



A Chance To Grow

A CHANCE TO GROW HOME BASED SERVICES

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Flu Prevention

Options available to prevent flu

With the onset of the fall season, the health community will soon begin promoting the 2008-2009 Influenza Vaccination Plan.

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends this year that all children and adolescents age 6 months through 18 years be vaccinated. The vaccine virus contains 3 new virus strains that were not in the 2007-2008 vaccine.

Parents may be concerned about the mercury content in the flu vaccine. The majority of influenza vaccines distributed in the United States do contain thimerosal (ethyl mercury) as a preservative. However, some contain no thimerosal or only trace amounts and are considered by the Food and Drug Administration to be preservative free. SafeMinds, a private non-profit organization that works to raise the awareness of the risks of vaccine suggests:

- ❖ Look at the evidence and decide if you consider the flu virus a threat to your child
- ❖ Request mercury-free flu shots. Do not

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From the Director's Desk

Celebrations are good things! Just this past August, A Chance to Grow honored staff who had completed milestones of services.

Home Based Services staff included: **Carol Olson -10 years; Rachel Nelson, Ashley Schuberg, Sackie Kennedy, Mary Gavin, Alicia Erpelding, Mary Kennedy, Mildred Hookom – all 5 years of service.**

We are very proud of everyone and the wonderful care they have given over the years. Please join me in a big **Thank You!**

November is National Home Care Month. We continue to be grateful for staff providing personal care services to clients, when family and friends cannot provide all the care that is needed. **Great job!**

We have expanded the newsletter to include information for PCAs; this means that everyone is receiving the same information at the same time. Look for updates in the **Frequently Asked Questions** section of the newsletter. This issue we address overnights, vacations, overtime, renewal of services.

Lastly, I am happy to announce that we have added another discipline to our services. **Crystal Vogt, LSW**, has joined our staff as a case manager. Her past experience has revolved around working with children, at-risk youth and their families in a variety of settings. Crystal says, "One of my passions is to see children and youth reach their full potential which is what drew me to A Chance To Grow's Home Based Services. I am excited to be a part of the team here and I look forward to meeting many of the families and PCAs that are a part of this organization." I know that she brings a new dimension to our commitment for children and their families. Welcome, Crystal!

Nadine Reiser nadine.reiser@actg.org, 612-706-5545

combine the flu vaccine with other vaccines

- ❖ Reconsider your choice, if you are unable to obtain mercury-free vaccine

The Minnesota Health Department reports that these vaccines do not contain thimerosal:

- ❖ Sanofi Pasteur for children age 6 months to 3 years. They also have limited amounts of thimerosal-free flu vaccine for older ages.
- ❖ Novartis produces a limited amount of thimerosal-free flu shots for persons age 4 and older.
- ❖ The new nasal-spray flu vaccine, made from a weakened live virus, does not contain thimerosal. Healthy persons age 2 through 49 years can receive it.

What if we can't find a thimerosal-free flu shot for our child? Check with your physician. There are 12.5 micrograms of ethyl mercury in a dose of thimerosal-containing flu vaccine. Breast milk contains between 1.4 to 1.7 micrograms of methyl mercury per liter.

What other options do we have? Because flu is caused by the influenza virus which is secreted by coughing, sneezing or nasal secretions, we can prevent the spread of flu by:

- ❖ Covering coughs and sneezes ALWAYS
- ❖ Washing hands often, for 20 seconds
- ❖ Staying home, if you are sick, or away from folks who are sick. Flu symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, headache, chills, muscle aches, fatigue.

Some facts: A person has more germs on their body than there are people in the United States. There are 229,000 germs per square inch on frequently used faucet handles. The worst hiding places for germs is the work desk, the kitchen sink, garbage can, and the refrigerator door, in that order.

Which soap is best? Plain liquid soap (non antibacterial) is recommended for non-healthcare settings. There is no evidence that antibacterial soaps are more effective. Liquid soap is recommended because it is easy to use and will not spread germs from one person to another. For more information: www.mdhflu.com and www.safeminds.org.



Audio-Visual Entrainment

Audio-Visual Entrainment (AVE) uses the brain's natural tendency to follow light and sound to reinforce healthy brain wave patterns. AVE uses a small device that connects a music source, 'light' glasses, headphones and pre-programmed tones that are 'listened to' for approximately 20 minutes a day, two to four days a week.

Through the light and sound experience, AVE exposes the brain to useful patterns for enhancement and allows the brain to be more accessible to the person. The person is able to adapt to a relaxed and focused state of being. AVE may assist in helping symptoms associated with an unregulated brain, such as behavior challenges, inattention, emotional disorders, hyperactivity, impulsivity, anxiety, sleep problems, migraines, depression, and aggressiveness.

AVE has been recognized in many school districts as a useful tool for academic achievement, especially for children with learning challenges.

AVE is simple to use, affordable relative to other types of interventions, and is drug-free. While there are no guarantees, some regular uses have reported reducing or eliminating behavior-controlled medications.

"My son is more able to come home and share what has happened in school. Before he was unable to remember or unwilling to remember. He is more outgoing, focused, positive, and proactive," said a mother of a child using AVE.

