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Health & Wellness
for Kansas Kids

- Summer Bike Safety
- Healthy-Habit Influencers
- Policies to Promote Children's Health

Creating a HEALTHY, HAPPY KANSAS



For my two children, I want what all parents want, regardless of education or income level, nationality or neighborhood. I want them to be healthy and happy. It's as simple as that.

Ensuring the health and well-being of our youngest Kansans is a little more complicated than I've made it sound, however. Early in life, children are rapidly growing and highly sensitive to environmental conditions. Their health and well-being are directly impacted by conditions in the places where they live, learn, and play. Thus, early care and education has wide-ranging effects on long-term life outcomes.

High-quality early care and education environments support children's mental, physical, and social-emotional development. When families have equitable access to these programs, young children are more likely to do well in school, succeed in the workplace later on, and ultimately live longer, healthier lives.

In this issue of *Kansas Child*, experts from across the state and nation explain the latest approaches to health and well-being within early care and education settings. We explore individual-level strategies, such as supporting the health and well-being of caregivers, as well as program-level strategies, like nature-based play and infant mental health. With a focus on equity, we also discuss opportunities to embed health and well-being throughout our entire early care and education system.

Health and happiness may seem like simple, straightforward concepts, but making them a reality for Kansas children requires careful thought and intention. As we shift into an endemic phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, there's no better time than now to think creatively and strategically about what it means to create a healthy, happy Kansas. ●



KELLY DAVYDOV

Executive Director,
Child Care Aware® of Kansas

Kelly Davydov joined Child Care Aware® of Kansas as Executive Director in September 2020. Kelly's professional background includes leadership for two key initiatives in Iowa: the state's early childhood system-building effort, Early Childhood Iowa, and its 2-Gen anti-poverty initiative. Kelly, her husband Dmitry, and their two sons (Ethan, 14, and Henry, 11) have made Kansas City their new home. Together, they enjoy exploring state and national parks and farmers markets and spending their winter weekends poolside at swim meets.

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Kansas Child is intended to provide a forum for the discussion of child care and early education issues and ideas. We hope to provoke thoughtful discussions within the field and to help those outside the field gain a better understanding of priorities and concerns. The views expressed by the authors are not necessarily those of Child Care Aware® of Kansas or its sponsors.

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Practicing Mindfulness in Your Child Care Program



MINDFUL RESOURCES

Sesame Street has partnered with the mindfulness app Headspace to create Monster Meditations — short, animated videos that teach kids to calm down by focusing on their breathing. Also check out the free app Breathe, Think, Do with Sesame and Headspace for Kids.

Practicing mindfulness outside can be a rewarding experience for children and adults. In a blog published by the National Association Education for Young Children (NAEYC), Monica Wiedel-Lubinski, founding director of the nature preschool at Irvine Nature Center, explains [three nature-based mindfulness activities](#) for more calm and peaceful kids.

BY LEANN WOODS

Our brains govern our behavior, our interactions with others, and the ways we live and love in the world. That means the healthy brain development of Kansas children affects more than their own futures. It also impacts the health, wellness, and safety of our entire society.

Mindfulness is the practice of being fully aware, in the moment, with a nonjudgmental stance.

Just as we teach children how to care for and protect their physical bodies, we also need to help them look after their brains. Integrating mindfulness practice at home and in early childhood settings can provide our little ones with constructive tools during the crucial first years of brain development.

Mindfulness is the practice of being fully aware, in the moment, with a nonjudgmental stance. It allows you to choose your behavior and emphasizes responding over reacting.

According to the Child Care Education Institute, mindfulness can help children develop self-regulation skills and improve their attention spans. The practice

encourages well-being and resilience and promotes kindness and compassion for yourself and for others in the world. That, my friends, is a powerful statement! These skills are essential to building a healthy, well, and safe society.

Mindfulness practice has done wonders for my own physical and mental health. I wish I had been practicing since birth. It's my hope that early childhood educators take every opportunity to guide children toward a calm, responsive, compassionate, and attentive existence! Have fun and enjoy the peace mindfulness can bring! ●



LEANN WOODS

Child Care Health Consultant,
Child Care Aware® of Kansas

LeAnn is a mother of three and a grandmother of five, currently residing and working remotely in central Kansas. She graduated from Fort Hays State University with a bachelor's degree in social work. Before her role in early childhood education, she worked in mental health community-based services. LeAnn is a humanitarian by nature and a champion for children and families.



Consciencia: Una herramienta valiosa en la primera infancia

Mire Plaza Sésamo para ver consejos de concientización para niños. Le dará ideas para ayudar a calmar a los niños utilizando técnicas de respiración o encontrando herramientas para dar a los niños y así desarrollen mentes más felices y tranquilas. Lea más consejos de [Plaza Sésamo](#).

La práctica de la concientización en otros lugares puede ser una experiencia gratificante para niños y adultos. La Asociación Nacional para la Educación de Niños Pequeños (NAEYC, por sus siglas en inglés) publicó un blog de Monica Wiedel-Lubinski, directora fundadora del jardín de infancia natural del Centro de Naturaleza Irvine. El Centro de Naturaleza Irvine utiliza los beneficios del aprendizaje al aire libre para los niños al planificar sus programas diarios. Para conocer más sobre actividades conscientes basadas en la naturaleza, visite el siguiente blog en el sitio web de la NAEYC: [Concientización Basada en la Naturaleza para Niños Más Tranquilos y Pacíficos](#) (en inglés).

BY LEANN WOODS

Nuestro cerebro guía nuestro comportamiento, nuestras interacciones con los demás y la forma en que vivimos y amamos. Esto significa que el desarrollo cerebral saludable de un niño de Kansas influye más que su propio futuro. También impacta en la salud, el bienestar y la seguridad de toda nuestra sociedad.

La concientización es la práctica de estar plenamente consciente, en el momento, con una actitud imparcial.

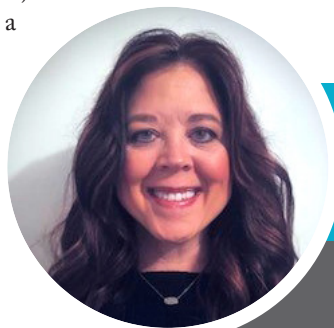
Así como le enseñamos a un niño a cuidar y proteger su cuerpo físico, también tenemos que ayudarlo a cuidar su cerebro. Integrar la práctica de la concientización en casa y en entornos de infancia temprana puede brindar herramientas constructivas a nuestros pequeños durante los primeros años cruciales del desarrollo cerebral.

La concientización es la práctica de estar plenamente consciente, en el momento, con una actitud imparcial. Le permite elegir su comportamiento y enfatiza la respuesta sobre la reacción.

De acuerdo con el Instituto de Educación sobre Cuidado Infantil, la concientización puede ayudar a los niños

a desarrollar habilidades de autocontrol y mejorar sus periodos de atención. La práctica estimula el bienestar y la resiliencia, y promueve la generosidad y compasión para sí mismo y hacia los demás. Amigos, ¡ese es un mensaje poderoso! Estas habilidades son esenciales para construir una sociedad sana, próspera y segura.

