

PA NAP SACC Innovative Practices in Nutrition and Physical Activity Policy

Child Care Center

Class 1 Child Care, Inc.

Contact Person

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Do you participate in Keystone Stars?

Yes, Level 3



What is your early childhood education center like?

Class 1 Child Care, Inc. is a small center in Jeffersonville, PA. We are close to town, but near a golf course which gives us a rural feel. We have been serving the community for over 22 years. We are licensed for 53 children but usually house around 37 to 40. We promote inclusive practices and welcome therapists into our center for our children's well-being. Even though our indoor space is limited, we have a very large playground that enhances our learning experiences. Class 1 Child Care, Inc. was selected for the 2012, 2013, and 2014 Best of Norristown Award in the child care category through service to our customers and our community. This has been a great year for Class 1 children and families. Together we have given over fifty pounds of food, blankets, toys and treats to the SPCA; are planning our annual Family Appreciation Wellness Fair with games, snacks and free lead poison screening, and we are an official site for the Toys for Tots Collections. It is terrific to see how our families teach their children about compassion and caring for others.

Where do you make an Innovative Policy Change?

Indoor and Outdoor Play Environments

What was the objective of your Innovative Policy?

Our goal was to improve indoor and outdoor play by: adding new and fun equipment; changing wording in our Family Handbook and our Employee Policy and Procedure Manual to express that preschoolers need at least one hour of physical activity each day, both structured and unstructured; accessing professional development for all staff members; creating a new resource book "Eat-Play-Grow" Curriculum to engage children and parents; and implementing intentional planning on a monthly theme to include physical activity.

Describe your Innovative Policy?

All staff completed a questionnaire from Better Kid Care called *How Active are Your Children?* They also completed professional development from Better Kid Care on Childhood Obesity Prevention, *LMCC Increase Physical Activity*. They were then required to bring their completed questionnaire, along with their training certificate to our first official meeting on Wellness. At this meeting, we handed out: copies with an explanation our new employee policy and procedure manual; copies of *"Family Checklist for Physical Activity in Early Child Care and Education"*; copies of *"The Benefit of Music"*; and copies of Developmental Charts for all ages. We introduced our new resource book, *Eat-Play-Grow*, which included curriculum ideas, *Get Moving Daily* calendar for the upcoming year. It also included information on nutrition and physical activity for infants, young toddlers, older toddlers, and preschoolers. We also introduced all of our new toys and equipment with the intention of implementing 60 to 120 minutes of physical activity into our lesson plans by using suggested activities, new resource book, and new equipment. As an added bonus, staff were encouraged to take another training from BKC on avoiding behavior problems and teaching self-control. This training tied in with our new physical activities for teaching children to control voices, bodies, and actions at

different levels through physical activity games. The cost to Class 1 was training time, meeting time, copying and printing materials.

What action steps did you take to reach your goal?

First I chose a team of four people (Director and lead teachers). We completed the Self-Assessment to see where we needed improvement. We then decided on which improvements to make. Once things were ordered, paperwork completed, and copies made, we had our meeting to incorporate the new activities into our program.

What materials did you purchase to support your action steps?

- Sensory walk
- Roller boards
- “Ready, Set, Move” game
- Movement scarves
- Parachute
- Stand tall stilts.

How did you measure success?

After allowing ample time to implement our new goals, we met again to reflect on our accomplishments. We asked for any suggestions to improve policy and shared new lesson plans. Our physical activity has improved greatly over the past few months. This program also recommends many valuable resources.

What advice would you offer to other child care programs that want to try your Innovative Policy?

It may seem like a lot of work to obtain a small grant, but it was well worth it. It covered most of our costs, promoted team work amongst our staff, increased our equipment and physical activity time, and made our program more efficient and goal orientated towards children physical well-being. Thanks to the PA NAP SACC, we definitely have improved in a variety of areas. Since re-doing the Self-Assessment, I see where we can still improve our program. The CQI really works. I will continue to use this long after the end of our grant. I hope others will be open to this - it really promotes improvement in both nutrition and physical activity!