Neurotechnology professionals develop individualized approaches for children and adults for in-clinic or at-home uses.

For further information, call Becky Aish at 612-706-5551.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Question: Tell me again, who should be using the Blue Book at the client's house?

Answer: The Blue Book is for the PCA. It contains the care plan that they follow, emergency information envelopes they take when they are in the community with the client, and other directives and information for providing service. It should be available to the PCAs anytime they are in the home.

Question: What is A Chance to Grow's Policy about Overnight Hours?

Answer: All Overnight Hours must be part of the Service Plan, received from the Public Health Nurse. These hours are then included in the client's Care Plan. Overnight hours are those hours which been authorized in order for the child to receive medical care or health-related care during regular sleep hours, such as turning to prevent bed sores. Overnight hours are not intended to replace the parent's responsibility to meet the basic care, nurturing and supervision needs of minor children.

If Overnight Hours have been authorized, this means that the PCA is not sleeping during this period of time. They must be awake to tend to the needs of the child.

We understand that the policy may have been unclear in the past and interpreted in different ways. Home Based Services will follow the above policy, effective immediately.

Question: My husband and I are going on vacation. Can the PCA be paid for all the hours we are gone?

Answer: No. PCAs cannot assume parental responsibilities. See the question above for Overnight Hours.

Question: I am a PCA and I see on the Opens List that a family is looking for a new PCA. Can I call there and start working there as soon as I want?

Answer: Yes and No. Yes, you can call there to inquire. No, you cannot start work there until you have been trained to the specific needs of the child and the care plan. As in any job, you need to have agency approval to start with a new family.

Question: My child will be attending an all-night awake activity at church. The PCA will be going with him. Is that okay?

Answer: Yes, if this is a community activity where the PCA is needed for health-related care and to redirect behavior. It is not considered an overnight. The family should notify ACTG about the event for billing purposes.

Question: The Public Health Nurse called to make an appointment to renew services. I was not home to take the call. Is that a problem?

Answer: Yes, it can be a problem. The Public Health Nurse only has to make 3 attempts to do the assessment. If you are unable to connect, they will discontinue services for your child on the 3rd failed attempt.

Question: Does A Chance to Grow provide private pay home care?

Answer: Yes, our home health agency will do private pay home health care under our Class A Home Health Care Agency License. The aide work will be provided by a Certified Nursing Assistant and supervised by a Registered Nurse. Call Linda, 612-706-5535, for information and current rates.

Question: Can I work overtime?

Answer: Overtime must be approved by ACTG before it is worked. Overtime is more than 48 hours in a work week. PCAs who report more than 48 hours of work for the week without receiving permission will receive a corrective action notice.



Calendar of Events

"HEALTHY WORLD – HEALTHY CHILD", A CHANCE TO GROW HEALTH FAIR

PLACE A CHANCE TO GROW, 1800 2ND STREET NE

DATE MARCH 25, 2009

HEALTH FAIR FOR FAMILIES AND STAFF, EXPLORING WAYS THE ENVIRONMENT EFFECTS THE HEALTH OF OUR CHILDREN.

NUTRITION TIDBIT: CLUB HOUSE RULES

Nearly three out of four Americans shop at one of the hundreds of warehouse club stores nationwide. Here are some home food safety tips.

Safe Can Command – How often do you clean the outside of cans and bottles before opening them? About 66% of people do not. Rinsing off soda cans, milk bottles, jars, canned foods and even can openers can help eliminate harmful bacteria, which can be ingested.

A-Peeling Exam – Nearly 40% of Americans stock up on fresh produce when shopping at warehouse club stores. While most people remember to wash ready-to-eat fruits, such as apples, grapes and pears before eating them, more than half of us skip washing peel-and-eat fruits such as oranges, bananas, and lemons – a home food safety “don’t”. Fruit peels might carry bacteria that can spread during eating, cutting, or peeling, so be sure to always rinse them first.

Eggs-piration Elimination – What should you do if you can’t eat all the eggs before the expiration date? You can freeze them, for as long as a year in the freezer. Just beat whole eggs until just blended, pour into freezer containers, seal tightly and freeze. Label the quantity. Then thaw overnight in the refrigerator for breakfast use.

A CHANCE TO GROW
Home Based Services
1800 2nd Street NE
Minneapolis, MN 55418

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Community Resources:

A Chance to Grow: www.actg.org, 612-789-1236

ARC of Minnesota: thearcofminnesota.org; 1-800-582-5256. Many local chapters

Autism Society of Minnesota: www.ausm.org, 651-642-1230.

CHADD – Children and Adults with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder: Twin Cities Chapter- 952-922-5761, Bloomington, Minnesota

Epilepsy Foundation of Minnesota: www.efmn.org, 1-800-779-0777.

Minnesota Parent Leadership Network: www.mpIn.org A parent driven and family affirming children mental health system of care

MOFAS (Minnesota Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome) www.mofas.org, 1-866-906-6327.

Spinal Bifida of Minnesota www.sbamn.com 651-222-6395

United Cerebral Palsy of Minnesota: ucpmn@cpinternet.com, 1-877-528-5678.