La práctica de la concientización ha hecho maravillas por mi propia salud física y mental. Desearía haberla estado practicando desde que nació. ¡Tengo la esperanza de que los educadores de infancia temprana aprovechen cada oportunidad para guiar a los niños hacia una existencia tranquila, receptiva, compasiva y atenta! ¡Diviértanse y disfruten lo que puede traerles la concientización de la paz! ●



LEANN WOODS

Child Care Health Consultant,
Child Care Aware® of Kansas

LeAnn es madre de tres hijos y abuela de cinco, actualmente reside y trabaja de forma remota en el centro de Kansas. Se graduó de la Universidad Estatal de For Hays con una licenciatura en Trabajo Social. Antes de su rol en Educación Infantil Temprana, trabajo en servicios comunitarios de salud mental. LeAnn es humanitaria por naturaleza y una defensora de los niños y las familias.

USING PROVEN EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTIONS TO COMBAT ACES

BY DAVID JORDAN

It's true what they say: children don't come with an instruction manual. These days, many families are struggling to feel successful raising their children while also coping with the many demands and challenges of modern life.

Toxic stress and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are major influences on a child's overall development — affecting school readiness, student success, physical and mental health, and other factors, including the ability to exercise self-control. ACEs include abuse, neglect, witnessing violence, mental health or substance use problems in the household, and instability in the household, such as separated parents, among other experiences.

ACEs are incredibly common. According to the CDC, approximately 61% of adults surveyed across 25 states reported that they had experienced at least one ACE, while 1 in 6 had experienced at least four. In Kansas, 39% of children have experienced an ACE, and 20% have experienced two or more ACEs.

The first step toward addressing toxic stress and supporting children's physical health and social-emotional development is to screen early and regularly. Performing a developmental screening when a child first enrolls in early care and education can identify potential risk factors or barriers to success. In many cases, when these concerns are identified and addressed early, the interventions are less intrusive, and children reach developmental milestones more quickly.

Programs & Interventions

Caring and responsive relationships are critical for every child's healthy development. A number of programs and interventions, including evidence-based home visiting models within the state, nurture caring relationships and positive childhood experiences.

For example, evidence-based early literacy programs promote stronger caregiver-child relationships. Programs like Reach Out and Read (ROR) engage parents, children, and health care providers. ROR's Perry



Klass notes that, by reading to young children, parents and educators are teaching responsiveness and cultivating routines and structures that will help children feel safe. These relationships and routines will stimulate healthy brain development and foster a love of reading, leading to improved language skills and health outcomes.

For kids with significant needs, caring and responsive relationships mitigate the effects of toxic stress. Research shows that infants and toddlers who have experienced adversity can benefit from early intervention that focuses on building supportive adult relationships.

One strategy to counteract early adversity is the evidence-based Attachment and Biobehavioral Catch-up (ABC) program. Over the course of the 10-week program, parents increase their knowledge and skills in order to create secure attachments and help their children have better outcomes. While babies cannot verbalize their needs, parents can learn to recognize and respond to their child's cues, which leads to strong and healthy relationships.

Through support for evidence-based early childhood development programs, we can ensure that the youngest Kansans enjoy nurturing family environments that prepare them for healthy lives and academic success. Investing in proven early childhood interventions as a state will result in a more capable workforce, reduced health care and mortality costs, and reduced demand for public services. Kansas' future depends on the children we invest in today. ●

CHILD CARE PROVIDERS & INFANT MENTAL HEALTH

No one can say that caring for infants is simple work. Understanding infants and toddlers and making sure they receive appropriate behavioral health support is difficult.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, as many as 1 in 10 preschoolers are affected by emotional, relationship, and behavioral problems. A young child's misbehavior may be due to mental health concerns. Ensuring that children receive age-appropriate support as early as possible — is important for their future health and school readiness.

How can child care providers promote good mental health?

- Connect parents to local resources, such as early childhood development centers that specialize in home visiting and building parents' caregiving confidence and skills.
- Provide age-appropriate screenings for children in your care. If you are not currently using screenings, you can attend ASQ trainings through the Kansas Technical Assistance System Network (TASN).
- Advocate for statewide policy changes that would benefit infant mental health, such as increased consultation services and the use of the DC: 0-5 diagnostic classification tool.



DAVID JORDAN

President, United Methodist Health Ministry Fund (Health Fund)

David leads the Health Fund's grantmaking, relationship building, policy development, and advocacy efforts. He also represents the Health Fund on local, state, and national boards, including serving as a member of the Governor's Commission on Racial Equity and Justice.



SUMMER

BIKE

SAFETY

BY CHERIE SAGE

What could be better than riding a bicycle on a beautiful, sunny day? Besides being a whole lot of fun, biking is great exercise and reduces stress. Plus, you can do it together as a family.

When we learn to ride a bike, falling is part of the process. Practice in a safe space free from traffic, like a bike path or an empty parking lot. It's also important to wear the right protective gear.

Bike crashes can cause serious harm, including brain injuries. For protection, riders of all ages should use a bike helmet. Helmets that fit properly can reduce the risk of head injuries by at least 45%. With so many shapes and designs available, it's easy to find a good-looking, comfortable, and adjustable helmet for everyone in the family.

When it comes to helmets, Safe Kids Kansas recommends an "every ride" rule for your family. Yep, it's that important. Helmets protect your brain and give you peace of mind.

Whether you ride a bicycle, a tricycle, or even a unicycle, keep your family safe by following just a few simple guidelines.

- Wear a helmet that fits properly in order to prevent traumatic head injuries.
- Ride on the sidewalk or designated bike path when you can. When that's not possible, ride in the same direction as traffic, as far to the right-hand side of the road as possible.
- Use hand signals and follow the rules of the road. Drivers should be able to predict your next move. Make sure you ride in a straight line, and don't swerve between vehicles.
- Wear bright colors and use lights, especially when riding in the evening and early in the morning. Reflectors on your clothes and bike make you more visible.
- Ride with your children. Stick together until you are confident your kids are ready to ride on their own. Be a good role model by riding safely and wearing your own helmet.

Enjoy the fresh air and pedal away! To learn more about bicycle safety, visit safekids.org/bike. ●

Helmets that fit properly can reduce the risk of head injuries by at least 45%.



CHERIE SAGE

State Director,
Safe Kids Kansas

Cherie is an alumna of Baker and Washburn Universities and a graduate of Leadership Greater Topeka. She has worked for Safe Kids Kansas, a nonprofit coalition dedicated to childhood injury prevention, for nearly 20 years and resides in Topeka.

HOW ONE COMMUNITY ORGANIZED FUN, HEALTHY ACTIVITIES FOR EVERYONE



BY KELLI FRAZELL AND DAMARIS KUNKLER

Joe Works, owner of B&W Trailer Hitches, his wife Janie, and their children have carved the path for growth in Humboldt for years.

“I think the desire to give back to the community came before B&W. I think that was just part of the way our family was built,” Joe says.

