

Jessica Redden, RN  
Child Care Nurse Consultant  
Scott County Health Department  
600 W. 4th Street  
Davenport, IA 52801  
563-326-8618 Ext. 8821  
Jessica.redden@scottcountyia.com



# Quality Care For Kids

A newsletter for Scott County  
Child Care Providers

Written by Jane Matzen, RN and Heidi Hotvedt, RN

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Call your Child Care Nurse Consultant if you have any questions about child health and safety, or any special training needs.



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## Baby Boxes

Baby boxes have been in the news lately. Baby boxes are cardboard boxes that have a firm mattress and have been used to sleep babies in Finland since the 1930's. Finland has one of the lowest infant mortality rates in the world. However, attributing their low infant mortality rates to the use of baby boxes alone does not include that Finland has a national healthcare system and provides prenatal care for all women. Finland also offers extended maternity and paternity leave.

Research on baby boxes is limited.

### **Baby boxes are not appropriate for use in the child care setting:**

- ◆ Healthy Child Care Iowa (HCCI) Safe Sleep Policy states that infants sleep on their back in a Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) safety approved crib with a firm mattress and a tight fitting sheet.
- ◆ Baby Boxes would not fall under the safe sleep recommendations by Caring For Our Children (CFOC) standards, American Acad-

emy of Pediatrics (AAP), and Iowa SIDS Foundation.

- ◆ Baby boxes would not be a safe environment for infants in care because they would be placed on the floor and accessible to other children (and pets).
- ◆ Baby boxes would not be safe placed on an elevated surface due to fall risk.
- ◆ Baby boxes are not able to be cleaned and disinfected.

For more information:

Infant "Safe Sleep Policy" available at <http://idph.iowa.gov/hcci/products>

## Managing Diarrhea in Child Care

What is diarrhea? When a child suddenly starts having frequent loose, watery stools, it is diarrhea. A child with diarrhea can also have abdominal cramping, a fever, and general feeling of not being well.

Diarrhea can be caused by changes in the child's diet and some medications. It can also be caused by intestinal problems or food allergies. Diarrhea can also be caused by:

- Viruses: Viruses are the cause of most diarrhea in child care (e.g. Rotovirus in children that have not been immunized; Enteroviruses which are more common in the summer; and the Norwalk family of viruses which occur year round).
- Bacteria: Salmonella, Shigella, E. Coli, Campylobacter, and Clostridium difficile are bacteria that cause diarrhea.
- Parasites: Tiny organisms that can live in humans and cause diarrhea (e.g. Cryptosporidium).

What should be done to prevent the spread of diarrhea in child care?

- Make sure that young infants receive the

recommended immunizations for rotavirus.

- Report incidence of diarrhea to staff and parents so they can watch for symptoms.
- Everyone should follow strict handwashing using soap and water.
- Proper handling, cooking, and storage of food should be followed.
- Staff who prepare and handle food in child care should be excluded if they have a diarrheal illness.
- Procedures for diapering and toileting should be strictly followed.
- Staff should follow recommendations for cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting.
- Exclude children who have diarrhea. Exclusion criteria varies dependent on the cause of the diarrhea.

For more information contact your local child care nurse consultant. HCCI has handwashing and diapering posters, illness exclusion and information on cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting on their website at:

<http://www.idph.iowa.gov/hcci/products>