Assessment*, which includes a review of immunizations and childhood illnesses. Reassure participants that if they are unsure of their status, their health care provider can order blood tests to determine immunity and to advise them.

D. **Topic:** Stress Reduction

Method: Small Group Activity

Instructions:

1. State that participants have identified the key role of the CCHA, and that self-care and stress reduction require special attention. Ask participants what the common stressors are in their own worksites. Write their answers on a chart pad. Divide their answers into categories: the environment, caring for children, working with parents, working with other staff, and balancing their work and family needs.
2. Pair participants up. Ask them to choose the stressor that is most challenging for them and to talk with their partner about how they will address it.
3. *Optional: Play a stress reduction cassette or conduct a guided meditation, so that participants have the experience of becoming relaxed quickly, completely and within a short period of time, emphasizing that this method could be used during breaks at the workplace.*

E. **Topic:** Staff Health Stories

Method: Small Group Activity

Instructions:

1. Divide the participants into small groups. Direct participants to *Activity 2* on page 11 of the module. Ask participants to read the stories and answer the questions.
2. Reconvene the group and ask the participants for comments and reactions. What was noteworthy to them? What was new? What was helpful? What in the discussion of these stories will be useful to them in promoting staff health?

F. **Optional Topic:** *Advocating for Staff Health*

Method: *Small Group Activity*

Instructions:

1. *Divide the participants into small groups. Instruct them to think about one occupational hazard that could be reduced by advocating at the local, state or federal level (e.g., low wages, high provider-child ratios, limited nontoxic alternatives). Ask them to discuss how they might advocate for improved working conditions.*

2. Reconvene and discuss the proposed actions.
3. Refer participants to the Center for the Child Care Workforce (<http://www.ccw.org>), which provides information on local organizing efforts if ECE teachers want to advocate on their own behalf.

If you have experienced CCHAs in the room, do one or more of the following:

1. Ask them to describe the policies they have in place to protect staff health.
2. Ask them to describe how they provide education and training about self-care to staff.
3. Ask them to describe the challenges related to staff health that they have overcome and how they have overcome them.
4. Pair them up with nonexperienced participants and ask the experienced caregiver to role play an orientation of a new staff person on proper lifting technique using the *Handout: Cal/OSHA: Work Smarter, Not Just Harder: Think Ergonomics* poster as a guide (this orientation is required by OSHA). Participants with knee, back or other health problems should be warned not to participate in this activity.
5. Pair them up with nonexperienced participants and instruct the nonexperienced to ask questions of the experienced CCHAs about strategies for self-care.

III. Summary and Closure

A. **Optional Topic:** *Using the Staff Health Module*

Method: *Small Group Activity*

Instructions:

1. *Explain to the participants that the curriculum is a rich resource for them and encourage them to become familiar with it. Towards this end, spend a few minutes looking through it together. Explain that participants will work in pairs to go through the module to find the answers to these questions.*
2. *Hand out Appendix 9A. Tell the participants they have 5 to 10 minutes to locate the answers.*
3. *Note to Trainer: Participants may feel that this is “busy work.” Let them know that our goal is to use our time today to give them new tools and resources, and the curriculum is one such resource. Explain that becoming familiar with the curriculum is one way to help them determine how they will improve quality in their setting.*

B. **Topic:** Next Steps for the CCHA

Method: Large Group Discussion

Instructions:

1. Ask participants to describe the possible next steps for improving staff health in the following areas based on the training:
 - a. illness prevention
 - b. injury prevention
 - c. prevention of exposure to toxic materials
 - d. stress management
2. Ask participants to discuss how they will prioritize which areas they work in.

C. **Topic:** Summary and Closure

Method: Brief Closing Activity

Instructions:

1. Summarize the key points shared by participants. Review by stating that it is the role of the CCHA to prevent illness and injury, reduce exposure to toxins and help staff manage stress. Reiterate that it is very hard for staff members to take care of themselves, and that they spend their entire professional lives, and probably a good part of their personal lives, caring for others. Emphasize that CCHAs serve as good role models by demonstrating self-care.
2. Next Steps: Direct participants to write down one next step they will take as a result of this training. Ask participants to share these with the group.

APPENDIX 9A

Using the Staff Health Module

Topic: Using the Staff Health Module

Method: Small Group Activity

Instructions: Review the module and find the answers to the following questions.

According to the module:

1. What are some dangers associated with old buildings?
2. What route of transmission is responsible for the greatest transmission of illnesses in the ECE setting?
3. What immunizations does an ECE provider need?
4. Who is at risk for a latex allergy?