

# A Daily Health Check



## WHAT IS IT?

A Daily Health Check is a quick way for parents and child care providers to check for a change in a child's health and well-being. Does the child act differently from usual? Does the child look different from usual? Doing a Daily Health Check can help prevent illness and disease from entering a child care facility.

## WHY DO IT?

A Daily Health Check on all children entering child care helps the caregivers establish what is normal for each child and what is abnormal for each child. It also provides a wonderful opportunity to transition the children into child care. The sooner sick children are identified, the sooner their health needs can be addressed. Early identification of illness in children can also reduce the spread of illness or disease.

## WHO DOES IT?

Caregivers do the Daily Health Check, using a checklist. Child Care Health Consultants can provide training on the Daily Health Check for the caregivers. The caregiver should perform the Daily Health Check in a relaxed and comfortable manner that respects the family's culture as well as the child's body and feelings.

## WHEN TO DO IT?

Caregivers should perform a Daily Health Check when a child first arrives at the child care facility and when the parent is still present. It can be repeated periodically throughout the day as necessary. (National Health and Safety Performance Standard 3.001\*)

## HOW IS IT DONE?

Start by getting on the child's eye level. Then

**LOOK** - for signs and symptoms of illness



- Changes in mood or behavior
- Change in activity or energy level, listlessness or difficulty moving
- Runny nose or eyes, drainage from open sores
- Skin changes such as a rash, swelling, bumps or redness
- Scratching, tugging at a part of the body or holding a body part

**LISTEN** - for complaints and unusual sounds from the child that might indicate they are not feeling well. Listen to what a parent shares about the child or other illness in the family.



- Groans
- Continual crying or unusual fussiness
- Wheezing, sneezing, labored breathing
- Hoarseness
- Coughing

**FEEL** - for a change in the skin that might indicate a fever or dehydration.



- Moistness
- Unusual warmth
- Skin does not spring back when slightly pinched

**SMELL** - for unusual odors that might indicate an underlying disease



- Fruity sweet breath
- Foul breath
- Unusual urine or bowel movement odors

## A DAILY HEALTH CHECK

CHECKLIST - A HEAD TO TOE CHECK	No	Yes, COMMENTS
Shows a change in behavior or mood: less active, less energy, more sleepy, easily irritated		
Looks different from normal		
Complains of not feeling well		
Has itchy skin or scalp		
Is pulling at ear		
Has drainage from the eyes		
Has a runny nose		
Is coughing severely		
Has skin rash or discoloration		
Has drainage from an open sore		
Has unusually warm skin		
Eating or drinking more or less than usual		
Is vomiting		
Has abnormal stools: white bowel movement, gray bowel movement, diarrhea or unusual odor		
Is not urinating		
Is off balance or walks unevenly		

If the answer is "yes" to any of these questions, the child may be ill.

**At the beginning of the day when the parent is still at the facility,** caregivers and parents can decide together on a plan of action to support the child's health. If the child needs to be excluded from care the parent can leave with the child and tend to the child's health needs.

**If the child becomes ill during the day,** the caregiver should notify the child's parents and decide together on how to care for the child. Children who are ill or contagious must be excluded from child care based on the NC Child Care Rule .0804. Parents may need to consult the child's health care provider before a child can return to child care.

**Any time child abuse or neglect is suspected,** a report must be filed with DSS.

\*American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care. Caring For Our Children National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Out-of-home Child Care Programs Second Edition. 2002.

### References:

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