The Works family and other key community members created A Bolder Humboldt, a community development organization, to offer a more structured, purposeful way to grow Humboldt with new businesses and community events.

A Bolder Humboldt puts on a variety of events and programs, including a community garden for all ages, Movies on the Square, and Water Wars. These events encourage everyone to come outside and participate in something fun for their well-being.

Outdoor Films

Movies on the Square screens well-loved movies outdoors in the town square. Not only do people of all ages sit on the lawn to watch the show, but they participate in preshow activities like bicycling, playing yard games, socializing, and snacking on free popcorn. Weather permitting, the event is held monthly throughout the summer.

Summer Festival

Humboldt’s Water Wars festival celebrates the heat of summer in the wettest and wildest way imaginable, drawing overing 1,000 people to the town square for a super, soaking day. The annual event kicks off with an interactive parade where water-themed floats and fire trucks battle the crowd with water guns, water

cannons, and more — and the crowd serves it right back.

When the parade is over, the fun is just getting started. Mayhem ensues across the town-square-turned-water park, where activities include a 100-foot slip & slide, polar plunge dunk tanks, water balloon dodgeball competitions, water bottle rockets, inflatable water slides, bubble stations, a giant foam pit, water balloon slingshots, fire truck tours, water hydrant playtime, kiddie pools, a watermelon feed, and so much more. The event concludes with teams of firefighters and civilians wielding fire hoses in an epic battle of strength, stamina, and precision. Water Wars is truly an event of such over-the-top joy and childlike chaos, you just have to be there to believe it.

Community Gym

Another asset to our community is Humboldt Fitness. Originally built for B&W employees and their families, it quickly opened to the public for membership. This facility offers fitness equipment, free weights, and a half-basketball court.

Humboldt Fitness has also opened the court to home child care providers free of charge to give the children an opportunity for healthy movement throughout the day — providing a space and equipment they might not otherwise have access to. The kids dance to music and play basketball, dodgeball, and kickball.

A Bolder Humboldt and our community members are always striving to ensure that everyone has access to fun, healthy activities.

“Most of the good ideas you get come from listening to other folks talk,” says Joe. “Just get people together and get them expressing what we need, what we want,

what we could be doing, how we could be serving each other better.” ●



KELLI FRAZELL

Humboldt Fitness Director

Kelli has been the Director of Humboldt Fitness since its inception in 2019. Originally from Iola, Kelli graduated from the University of Tulsa with a bachelor’s degree in exercise and sports science and then completed her master’s in sports science at United States Sports Academy. After living in Tulsa for 13 years, she moved back home to Iola with her husband to raise their son in a more inviting community. Kelli stays busy running the fitness center, teaching group fitness classes, coaching her son’s sports teams, and spending time at the lake.



DAMARIS KUNKLER

Community Engagement Director, A Bolder Humboldt

Damaris is a change agent in southeast Kansas with 15 years of experience in nonprofits, grassroots mobilization, and event coordinating. Her main project in Humboldt is to repurpose a historical church into a concert venue.

EASY WAYS TO IMPROVE SAFETY IN CHILD CARE SETTINGS



BY KATHY ATTAR

Unfortunately, our everyday environments, including child care settings, may expose us to dangerous pesticides and lead, among other environmental hazards, that can impede a child's mental or physical well-being.

Creating safer and healthier child care settings — free of harmful environmental hazards — ensures that children can learn, play, and grow to their full potential in safe environments.

Eco-Healthy Child Care® (EHCC) partners with child care providers to reduce environmental hazards and keep kids healthy and happy. EHCC offers low-cost and realistic strategies to eliminate from child care settings the lead, pesticides, and harmful chemicals found in many household products.

The science linking exposure to environmental hazards to poor health is strong and continues to grow. Studies have found pesticides and heavy metals, including lead, in child care facilities — which puts both children and staff at risk. Eliminating these threats will improve the health and safety of children and their caretakers, who are often women of childbearing age.

Populations that use and work at child care facilities are more vulnerable to and more likely to be exposed to environmental hazards. Children are more susceptible than adults due to their developing bodies and behaviors like mouthing items, crawling, and laying on the ground.

Approximately 40% of the child care workforce are women of color. Many providers are also low-income. These factors put child care providers at a higher risk of

being exposed to environmental hazards, because Black, Latinx, Indigenous, and Brown communities, as well as low-income communities, are more likely to live near hazardous waste sites, polluting industry, and substandard housing.

Eco-Healthy Tips for a Healthier Child Care

You can implement these tips within and around your child care facility and have an immediate impact on the health of the children and staff. All the suggestions are applicable to both center-based providers and family child care providers.

Ensure healthy indoor air quality.

1. Increase natural ventilation by opening screened windows and doors when outdoor air quality allows.
2. Make sure the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system is properly maintained by scheduling yearly checkups with an HVAC professional.
3. Reduce chemical exposures by avoiding fragranced products, including air fresheners.

Reduce pesticides and pests.

1. Only allow children to eat food in the designated meal areas.
2. Limit the use of food items for crafts and always store food items in tightly sealed glass or metal containers.
3. Fix all leaks promptly and remove standing water.
4. Seal or caulk cracks and holes.

Exposure to harmful chemicals in plastics.

1. Look for products (toys, food containers, dinnerware) labeled PVC free, phthalate free, and BPA free. Avoid soft vinyl plastic, hard clear plastic, and styrofoam products.
2. Never heat or microwave food or drink in any plastic containers or plastic wrap, even if the container says “microwave safe.”
3. Use glass baby bottles with a silicone sleeve whenever possible. If glass is not an option, use milky, opaque plastic bottles and sippy cups labeled “BPA free.”

Visit the [EHCC website](#) to learn more low-cost, eco-healthy tips. All our resources are available in Spanish! ●



KATHY ATTAR, MPH

Program Manager,
Eco-Healthy Child Care®,
Children's Environmental
Health Network

Kathy has worked with the Children's Environmental Health Network since March 2018. She brings over 15 years of experience with issues related to environmental health. She has worked to increase the public's engagement in the policy process, as well as awareness of how environmental hazards impact communities' health. Kathy is firmly committed to protecting the health of communities most at risk from environmental hazards by advocating for policies that reduce exposure. She holds a master's degree in public health from UCLA.

CREATE HEALTHY FUTURES:

Become a CACFP Provider

BY JILL LADD

Did you know that children enrolled in child care receive an average 40% of their daily calories while in the child care setting?

Scientists have learned that a child's first five years set the stage for the rest of their lives. Child care providers have a powerful opportunity to instill healthy habits in young children that have a lasting impact on health.

The Child and Adult Care Food Program, also known as the CACFP or "food program," is a federal program that provides funding to supplement the cost of nutritious meals and snacks served to children while in child care. The goal of the CACFP is to improve and maintain the health of children through nutritious meals and snacks, promote good eating habits, and integrate nutrition education to help children develop lifelong healthy habits.

