



Dear Provider:

As mandated reporters, caregivers play a vital role in protecting children. During the month of April, the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) highlights prevention activities to help keep children safe. Many activities involve the national symbol for child abuse prevention--the pinwheel--and the symbolic color, blue. OCFS recognizes the role child care professionals play in helping build strong families. Some examples of this:

- Developing relationships with children’s families
- Providing resources and referral to parents
- Modeling warm and responsive interactions with children
- Offering guidance to families regarding child development



OCFS has posted a [calendar of protective factors](#) you can post in your program and share with parents. The calendar encourages parents to participate in activities that build strong families.

### New Legislation Impacts Child Care Programs



On April 1, 2019, with the passage of the New York State budget, legislation was enacted in Article VII, Part H, that grants OCFS the authority to implement federal requirements mandated in the Child Care Development Block Grant of 2014. This will affect background clearances, training, and inspections. Implementation of these new requirements will begin in

September of 2019. Please check our website regularly for updates.

### OUCH! That’s Too Hot!

Have you checked the temperature of your water lately? According to *Caring for Our Children*, a reference guide that sets national health and safety standards for early care and education programs, it is common for tap water to scald young children. Hot water temperatures at sinks used for handwashing, or where hot water will be in direct contact with children, should be set at a temperature of at least 60 degrees Fahrenheit and not exceed 120 degrees Fahrenheit. Water heated to temperatures above 120 degrees takes less than 30 seconds to burn the skin. If you are unable to set the water temperature, be sure to test the water on your wrist before allowing it to come into contact with a child’s delicate skin. Remember: children cannot be left without competent supervision at any time.



## Do You Know About Radon?



You cannot see, taste or smell this radioactive gas. Radon exposure causes 22,000 deaths per year. It is one of the top causes of lung cancer, second only to smoking. Children are especially vulnerable to the effects of radon due to smaller lungs and higher breathing rates.

Additional information about radon and test kits available to child care providers at a reduced cost from the NYS Department of Health can be found [on the OCFS website](#) (ocfs.ny.gov). If radon is present, its level can be reduced. To locate radon reduction programs in your area, [visit the NYS Department of Health website](#) (health.ny.gov).

Towns in [Zone 1](#) have been updated to include additional locations. **Effective August 1, 2019**, all programs in the new [Zone 1 locations](#) must complete radon testing at renewal. Documentation of radon testing must be on file and submitted to OCFS.

## Why Attend a Webcast?

Webcasts provide an opportunity to engage with experts in the field during a live broadcast, while networking with child care colleagues in a supportive learning environment. OCFS sponsors them and provides them at no cost to you. Below is a list of the webcasts planned for 2019.



### **Thursday, April 11, 2019**

Supporting Children and Families Through Good Eating Practices: good nutrition and positive relationships with food do more than just fuel children's bodies; they promote healthy cognitive, social and emotional development as well.

### **Tuesday, July 16, 2019**

Safety Throughout the Year: experts will share seasonal tips to keep children in your program safe year-round.

### **Wednesday, November 6, 2019**

Town Hall Meeting - Child Abuse and Maltreatment: engage with experts in the field and analyze dramatized case studies.

Register now for webcast trainings at a location near you: <https://www.ecetp.pdp.albany.edu/>

## Countdown to US Census Day



April 1, 2020 is "Census Day" across the country. The U.S. Census Bureau is preparing to send you an invitation to participate. You will have three options to respond: online, by mail or by phone. Please respond promptly and accurately when you receive your census count request in 2020.

The federal census helps determine funding for your community. The data shapes services such as education, child care subsidy, health care, housing, food and income security, and rural access to broadband. Those at risk of being missed by the census include people of color, low-income households, immigrants, and young children. Being undercounted deprives already vulnerable communities of fair representation and vital community resources. Find out more on [the federal government's census website](#) (census.gov/programs-surveys).



