

# Staff Wellness Policy

## INTENT STATEMENT

We are committed to the health, safety and well-being of the child care providers in our employ. This Wellness Policy is designed to make healthy nutrition and physical activity choices the easy choices, while being supportive of individual rights to choose.

## WORKSITE WELLNESS PROGRAMMING

Our goal for the wellness program is to make a positive difference in the lives of our staff and to help them enjoy happier, healthier lives. We support staff participating in worksite wellness activities. Staff participation in wellness activities is voluntary. We will provide awareness and education by including worksite wellness information in new staff orientation, posting flyers on walls or bulletin boards and sending e-mail correspondence. Components of our wellness program will include:

*Environmental wellness:* The positive perception of the environment that one works and lives in.

- Finding satisfaction and worth in your work
- Ensuring your work environments and relationships are comfortable
- Being aware of the natural environment you live in
- Recognizing opportunities that lead you to new skills and acting on those opportunities
- Working to ensure the stability and longevity of our natural resources

*Emotional wellness:* Possession of a secure self identity and a positive sense of self-regard; also the ability to cope with and/or improve unpleasant mood states.

- Keeping a positive attitude
- Being sensitive to your feelings and the feelings of others
- Learning to cope with stress
- Being realistic about your expectations and time
- Taking responsibility for your own behavior
- Dealing with your personal and financial issues realistically
- Viewing challenges as opportunities rather than obstacles
- Functioning independently but knowing when you need to ask for help

*Spiritual wellness:* A positive perception of meaning and purpose in life.

- Being open to different cultures and religions
- Giving your time to volunteer or participate in community service activities
- Spending time defining personal values and ethics, and making decisions that complement them
- Participating in spiritual activities
- Participating in activities that protect the environment
- Caring about the welfare of others and acting out of that care

*Social wellness:* A perception of having support available from family, friends, or co-workers in times of need and a perception of being a valued support provider.

- Being comfortable with and liking yourself as a person
- Interacting easily with people of different ages, backgrounds, races, lifestyles
- Contributing time and energy to the community
- Communicating your feelings
- Developing friendships
- Recognizing a need for fun time in your life
- Budgeting and balancing your time to include both responsibilities and relaxation

*Intellectual wellness:* The perception of being internally energized by an optimal amount of intellectually stimulating activity.

- Learning because you want to, not because you are told to. Doing the work assigned
- Learning through varied experiences, such as reading, writing, sharing and exploration
- Observing what is around you
- Listening
- Finding applications for material learning in the classroom
- Staying current with world affairs/news
- Questioning
- Exposing yourself to new experiences, such as arts, theater

*Physical wellness:* A perception and expectation of physical health.

- Exercising regularly
- Eating properly
- Getting regular physical check-ups
- Avoiding the use of tobacco or illicit drugs

Source: <http://healthandwellness.vanderbilt.edu/work-life/>

## **PROCEDURE/PRACTICE**

### **Nutrition**

At least 50 percent of pre-packaged foods and beverages for meetings and/or vending should be healthy options.

Staff is encouraged to consider healthier alternatives when making available food for others at staff pot luck lunches, special occasions, staff meetings, etc.

Staff is encouraged to support the use of locally grown fruits and vegetables, such as providing on-site or neighborhood farmers' markets, Community Supported Agriculture programs, on-site or community gardening space, etc.

Environmental accommodations for food preparation and storage, such as sinks, refrigerators, and microwave, are made available to support staff in bringing healthy lunches and snacks to work.

### **Breastfeeding**

We seek to foster a breastfeeding-friendly environment where breastfeeding is accepted as the preferred method of infant feeding. We shall provide breastfeeding staff with reasonable break time and a private, non-restroom place for employees to express breast milk or breastfeed. Staff shall be provided access to space with an electrical outlet and seating, and nearby access to running water. Staff may use their own cooler packs to store expressed breast milk or may store milk in a designated refrigerator/freezer. (See Breastfeeding Policy <http://www.kentuckycchc.org/policies/> ).

### **Professional Development**

Staff will be encouraged to write an annual professional development plan to include two hours or more in health and wellness education. Training topics may include: staff wellness, managing stress, healthy living, etc.

### **Physical Activity**

We encourage (but do not require) staff to engage in a regular program of exercise and health improvement, unless existing health related conditions make such a program inadvisable.

Shoes with good shock absorption will help reduce injury.

8/2014

Revision 8/2015

During pregnancy, staff should take extra caution to prevent back problems, swollen feet, varicose veins and fatigue.