**Children served by the CACFP
eat healthier food than children who
bring food from home.**

Research shows that well-nourished children are healthier and more attentive and have better mental performance than children who are undernourished. Findings also indicate that children served by the CACFP eat healthier food than children who bring food from home. CACFP operators serve healthy meals and snacks that include more whole grains and greater varieties of vegetables and fruits and that contain less added sugar and saturated fat.

CACFP providers play a critical role in supporting the health, wellness, and development of children. Providers receive other benefits, too:

- Financial security, because providers are always better off financially when they join the food program
- Free training on child nutrition topics, which counts toward licensing training requirements
- Menu-planning tools to help improve the quality of meals and snacks
- Nutrition education resources

Is your program participating in the CACFP? If so, thank you for your commitment to nutrition security! If not, we'd love to hear from you and discuss your participation options!

To learn more, email cnw@ksde.org, visit kn-eat.org, or call 785-296-2276. ●



JILL LADD, MPH, RD, LD

Assistant Director,
Child Nutrition & Wellness,
Kansas State Department
of Education

While Jill's formal education was helpful in learning about nutrition, her experience as a mom of two daughters was just as, if not more, valuable! A registered dietitian, Jill received a bachelor's degree in dietetics from Kansas State University, completed a dietetic internship at Vanderbilt University Medical Center, and earned a master's in public health through Creighton University.

Gardening

with Children

Who knew that something as simple as gardening could have innumerable benefits on a child? Children that help garden are provided rich experiences that can lead the way in growing future generations of children that appreciate gardening.

BENEFITS

- ✦ Children that have the opportunity to plant seeds and harvest the fruits from their labor, gain priceless experience of knowing where and how food is grown.
- ✦ Children that know where their food comes from and are involved with its production are more likely to branch out and try new fruits and vegetables.
- ✦ Children that are exposed to a variety of fruits and vegetables learn about a variety of foods and the food groups.
- ✦ Children have the opportunity to be outside in the fresh air. This allows them time to run outside increasing their daily exercise.
- ✦ Children gain a sense of respect for life and others. This shows children the responsibility of caring for another.

Instilling a love for gardening in a child plants a seed in them that will benefit them today and in the future.



www.ks.childcareaware.org
855-750-3343



Nurturing Your Child's Brain During Everyday Routines



BY KANDI NOVAK

Science tells us that 90% of the brain has already developed before a child even enters kindergarten. Without a doubt, families are an essential part of their children's learning and development, starting at birth.

Children build important connections in their brains during everyday routines — getting dressed, washing their hands, playing, sleeping, and eating. These daily routines with your child can be valuable opportunities for them to learn a new skill or healthy habit.

In fact, your child is learning every time you talk with them, sing a song, read a book, or play simple games like peekaboo or Simon Says. There are many ways to support your child's learning and developing brain — without having to buy expensive toys or adjust your busy schedule.

You Are a Brain Builder!

Here's the great news: Brain-building moments can happen every day through simple, back-and-forth interactions between you and your child.

Vroom® helps families add learning into their everyday moments and routines with children by offering simple, daily brain-building tips. The Brain Building Basics™ are five ways to turn moments you already spend with your child into opportunities to connect with them and encourage learning.

- **Look** for what catches your child's attention.
- **Chat** back and forth with them about everyday things while going about your routine.
- **Follow** your child's lead by responding to their sounds.
- **Take turns** with your child when you talk and play.
- **Stretch** your child's mind by building on what your child says and asking questions.

Building Brains Anytime, Anywhere

Are you looking for ideas to make shared times with your child — like diaper changing, getting dressed, or running errands — more fun and engaging? Child Care Aware® of America, the nation's leading voice on child care, has partnered with Vroom to bring brain-building tips to families and caregivers through a collection of easy-to-use resources.

Vroom has used research on early brain development to create tips for families to support their children's brain development. Each science-based tip offers an idea for turning a common, everyday moment or routine with a child into something more.

Visit WeAreBrainBuilders.org for the resources listed below and more:

- Creating Calm Moments at Home
- At-Home Tips to Make the Most of Everyday Moments with Your Baby, Toddler, and Preschooler
- Creating Routines that Ease Home-to-School Transitions ●



FREE BRAIN-BUILDING TIPS AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

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KANDI NOVAK

Technical Assistance Specialist,
Child Care Aware® of America

Kandi supports the Vroom and Mind in the Making partnership initiatives at Child Care Aware of America. She helps child care resource and referral agencies integrate science-based resources that promote early brain development into their outreach to families, child care programs, and community partners.



HEALTHY-HABIT INFLUENCERS

HOW THE CHILD CARE SYSTEM CAN IMPROVE HEALTH TODAY AND TOMORROW

BY GEORGIA S. THOMPSON AND ROSHELLE PAYES

Early care and education (ECE) professionals are the original influencers. After parents and family, children look to the other significant adults in their lives for role models, guidance, and learning opportunities. ECE providers play a critical role in shaping a child's development, growth, and habits during one of the most dynamic periods of their lives.

In the United States, most children under five (59%) are in some type of nonparental care, with 62% in center-based care and 20% in a family child care home. As the country continues to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, state leaders are exploring how to rebuild the child care sector, which was significantly impacted by increased operating costs, a reduced workforce, and lower enrollment, as well as temporary and permanent closures. While immediate investments in the child care sector are essential for economic recovery, increasing access to quality child care with a focus on health and wellness can build the foundation for lifelong health and increase equity.

For more than a decade, Nemours Children's Health has been partnering with state agencies and early childhood organizations to embed healthy eating and physical activity standards into the systems that support ECE providers, such as licensing, professional development, and technical assistance networks. While our specialty is pediatric health care, we know that 80% of the impacts on a child's health take place outside of the health care setting. Since millions of young children eat, play, and learn in child care, we work to transform these settings and systems.

Strengthening ECE systems for health takes time, but we have identified a few key strategies to help state and local leaders get started.



1. Invest time and resources into meaningful and diverse partnerships.

Meaningful and intentional relationships are at the core of successful systems-change work. A variety of voices for change aligned around a common goal can have a powerful influence on ECE systems to promote and advance healthy habits in young children.

Nemours currently partners with 12 states to implement the [Healthy Kids, Healthy Future Technical Assistance Program \(HKHF TAP\)](#) to integrate healthy eating and physical activity into state ECE systems. To set a foundation for systems change, our state partners established new or leveraged existing stakeholder groups composed of cross-sector agencies and organizations.

Many HKHF TAP states have reported a positive impact made possible by the relationships established through the stakeholder groups. States can enhance their partnerships for systems change by:

- Convening a diverse stakeholder group with organizations that work toward similar goals to improve health, nutrition, and physical activity for young children. Stakeholders may need to establish a workgroup that focuses specifically on health and wellness in ECE — if one doesn't already exist — to lead this work at the state level. Participating agencies and organizations may include departments of health, child care resource and referral agencies, university extension programs, and other early childhood organizations.
- Ensuring that community voices and those with lived experience are included in the stakeholder group. Engagement of those with lived experience should inform potential practice and policy changes.
- Seeking nontraditional partners to engage in the stakeholder group. Organizations such as grocery store associations, faith-based leaders, and private-sector partners can offer resources and insights to support healthy practice and policy change.
- Engaging stakeholders in planning, decision-making, and brainstorming solutions to barriers. Often, stakeholder groups are stuck in information-sharing mode but real change comes through intentional collaboration, shared planning, and inputs. States can also establish

smaller workgroups to drive action steps informed by the larger group.