## Facility Application and Management System (FAMS) Update

Last December, OCFS launched FAMS in an effort to streamline and enhance the licensing process. FAMS is currently only available to day care center (DCC) and school age child care (SACC) programs. We have received overwhelmingly positive feedback on FAMS. Please note: as of January 1, 2019, all OCFS-approved Plans of Study must be uploaded into FAMS for tracking and management purposes. They are no longer to be entered in ASPIRE.

The next enhancement slated for FAMS will allow DCC/SACC programs to manage and maintain their electronic case file. We anticipate this to be rolled out in the coming months. Home-based programs will be scheduled for development in FAMS after that time.

All DCC/SACC programs that have provided their email addresses to OCFS, have been emailed a link to create a FAMS account through <https://my.ny.gov/>. You can also link your FAMS account to any current <https://my.ny.gov/> account that you use for your OCFS business. If you missed the email invitation, don't worry, an email is sent out every 15 days to those not already using the FAMS system. If you need help using FAMS, please reach out to your regulator or email [ocfs.grp.sm.FAMShelp@ocfs.ny.gov](mailto:ocfs.grp.sm.FAMShelp@ocfs.ny.gov).

## Two Products Raise Safety Concerns

A popular product has been recalled after reports of multiple deaths. The **Fisher-Price Rock 'n Play** sleepers because of several fatalities from suffocation. More information can be found [on the Consumer Product Safety Commission's website](http://www.cpsc.gov/Recalls) (cpsc.gov/Recalls).

The commission also received approximately 200 reports of wheel failures on the **Britax Jogging Stroller** (known as "BoBs") that resulted in injuries to parents and children. The product remains on the market. The company offered [replacement parts](#) and produced [a safety video](#) to assist consumers.

## Prevent the Flu



For many, spring is a time of growth and renewal, and a time to happily watch "flu season" fade away. However, "flu season" is different each year, and it is not possible to know when it will begin or end. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) suggests preparing for influenza in late summer and has some tips you can incorporate into your program to help reduce the spread of the flu and other illnesses:

- Seasonal flu vaccines are the best available protection against influenza. The best way to protect young children from getting infected is for all caregivers to be vaccinated. It is strongly recommended that caregivers receive flu vaccines annually. Information about flu vaccine can be found [on the AAP's website](http://www.aap.org) (aap.org).
- Remind everyone about proper infection control behaviors (e.g., wear a surgical mask if you are unvaccinated; and cough/sneeze into your elbow). Wash hands frequently and sanitize surfaces and toys to help decrease the spread of germs. Staff who are exhibiting flu symptoms should remain at home.
- Follow your health care plan and exclusion criteria. Remind parents that ill children need to remain at home. Help families understand the important role they play in reducing the spread of the flu.

## Provider Appreciation Day

National Child Care Provider Appreciation Day is celebrated annually on the Friday before Mother's Day. This is a day to recognize and thank child care providers across the nation for the extraordinary work they do every day. Below is our message of gratitude, from the Division of Child Care Services to New York State child care providers, that will be posted on our website in May.

Dear Child Care Provider,



Today we celebrate all the incredible work that you do for young children. You are the best advocate for children in your care, and an invaluable resource for families. On this Friday, May 10, 2019, the New York State Office of Children and Family Services would like to express our appreciation to all child care providers, teachers, school-age program staff, and everyone involved in the quality education and loving care of New York State's children. The Office of Children and Family

Services extends this appreciation message to all family members, friends and neighbors who help families take care of their most prized possessions. Your dedication to child care gives New York State children a chance for a brighter and happier future. We thank you for your commitment to children and youth across the state.

Sincerely,

Sheila J. Poole  
Acting Commissioner

Janice M. Molnar  
Deputy Commissioner



**Become an organ, eye and tissue donor today!**

For more information or to enroll, go to the NYS Donate Life Registry at [www.donatelife.ny.gov](http://www.donatelife.ny.gov).



Si necesita leer esta carta en español, visite el portal de la División de Servicios de Cuidado Infantil: . Si no tiene acceso a <https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/childcare/letters.asp> la Red o Internet, contacte al encargado de licencias o registros para recibir ayuda.