

Module 8: Healthy Practices (Part II)

Handout 4

Daily Health Check

You should continually look for changes in behavior or appearance that may indicate a change in a child's health. The sooner a sick child is identified, the sooner his or her health needs can be addressed. Early identification can also reduce the spread of illness or disease.

When to Check Children

Perform a health check:

- When a child first arrives at a child care setting
- Periodically throughout the day

How to Check Children

In order to check a child, ask yourself the following questions:

- Does the child behave or look different than normal?
- Does the child complain of not feeling well?
- Does the child have skin rashes, discoloration of the skin, itchy skin, or scalp?
- Does the child appear to have a fever? If so, is his/her temperature above 38 degrees C (100 degrees F) measured under the armpit (axillary)?
- Does the child refuse to eat or drink as much as usual (especially when offered favorite foods)?
- Does the child vomit?
- Does the child have an abnormal stool (white bowel movement, gray bowel movement, blood in the stool, or diarrhea)?
- Does the child seem less active than usual?
- Does the child seem irritable or easily angered (even after comforting)?
- Does the child have severe coughing?
- Does the child fail to urinate?
- Does the child appear to have less energy, or is the child sleepier, than usual?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, the child may be ill. Caregivers should notify the child's parents. Parents may need to consult the child's health provider about what to do.