- Mapping partner efforts to understand how different organizations and agencies are already supporting healthy eating and physical activity in ECE. This prevents the duplication of efforts and reveals gaps in service delivery or program coverage.

When state systems establish intentional programs and standards around improved practices in ECE, it can promote providers' participation and impact children on a larger scale.

Equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) should be at the center of any systems-change efforts.

2. Use a common framework to identify opportunities for change.

The ECE system in any state is complex and has many potential levers for change, including licensing, professional development, and financing. Identifying where to influence and promote healthy habits can be a daunting task.

However, the use of a common framework has helped guide systems improvements in many states. Since 2018, our partners have used the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s [Spectrum of Opportunities Framework for State-Level Obesity Prevention Efforts Targeting the Early Care and Education Setting](#) to guide their work under HKHF TAP. The framework identifies nine areas in which to integrate healthy eating and physical activity practices, including:

- Licensing and administrative regulations
- Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)
- Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)
- ECE funding streams (subsidy, pre-K, Head Start)
- Pre-service and professional development systems



- Statewide technical assistance networks
- Statewide recognition and intervention programs
- Statewide access initiatives (Farm2ECE)
- Early learning standards

State leaders and program managers can use the framework to explore the most feasible opportunities within their own state context. Once partners build consensus around a few opportunities to pursue, they can develop a shared action plan with steps, resources, and measurements of change.

Efforts that have been shaped by the Spectrum of Opportunities include:

- Embedding nutrition and physical activity standards into quality rating and improvement systems, early learning standards, and licensing requirements.

RESOURCES TO SUPPORT STATES IN PROMOTING HEALTHY HABITS

[Nemours Children's Health: Healthy Kids, Health Future Technical Assistance Program](#)

[CDC: The Spectrum of Opportunities for State-Level Obesity Prevention Efforts ECE Settings](#)

- Providing professional development and technical assistance opportunities for ECE professionals to increase their knowledge of best practices and strategies. Include nutrition and physical activity training opportunities in state professional development systems.
- Analyzing CACFP participation and developing a statewide initiative to increase provider participation and increase access to CACFP, particularly in underserved communities.
- Encouraging the use of American Rescue Plan Act Child Care Stabilization grants to enhance health and wellness in ECE programs.
- Establishing a statewide recognition system to recognize providers who are making positive changes to integrate best practices in health and wellness. This program can also offer technical assistance and resources to help providers improve their child care environment.

3. Embed equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) should be at the center of any systems-change efforts. Poor health is too often determined by ZIP code and impacted by structural inequities. Many families, particularly in communities of color or in low-income neighborhoods, lack access to

healthy and affordable foods, safe outdoor spaces for physical activity, and quality ECE programs.

Intentionally thinking about the equity implications of practice and policy changes can identify and address gaps. State leaders and partners should consider:

- Providing equity, diversity, and inclusion training for stakeholder groups. EDI training and capacity building helps partners establish a shared understanding of EDI and the root causes of health inequities in communities.
- Completing an equity impact review or other assessment to understand how proposed changes in practice and policy could potentially cause unintended consequences. Use the information from the review to develop a strategy to intentionally address gaps in service and access.

Progress in Kansas

Across the country, ECE stakeholders are already transforming their states' systems to promote healthy practices. Child Care Aware® of Kansas — Nemours Children's HKHF TAP state partner — and local child care resource and referral agencies have engaged 168 ECE programs, serving 2,459 children in Go NAPSACC,

which guides ECE programs through simple steps to make healthy changes.

Child Care Aware of Kansas is advancing a plan to improve equity within its organization and state work, which includes the exploration of organizational equity-readiness assessments and the translation of health promotion materials to increase access to these resources statewide.

They have also partnered with the Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition to launch a breastfeeding toolkit to help providers become a designated breastfeeding-friendly ECE program.

By implementing these key strategies to engage the right partners, employ a robust framework, and center an overall focus on equity, Kansas and other states across the country have the power to transform health and wellness outcomes for young children. When state partners collaborate on intentional systems change in early care and education, they help ECE professionals to influence healthy habits for life. ●



GEORGIA S. THOMPSON
Senior State System Specialist,
Nemours Children's Health

At Nemours, Georgia supports initiatives working to improve health outcomes for young children. She has worked in early care and education for over 15 years, beginning as a preschool teacher and advancing to PK-12 education, professional development, quality improvement, and higher education.



ROSHELLE PAYES, MPH
Project Director of Early
Childhood and Health,
Nemours Children's Health
National Office of
Policy & Prevention

Roshelle leads the CDC-funded Healthy Kids, Healthy Future Technical Assistance Program, which works to embed healthy eating and physical activity best practices in early care and education systems and settings. She has more than 15 years of project management and child nutrition experience.

About Nemours Children's Health

Nemours Children's Health is one of the nation's largest multistate pediatric health systems, including two freestanding children's hospitals and a network of nearly 80 primary and specialty care practices across five states. Nemours seeks to transform the health of children by adopting a holistic health model that utilizes innovative, safe, and high-quality care, while also caring for the health of the whole child beyond medicine. Nemours also powers the world's most-visited website for information on the health of children and teens, [KidsHealth.org](https://www.kidshealth.org).

The Nemours Foundation, established through the legacy and philanthropy of Alfred I. duPont, provides pediatric clinical care, research, education, advocacy, and prevention programs to the children, families, and communities it serves.

Nemours currently partners with 12 states to implement the Healthy Kids, Healthy Future Technical Assistance Program (HKHF TAP) to integrate healthy eating and physical activity into state ECE systems: Alabama, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, South Carolina, Wisconsin, and Virginia.

Nemours is currently funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) under a five-year Cooperative Agreement (6NU380T000304) to support statewide early care and education (ECE) organizations to integrate best practices and standards for healthy eating, physical activity, breastfeeding support, and reducing screen time in ECE systems and settings. The views expressed in written materials or publications, or by speakers and moderators do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Department of Health and Human Services, nor does the mention of trade names, commercial practices, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

Worksite Wellness for Child Care Professionals

BY ANDREW HODGSON

More than half of medium and large companies operate wellness programs, which can boost morale and productivity, support general health, complement culture, and introduce a little fun to the workweek.

Small businesses and organizations may not have the same resources as large corporations, but they can promote worksite wellness, too. If you're interested in starting a wellness program at your child care facility, consider these tips and ideas.

Your work environment should support healthful choices with cues and nudges.

Choose wellness topics that are relevant to your staff.

Know your workforce and what matters to them. If your staff members are struggling with stress, use the wellness program to highlight mental health, rather than prioritizing physical health. Tailor the language and challenges to resonate with the demographics of your group. For example, some people like going to the gym, while others enjoy keeping up with the grandkids at the zoo.

