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Serving Children and Families

LILLIAN B. KOLLER, J.D.
STATE DIRECTOR

NIKKI HALEY
GOVERNOR

October 1, 2012

Dear ABC Level B Child Care Provider:

As you know, this past spring we introduced Level B providers to new ABC Level B Center Standards for nutrition and physical activity to be implemented October 1, 2012. We hope you were able to join us in Florence, Greenville, Columbia, or Charleston for the overview of these new ABC Grow Healthy standards which have been incorporated into our ABC Program Standards. You can find the Standards with revisions shaded on www.abcqualitycare.org. If you are unable to access the internet, please contact us at 1-800-763-2223 and we will mail you a copy. Attached is a brief summary of the revisions and reminders.

We have partnered with the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SC DHEC) and the Arnold School of Public Health at the University of South Carolina to develop the statewide standards and policy because of state and national concerns about childhood obesity. ABC Grow Healthy defines policies and activities to promote children's health and well-being through healthy foods served and more physical activity for children.

Our state pilot of 19 ABC Level B child care centers (including focus groups) helped us better define our standards. We reviewed our findings from that pilot using the criteria of cost, feasibility, and impact on children. We were impressed by the pilot sites in their enthusiasm to try out the recommended standards. They were thoughtful in providing us with their comments on what was workable and what was not.

Based on the feedback with the pilot centers, we are confident that you can make these changes in your centers. As leaders in the early childhood community you will help South Carolina's children "grow healthy".

Attached is a brief summary of the changes and current resources to help you. We will continue to post resources, sample policies, and information that can help you implement the new standards. We are committed to helping you succeed with these new best practices. If you have questions, call us at 1-800-763-2223. Thank you for being a part of South Carolina's Child Care Quality Improvement System and providing leadership for the health and well-being of the children you serve.

Sincerely,

Leigh W. Bolick
Director
Child Care Services

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DIVISION OF PROGRAM QUALITY ASSURANCE
ABC CHILD CARE
P.O. BOX 5616, GREENVILLE, S.C. 29606-5616
www.abcqualitycare.org
1-800-763-ABCD

Summary of 2012 ABC Level B Program Standards Revisions

All changes have been highlighted in the ABC Child Care Program Standards document at www.abcqualitycare.org . The following summarizes key changes:

Mandatory Standards:

Standard II. Administration: revised discipline policy; new nutrition policy and physical activity policy.

Standard III. Staff Qualifications and Development: Revision to the education plan requirements for the school-age person in charge and teachers/caregivers; new training requirement for nutrition and physical activity

Standard IV. Health, Safety, and Well-Being: Reduction of environment conditions to be assessed; new menu planning and meal service requirements.

Observation Standards 0-2, 3-5, 6-12:

Standard VII. Staff-Child Interaction C.: Revised indicator on positive guidance for all ages

Standard VIII. A. Activities: Changes and/or clarifications on indicators related to ABC Grow Healthy for all ages; new indicator on handwashing at all ages previously included in mandatory standards.

Standard IX. A. Indoor Environment: Changes and/or clarifications on indicators related to ABC Grow Healthy for all ages. Restructured scoring for 6-12 age group.

Standard IX. B. Outdoor Environment: Changes and/or clarifications on indicators related to ABC Grow Healthy for all ages. Restructured scoring for all age groups.

Reminders

1. If you have questions, please call or email your ABC Program Monitor directly or call us at 1-800-763-2223. We are committed to helping you succeed with these new best practices.
2. For those who participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), you should find no conflict between our revised Level B standards and the CACFP requirements. We have worked closely with CACFP to assure consistency in requirements.
3. We have conducted a wide variety of training sessions at local and state conferences on the new nutrition and physical activity standards. We hope that you have been able to attend some of those sessions. We will continue to arrange/provide training sessions that relate to nutrition and physical activity to help you meet the continuing training requirements in this area. We welcome your suggestions and feedback on training needs that you might have.
4. Our technical assistance partners, including the SC Program for Infant/Toddler Care (PITC) Specialist Network and the Child Care Resource and Referral Network, have been invaluable in providing on-site technical assistance to those who have already begun implementation of the new standards. Remember, they are available to you at no charge as an ABC provider.
5. Remember to visit our website, www.abcqualitycare.org, for new resources and developments to help you meet these new standards.