



DIRECTOR'S CORNER

>>> MARCH 2018

An effective family engagement system builds connections between home and school and is an essential component to meeting the needs of each child in your program.

TIP#1 MEDICAL EXCLUSION POLICY



As a child care provider, you will need a clearly written policy for excluding sick children from your child care facility. Give each parent and guardian a copy of your Exclusion for Illness Policy when each child is enrolled. Explain the policy and answer any questions that the parents or guardians have at that time. This will prevent problems later when a child is sick. Children can become sick quickly. You should be aware of signs and symptoms of illness and know what to do if a child becomes ill. You should have a procedure for recording in writing and reporting any unusual illness or injury. Make sure these policies are in place and up to date and communicated with families.

TIP#2 OUTDOOR/PLAYGROUND INSPECTIONS



As we get closer to spring, it is a good idea to begin thinking about inspecting your playground equipment to ensure the safety of the children who will play on it. Look for visual signs of wear and tear, structural damage, vandalism or broken glass/other debris that could be dangerous. To prevent children from tripping while at play, correct or remove any hazards, such as exposed concrete footings, tree stumps and rocks. Warm weather brings snowmelt and a lot of rain. Repair any areas that have inadequate drainage or low spots that would allow standing water. Additionally, adequate playground supervision is another item to reflect on. Prepare your playground for the year by completing proper inspections and maintenance, as well as training your staff.

TIP#3 LOCKDOWN DRILLS & SCHOOL SAFETY



Schools should work with local law enforcement agencies and school safety experts to have safety procedures evaluated to make sure they have all the elements needed to protect kids in the event of a dangerous emergency. If they don't have a plan, they should work to have one put in place immediately. Some ideas include: Establish one main entrance, train staff to greet and challenge strangers, and take [other measures](#) to restrict and control access to the building. Make sure that first responders have floor plans to the school in case of emergency. Urge elected officials to increase funding for school security, emergency planning, and school violence prevention measures.

TIP#4 INTERNATIONAL DAY OF HAPPINESS: MARCH 20



Setting aside a day to appreciate things that we take for granted – good health, family, and friends. [International Happiness Day](#) is a great way to foster kindness at your center. Host a “Hug Drive” where ones can come give and receive hugs. Consider guided meditation/ yoga for both children and staff. Mindfulness meditation will not only calm/reduce stress it has positive affects on our health and overall well-being. Meditation is directly linked to happiness through an increase in Social Skills/Self-esteem, Creativity, Attention/Concentration and Self-Awareness. See [other ideas](#) for Happiness Day.

TIP#5 WORLD WATER DAY: MARCH 22, 2018



World Water Day is about focusing attention on the importance of water. Plan center/classroom activities to teach kids about water pollution and conservation. Share resources with families to [conserve water](#) at home and to even implement water saving policies in your center. Share these [resources](#) with teachers and educators to make a difference. When it comes to conserving water, small adjustments can have a big impact.

TIP#6 MARCH IS NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH



Besides teaching kids just about healthy food, get families involved. Send a note home asking families to send in their favorite healthy family recipe. Put them together to make a Class Family Recipe Book. Or invite families to a Healthy Food Party, by bringing in a healthy food that they like to eat at home such as a fruit, vegetable, bread (check allergy policies) and to share them with the class. Even better if the healthy snack is native to their families culture.