Potential focus areas include:

- Physical activity
- More healthful eating
- Hydration
- Mental health
- Tobacco and substance use reduction
- Good sleep
- Creative expression



Implement wellness incentives that match your culture, values, and goals.

Your work environment should support healthful choices with cues and nudges, such as salads at potlucks or permission to take mindful breaks. Wellness challenges should match your organizational goals. For example, if the goal is to create a collaborative environment where people work together to solve problems, a competitive wellness challenge with winner-take-all prizes may not be a good fit.

Offer desirable prizes to boost results.

Keep the focus on personal wellness, and avoid too many incentives. Think creatively to keep costs down. For example, you might collaborate with a local business to offer a discount or a prize package rather than simply buying gift cards. Try to gauge staff needs and desires without asking directly. Keep an “ear to the ground” or use anonymous surveys to learn more about what kinds of incentives might delight your staff. Then spend some time writing out the rules clearly so there's no confusion about what it takes to win.

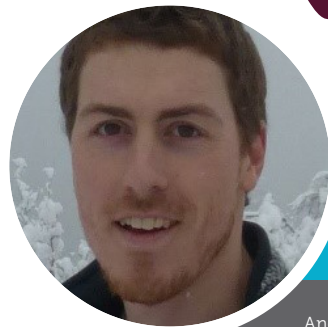
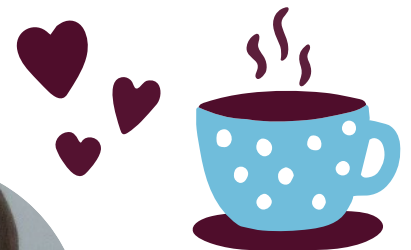
Establish a wellness committee.

Committee members should represent the diversity of the staff and include varying perspectives on wellness. Welcome new members, and be open to suggestions from the committee. Some wellness programs lose momentum when a champion leaves or when the leader's preferences take center stage.



Apply data and feedback to re-evaluate, fine-tune, and refresh the wellness program regularly.

Too many changes can confuse staff or deter participation, but the program must not become stagnant. The right answer today may no longer fit tomorrow. ●



ANDREW HODGSON

Nutrition Coordinator,
Child Start, Inc.

Andrew is a health coach with a B.S. in human nutrition, currently studying economics. He has six years of experience in school and community nutrition and worksite wellness at Child Start, Inc. Andrew is a home gardener and avid reader and enjoys writing and mountain adventures. Child Start, Inc. was named a Top 3 Finalist for the “Working Well” award in Wichita in 2019. A monthly wellness calendar tracks basic, healthful behaviors with a personal challenge option that allows staff to trade two sick hours for Wellness hours. The volunteer Wellness Committee includes 12 members from different departments who vote on new ideas in quarterly meetings.



5 TOP POLICIES

TO PROMOTE CHILDREN'S HEALTH IN KANSAS

BY HEATHER BRAUM

Policy choices in Kansas can change the health outcomes of Kansas kids for the better — or for the worse. Our government should prioritize health policy that gives every Kansas kid the opportunity to grow up healthy and thrive, regardless of their family's race, income, or ZIP code. Here are five ways lawmakers can prioritize Kansas kids' health.

Passing KanCare (Medicaid) expansion

Currently, kids in Kansas already qualify for KanCare at much higher income levels than parents or caregivers do. If Kansas expanded KanCare, more parents and caregivers would become eligible for health coverage at a more reasonable income level. Expansion outreach would naturally encourage parents to enroll their already eligible kids in KanCare. Workers whose jobs do not include insurance coverage (including many early childhood educators) often fall into the coverage gap and would benefit from KanCare expansion. When more people are covered by insurance, we all win — including young children.

Holding the line on childhood immunization requirements

Over the past few years, several attempts have been made to change childhood immunization laws in Kansas, including

who has the authority to determine the list of required vaccines and the types of exemptions parents can apply for. Numerous vaccine-preventable diseases are of particular risk to young children; loosening immunization requirements would harm Kansas kids. In the coming years, Kansas policymakers should protect our current processes and let experts — not politicians — handle the complexities of public health policy.

Easing the administrative burden to access important services

Families with young children may qualify for several state services during the first few years of a child's life. However, legislators have created a long and confusing process that Kansans must successfully navigate before accessing those benefits. Rather than requiring Kansas families to jump through cumbersome, invasive, and time-consuming hoops, our elected officials should be looking to make it easier for families facing financial hardship.

Strengthening infrastructure for maternal & child health

Kansas must invest more time, money, and staff positions in programs that provide services to young children and their families, such as local health departments and home visiting professionals. These are critical programs

for maternal and child health. Increased capacity in these programs will benefit the health of all young children and their families.

Addressing racial inequities

Kansas must investigate racial inequity issues and their correlation to the health outcomes of young children. We must thoroughly examine what causes these outcomes and the options lawmakers have available to address these causes.

Implementing these five policies is just the beginning of the journey to improve the health of young Kansans. Other issues, such as addressing environmental impacts, paid family leave, and adequate access to medical providers, should also be considered.

While Kansans will have to wait for lawmakers to begin the 2023 Legislative Session in January to pass any new legislation, advocates can start preparing now to promote policies that will help Kansas kids. ●



HEATHER BRAUM

Health Policy Advisor,
Kansas Action for Children

Heather joined Kansas Action for Children in July 2020; she also serves on the board of the Immunize Kansas Coalition as policy chair. She has previously worked in numerous library technology and continuing education roles. A fifth-generation Kansan, Heather holds degrees in political science and library science.

HOW TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST CHILD HUNGER IN KANSAS

BY MARTHA TERHAAR

Even here in the breadbasket of the world, one in six Kansas kids experience food insecurity, meaning nearly 125,000 children in Kansas do not know when their next meal will be.

With grocery costs continuing to rise and families forced to make tough decisions between purchasing food, affording child care, going to doctors' appointments, paying rent and utilities, and more, child nutrition programs offer critical support. Providers serve millions of meals to Kansas kids each year through programs like the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), universal school lunch and breakfast, and summer meals.

During the pandemic, the USDA implemented waivers so that school lunches and breakfasts could be served free of charge to every child regardless of their income. Kansas' amazing school nutrition staff, child care providers, volunteers, and advocates are the reason universal free meals have been such a smashing success.


Despite the lifeline they've provided, pandemic child nutrition waivers are set to expire June 30, 2022. Parents, teachers, and school nutrition directors across the state and country have amplified a crystal-clear message — universal free meals must continue.

All Kansas children deserve to thrive and live happy, healthy lives. Access to affordable food is a basic necessity and a human right. Child nutrition programs boost Kansas kids' well-being, behavior, and mental health while simultaneously providing caregivers and staff the capacity to invest in our youth without worrying whether their basic needs are being met.