In the course of meetings lasting more than 1 hour, staff are encouraged, but not required, to incorporate short stretch breaks for every 60 minutes of meeting time.

Staff is encouraged to take short walks or engage in other physical activity during their breaks.

Staff is encouraged to participate in work-sponsored physical activity opportunities offered through worksite wellness programs.

## **Ergonomics**

Staff shall maintain good posture by:

- Using adult-sized furniture when possible.
- Squatting and lifting with the legs to stand
- Sitting with back to the wall for other firm support
- Avoiding sitting or standing for long periods
- Storing items where they are accessible
- Squatting or kneeling instead of bending forward and down from the waist

Staff shall use proper lifting technique by:

- Giving yourself a firm base of support, with feet shoulder width apart and one foot next to the child you are lifting and the other slightly back
- Squatting down by bending at the knees, not the waist; engaging stomach muscles and keeping the back as straight as possible
- Having a comfortable hold on the child before beginning to lift
- Using your legs to lift slowly and smoothly

Child-sized furnishing and inadequate work surfaces can cause back injuries, therefore we will follow recommendations from *Caring for Our Children National Health and Safety Performance Standards*, which include:

- Adult-height changing tables
- Small, stable stepladders, stairs or similar equipment to enable children to climb to the changing table
- Adult furniture that eliminates awkward sitting and working positions

## **Workplace Interventions to Decrease Stress**

In an effort to decrease or eliminate stress in the workplace, whenever possible, we shall have:

8/2014

Revision 8/2015

- Someone on call so staff members can take a break from direct care
- A pleasant, comfortable space for breaks
- Regularly scheduled exercise breaks for staff
- Regular staff meetings
- Involvement of staff in program decisions
- Volunteers during the busiest times of the day
- A limited the number of children for which staff are responsible
- Staff plan activities only for a specific group of children
- Assign toys and materials to a specific room
- Set arrival and departure times to a fixed schedule
- Assign volunteers to one room

### **Preventative Measures**

We encourage, but do not require, staff to stay up to date on adult vaccinations recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, including Tdap booster, annual influenza vaccination and pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine for staff 65 years and over

Because employees are at risk for exposure to toxic materials, employees will be trained on any chemicals present in the workplace. Sanitation materials must be labeled and have a Material Safety Data Sheet on file.

Staff will:

- Use cleaning products for their intended purpose and according to manufacturer's instructions.
- Store products in original containers. Look at the ASTM D-4236 or ACMI label on art materials. These labels certify that the materials can be used without risk to health hazards.
- Use solvents such as turpentine and aerosol fixatives only outside or with good ventilation.
- Review toxicity of all art supplies. Substitute less hazardous products whenever possible.
- Call in experts to assess and eliminate any lead, asbestos, mold or mildew issues in the child care environment.

### **APPLICABLE**

This policy applies to all current and new staff.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Staff and volunteers will receive a written copy of this policy in their orientation packets before beginning work at the facility. Staff will receive written notification of any updates.

8/2014

Revision 8/2015

## REFERENCES

American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education (2011). *Caring for our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards; Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs*. 3rd Edition. <http://cfoc.nrckids.org/>

American Academy of Pediatrics, Pennsylvania Chapter (2002). *Model Child Care Health Policies*, 4<sup>th</sup> Ed. <http://www.ecels-healthychildcarepa.org>

Kentucky Division of Child Care - 922KAR:129 Child Care Health and Safety Standards. <http://chfs.ky.gov/dcbs/dcc>

MCH Library for Child Care Health Consultants.  
<https://earlychildhoodnewsupdate.wordpress.com/2014/02/21/mch-library-nti-for-child-care-health-consultants/>

Kentucky Child Care Health Consultation. <http://www.kentuckycchc.org/>

Lexington-Fayette County Health Department.  
<http://lexingtonhealthdepartment.org/ProgramsServices/HealthyWorkforce/tabid/220/Default.aspx>

Northern Kentucky Health Department. <http://www.nkyhealth.org/Services/Child-Care-Health-Consultation.aspx>

Vanderbilt University – Health and Wellness.  
<http://healthandwellness.vanderbilt.edu/work-life/>

<b>Reviewed by:</b> _____	<b>Director/Owner</b>
_____	<b>CCHC/Health Professional (optional)</b>
_____	<b>Staff Member</b>
_____	<b>Parent</b>
_____	<b>Board Member (optional)</b>

## EFFECTIVE DATE/REVIEW DATE

This policy is effective immediately. It will be reviewed yearly by the center director.

8/2014

Revision 8/2015