

Partner with a CCHC to Improve Health and Safety

Tips for Early Care and Education Programs

A child care health consultant (CCHC) can help your program provide safer, healthier, and more developmentally appropriate environments for children. Use these tips to make the most of your partnership with a CCHC.

■ Find a CCHC that fits your needs.

A [CCHC](#) is a health professional with education and experience in child and community health who also has specific training in early care and education and child care health consultation. Review the [CCHC Competencies](#) to learn more about how a CCHC can support your program. Interview CCHCs to find someone who has skills that are a good match for your program. If you are not sure how to find a CCHC, contact your state Child Care Resource and Referral agency or local health department.

■ Plan your partnership.

Identify who will be the main point of contact with your CCHC. Create a written agreement with your CCHC that clearly describes their role and responsibilities. Establishing mutual expectations early is critical for building an effective partnership. The agreement may also include how often your CCHC will visit your program and how to communicate between visits. An ongoing relationship with a CCHC helps build trust and collaboration and helps your staff feel more comfortable working with the consultant.

■ Use your CCHC's expertise for improving your program.

Your CCHC's early childhood health expertise can help you improve policies and procedures to comply with best practice standards and applicable requirements or regulations. They can [assess the health and safety of your program](#), identify areas for improvement, and develop a follow-up plan.

■ Enlist your CCHC to provide professional development for your staff.

Your CCHC can conduct staff training on health and safety topics. They can also provide coaching to support appropriate implementation of health procedures so your staff feel confident providing care for all children, including those with special health needs.

■ Use your CCHC to expand your program's health promotion and prevention activities.

Your CCHC can develop activities to promote healthy food choices and physical activity, healthy environments, and practices to support oral health, mental health, and safe sleep. They can also help you implement practices to reduce the spread of infectious diseases and prevent injuries.

■ Connect your CCHC with your families.

Your CCHC can facilitate health education for families and help you navigate conversations with families and health care providers about children's health concerns. They can also connect families with community resources and health care services.

Learn more about the expertise and role of CCHCs by visiting <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/health-services-management/article/child-care-health-consultants>



NATIONAL CENTER ON
Early Childhood Health and Wellness