The triumph of universal meals during the pandemic has shown that our country has the tools and resources to ensure that every child and every family has consistent and sustainable access to food. To be an anti-hunger champion and help achieve food security for all children, consider taking one of the following actions:

- Collaborate with your school's food service staff and/or other child nutrition program sponsors to discuss what gaps they see in children's nutrition and how you can support them.
- Organize local parent and PTO groups to talk with your district's school board about ways to increase access to food for every child in the county.
- Call or email your federal legislators and urge them to extend the COVID-19 child nutrition waivers to improve access to school lunches and breakfasts.

Kansans know how to get things done, so let's keep taking action against child hunger together. ●



**Nearly
125,000 children
in Kansas do not know
when their next
meal will be.**



MARTHA TERHAAR

Thriving Advocate,
Kansas Appleseed Center
for Law and Justice

Based in Holcomb, Martha is an anti-hunger advocate with Kansas Appleseed, working to address hunger in southwest Kansas, particularly Stevens, Seward, Finney, Ford, and Grant counties. With strengths in active listening and community engagement, Martha loves collaborating to increase food security in Kansas.

Kansas Appleseed is a statewide nonprofit, nonpartisan policy advocacy organization dedicated to the belief that Kansans, working together, can build a more thriving, inclusive, and just state. To learn more, visit [KansasAppleseed.org](https://www.KansasAppleseed.org).



HOW TO MODEL HEALTHY BEHAVIORS FOR YOUR CHILDREN

BY REBECCA QUIGLEY

When you first had children, what did you think parenting would be like? If you're anything like me, you planned to make homemade organic baby food, avoid electronics at all costs, and spend all of your free time outside enjoying nature. A couple of kids and a busy life full of extracurricular activities later, I wasn't able to stick to the first two ideas, but I can say that my kids spend quite a bit of time outside. One out of three isn't all that bad.

Healthy choices don't often happen by accident.

The idea of a healthy lifestyle and healthy habits can sometimes be easier than making them a reality, especially when everyone is so busy and technology is readily available to entertain children. Making healthy choices means planning

ahead and being intentional. Healthy choices don't often happen by accident.

You can't just tell your children to eat their fruits and vegetables or go outside and play. They need to see you eating your fruits and vegetables, unplugging from electronics, and going outside to play with them. Children learn by watching those around them, so you need to show them what healthy choices look like.

The next time you go to the grocery store with your child, don't hand over your phone to keep them quiet, tempting as it may be. Try encouraging your child to help you shop for healthy foods. Instead of buying chips, ask them to help you find a healthy alternative that you can both live with. The next time you're thirsty, grab a bottle of water instead of soda. Make a goal to spend 20-30 minutes outside in the afternoon or evening, taking a walk or just playing with your kids.

You can model behaviors and habits that will lay the foundation for your children to

lead a healthy lifestyle. Little changes like swapping out chips for carrots at snack time or parking farther from the entrance of a store can make a big difference down the road.

Remember that it's much easier to parent and teach hypothetical children than real ones, so allow yourself some grace. Try to be consistent, and healthy choices will become second nature before you know it. ●



REBECCA QUIGLEY

Early Care & Education Specialist, Child Care Aware® of Kansas

Rebecca has a B.S. in child development from Texas Woman's University. She began her current role in March 2020 after working for Child Care Aware of Eastern Kansas for two-and-a-half years. Rebecca also has 12 years of experience working in early childhood classrooms.

How We Help Families, Child Care Providers, and Communities

BY CHILD CARE AWARE® OF KANSAS STAFF



Families

The Child Care Aware of Kansas Referral and Resource Network has referred hundreds of thousands of families to quality providers in the state. We are in regular contact with 98% of Kansas' licensed providers, and we collect detailed information about their rates, available openings, schedules, age groups, and services.

Starting your search for child care is easier than you think! If you're not ready to call, start by downloading our [Child Care Search Brochure](#) to learn more about the process. Once you're ready, call 1-877-678-2548 to speak with a Resource Center Counselor about your particular needs and preferences.

You can also search for a list of providers in your area through our online database at ks.childcareaware.org.

Child Care Providers

Even if you hardly ever hear it, you're one of the most important people in our state. As a child care provider, you ensure that parents and guardians can work to support their families and contribute to our economy. More importantly, your tireless work serves as the bedrock for the next generation of Kansans. Child Care Aware of Kansas is here to help support Kansas providers in offering high-quality child care. We offer an array of programs to do just that.

The **Child Care Health Consultant Network** is a provider's partner in child care — offering free, customizable, on-demand consultation services, including start-up support for new or temporarily licensed child care programs. Consultants are regionally based and work directly with child care providers to implement

high-quality health, safety, and wellness best practices. Additional services include consultations with a registered nurse and an emergency preparedness and health equity consultant.

The **Child Care Quality Initiative** is a yearlong opportunity for family child care programs to enhance quality through a variety of coaching and professional development events focused on nurturing positive child interactions and engaging families. The Early Care & Education Specialists provide services to child care program participants in their local communities.

The **Child Care Aware of Kansas child care grants program** is dedicated to disbursing COVID-relief funding directly to child care programs, as a result of the critical need caused by the pandemic. Funding can help programs with normal operational expenses in order to keep their doors open, as well as opportunities to increase safety and wellness. Current rounds of sustainability grants are open for application from March 1 through November 30, 2022. Programs could be eligible for up to 14 months of payments.

**We are in regular contact
with 98% of Kansas'
licensed providers.**

The **Healthy Kids, Healthy Futures** program offers a variety of services to child care programs, such as breastfeeding support, assistance using the Go NAPSACC (Nutrition & Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care) tool, partnering with the Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) to increase participation, and enhancing work on equity and diversity.

Links to Quality works with child care programs to build upon their strengths — “linking” together competencies such as program business practices, family partnerships, learning and development, and health and safety. To support this journey, Links to Quality provides



Community Consultants who coach, consult, and connect programs with resources through local Learning Communities. In addition, the free **Program Administration Support** service is available to all licensed child care providers in the state of Kansas and focuses on promoting solid business practices in child care environments.

Communities

Child Care Aware of Kansas can help you understand what's needed to address systemic challenges in child care. We'll make it easy for you to learn about potential solutions and to start taking small, actionable steps.

The Community Outreach & Engagement team connects everyone with a stake in child care — parents, child care providers, businesses, local and state leaders, and community members — to the information and ideas they need to take action. Together, we aim to create an early care and education system that ensures:

- All kids have enriching early learning experiences within supportive caregiving environments.
- Parents have access to quality, affordable child care that meets their family's unique needs.
- Child care providers stay on a sustainable career path that allows them to support their own families and provide the best care for the kids they serve.
- Employers attract and retain a quality workforce.
- Communities — both large and small — provide a high quality of life that keeps current residents from leaving and draws in new families. ●



Mental Health Tips for Child Care Professionals

BY ERICA MCGINLEY

What's the last thing you did simply because you enjoyed it? If it's hard to answer this question, you're not alone. Child care providers are in the business of caretaking. You are the healer of scraped knees, the listening ear for energetic and imaginative stories, the muse for blooming artists, and the trainer of gentle touches and kind words. Your position comes with great responsibility for little ones. But have you forgotten about the great responsibility you have for yourself?

Mental health has emerged as a top health care priority over the past two years. In general, we tend to place the needs of others ahead of our own. Anything less than that is considered selfish, especially by professional

Self-care does not have to be elaborate or expensive.



caregivers. But that attitude seems to be changing. A poll by the American Psychiatric Association showed that one-quarter of Americans made a New Year's resolution to improve their mental health in 2022.

If you struggle to prioritize your own health or happiness, you cannot afford to ignore yourself any longer. Our physical health is linked to our thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, depression increases the risk for many types of chronic illness, such as diabetes, heart disease, and stroke.

The good news is that self-care does not have to be elaborate or expensive. Setting an intentional goal to take a 15-minute walk outside is self-care. Consider treating yourself to a new healthy recipe or heading to bed 30 minutes earlier one night this week.

Incorporate self-care into your work routine by building mindfulness into your child care program. Breathing exercises are a great way to teach children to calm their bodies; you can set an example by joining them and getting a few moments of relaxation yourself.

Think of this new part of your daily routine as "mental hygiene." You would not skip brushing your teeth for months at a time, would you? Give yourself permission to get a book from the library, exercise with a good friend, or call a family member to catch up. Do something for yourself each day, no matter how small, and watch it blossom. ●



MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

If you or someone you know is in a mental health crisis, please seek medical attention. Below are some national and state mental health resources:

- Crisis Services Resource Guide (kdheks.gov)
- Resources for Immediate Response | Mental Health America (mhanational.org)
- Directory of Mental Health Resources in Kansas (ks.gov)



**ERICA MCGINLEY,
MPH, BSN, RN**

Public Health Nurse,
Child and Youth Services Nurse,
Fort Riley

Erica earned a B.S. in nursing from Missouri Western State University and a master's in public health from Kansas State University. She has been engaged in Child and Youth Services programs at Fort Riley for five years and has worked with children of all ages and with a variety of special needs. Erica is also an American Heart Association HeartSaver Instructor. She has taught child care providers at Fort Riley about medication administration, communicable diseases, bloodborne pathogens, and diabetes.



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Funding provided by
All In For Kansas Kids


Family Connect Modules

These five one-hour interactive modules connect your family to resources and services that promote healthy development of your children ages 0-5! Scan the QR code to learn more or visit us on plus.greenbush.org!

This project was made possible by grant number 90TP0078-01-00. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official view of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families.



Families: Get a Stipend for Online Learning

As a proud recipient of an All In For Kansas Kids Quality Subgrant through the Kansas Children’s Cabinet and Trust Fund, the Southeast Kansas Education Service Center - Greenbush has developed and disseminated interactive modules for families, caregivers, and providers. The modules were created in alignment with the Kansas Family Engagement and Partnership Standards for Early Childhood and have been shared with early childhood programs and organizations throughout the state.

Five interactive modules have been developed to connect families to services:

- Families as 1) Foundation 2) Communicators
- 3) Advocates 4) Partners 5) Community Members

Each module consists of three or four sections with resources and information, activities, and short quizzes. Modules take approximately one hour to complete. At the conclusion of each module, participants will submit an evaluation and a W-9 so they may receive a \$25 stipend per module completed.

To access the modules, please use the QR code in the ad above. For assistance, contact Barbara Gannaway at barbara.gannaway@greenbush.org.

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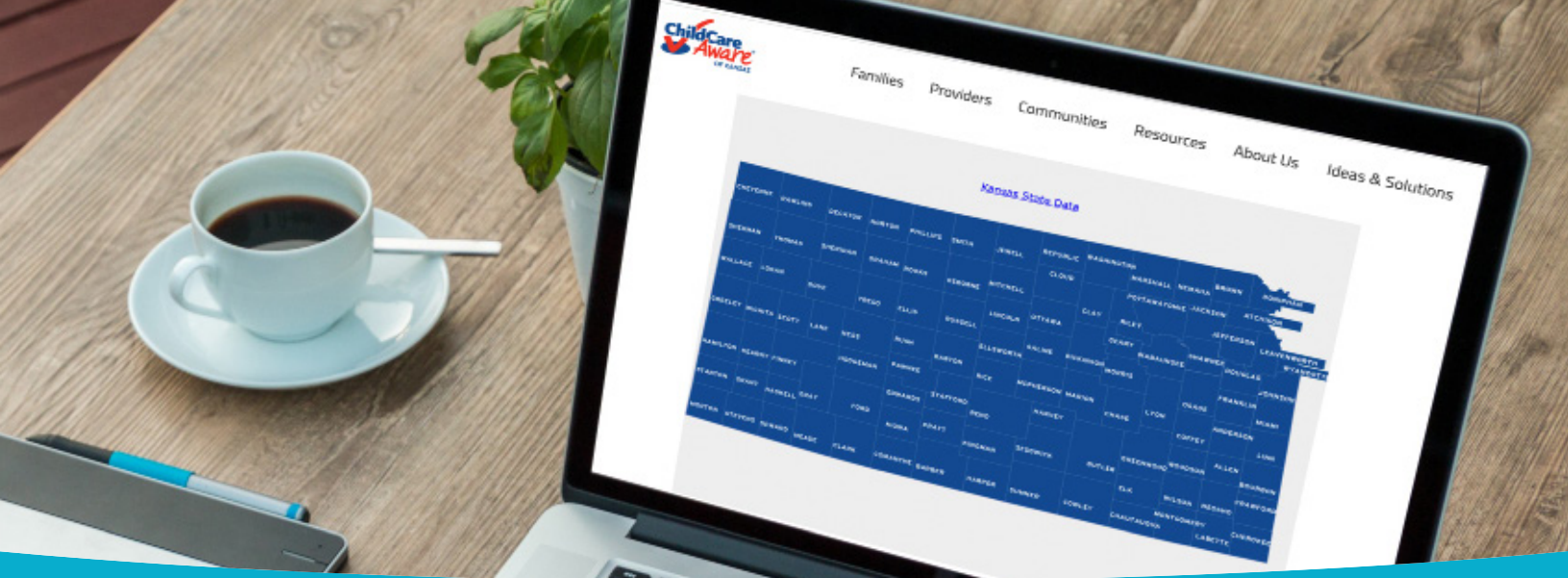
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NEW POINT-IN-TIME DATA LAUNCHED

Child Care Aware of Kansas' Point-in-Time data tool has been available for a little more than a year and used by over 6,000 community members across Kansas. After a year of use and feedback received from communities, we are relaunching with NEW data points to assist communities.

In just a click, communities can view the extent desired child care capacity meets the potential demand for care. The relaunched tool also displays the potential number of child care slots needed for each county. Additionally, communities can review enrollment and capacity numbers broken out by full-time and part-time child care programs. The tool provides the option to retrieve statewide data for comparison with county-level information.

If your community is interested in more information about how we can support you in making meaning with the data we provide, please email info@ks.childcareaware.org or visit our website at

ks.childcareaware.org



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