



# EMPOWER

## Newsletter

MAY 2016

### Greetings

Hello Empower Friends!



*In the merry, merry month of May...* Do any of you know that song? How about dancing around the maypole? May Day baskets? I'm showing my age, I know, but May makes me smile! Growing up in the Midwest, I think of walking home from school and picking lilacs to put in my hair, making endless bracelets out of clover, putting dandelions under our chin to see if it turned yellow, lying in the grass and looking at clouds, catching fireflies, picking tomatoes from the garden for supper, and shucking a 'baker's dozen' ears of corn that we got for \$1. In fact, I could have lived on tomatoes, corn, and watermelon all summer long! I'd spend two weeks at my grandma's house every summer and loved pulling weeds out of the sidewalk cracks, collecting rainwater in her buckets, swinging on the porch swing and so much walking! My grandma never drove. It seemed like we walked everywhere, or my aunt *Bonnie* picked us up and took us out to her farm where we played in the barn, looked for arrowheads, went snipe hunting and drank water from the pump! I hope kids today get to explore outside!

## May is Skin Cancer Awareness Month

While we always promote active outdoor play, summer in Arizona is a time to be very aware so you can help protect children from the harsh sun. Arizona has the second highest rate of skin cancer, just behind Australia!

Fortunately, [Empower Standard #2](#) 'sun safety' helps us to be sun-safe all year long. Our [Sunburn Card](#) is especially helpful with the graphics and [UV Index](#) guide. Today there are phone apps where you can check the UV Index by the hour! The UV Index forecasts the strength of the sun's

harmful rays. The higher the number, the greater the chance of sun damage. Arizona's [SunWise](#) program has a [tip sheet](#) with guidance on how to care for children and adults in the sun.

Child Care Licensing's [Rules for Centers](#) and [Rules for Child Care Group Homes](#) also include sun safety. Training on sun safety, policies and procedures is required for all staff. Also, instructions for sunscreen application and monitoring children for overheating and overexposure to the sun are stated for both

home and center-based settings.

Child care facilities use various methods for the application of sunscreen on young children. It's always best to discuss this with your assigned surveyor and document the procedure for future reference and for enrolling new families. Protection from the sun is important business and one more way that we keep children safe and healthy with lasting effects!

Be [SunWise!](#)

## Limiting Screen Time



Earlier this month, I sent out a quick email proclaiming May 2-8 as '[Screen-Free Week](#).' For most of us, that doesn't even seem realistic! When we think about how much time all of us spend using screens, however, it does make us give it some serious thought. Now that screens are all around us, more and more research is coming out about the effects it can have, especially on young children.

What do you think of when you hear about 'screen time' for young children? TV? DVDs? Tablets?

Cell phones? Assistive technology? Computers? Games?

[Empower Standard #1](#), in part, limits screen time in child care to no more than three hours per week. Exceptions include assistive technology and using a computer for homework for older children. In child care, it's relatively easy to limit or even prohibit screen time with so many other things to do! What about your own family? Can you turn it off for a week? A day? An hour?

## Screen Time Resources

As early care and education staff, we have screen time limits prescribed by several regulatory or quality agencies, including child care licensing rules, Empower, accreditation, Quality First, Head Start, a school district, company or employer.

The bigger challenge may be in our personal lives. *Do we actually do what we say?* Change is not easy, as most of us know. As the temperature climbs, do we tend to stay inside and watch movies and play video games?

Here are some good resources on screen time that you can think about, both for your program, your family, and yourself! Here is a self-assessment for ECE programs that you can use: [NAP SACC on Screen Time](#). It also comes in [Spanish](#)!

[Screen Free Moments: Promoting Healthy Habits](#)

[The Lifesaving Power of Books](#)

[Common Sense Media](#)

[NAEYC's Uncharted Territory: 10 Technology Tips for Preschool Parents](#)

[How True Are Our Assumptions about Screen Time?](#)

[Tips for Video Chatting with Young Children- Staying Connected While Far Apart](#)

[Selecting Apps to Support Children's Learning](#)

[Resources for Early Learning: Integrating Media and Technology into Curriculum](#)

[Community Playthings: Infants, Toddlers and Screen Media](#)

So...what do YOU think about screen time?

## Tidbits and Other Helpful Things to Know

### **WIC (Women, Infants & Children) Updates:**

Chances are, if you serve pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum women, infants and children under the age of five who are at nutritional risk and who are at or below 185 percent of the federal poverty guidelines, they are (or should be) enrolled and participating in WIC services. There are [new income eligibility guidelines as of April 4, 2016](#). If you'd like to help the families in your program, find out where your [local WIC clinic](#) is and refer them to this helpful support service!

### **USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) Updates:**

[Screen Time Resource Page](#)

[Recipes for Child Care Providers](#)

[Wellness Resources for Child Care Providers](#)

### **NEW!! CACFP Meal Patterns—effective October 1, 2017**

[New Infant Meal Pattern](#)

[New Child and Adult Meal Pattern](#)

[Meal Pattern Revision: Best Practices](#)

*Why not start these changes now? You'll be all set when October 1, 2017 rolls around!*

## Empower Training: How Do I Get My Hours??

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

- How do I get my required three hours of Empower training? ([Standard #8](#))
- With no Empower Conference this year, how do I get my training?
- When do you do Empower training?

### **Frequently Given Answers**

You can meet [Standard #8](#) in a variety of ways. There are no right or wrong ways to receive training on Empower topics. Listed below are some of the most common ways that staff receive training on Empower topics. On the last page of this newsletter, there are always website links to professional development opportunities.

- ECE conferences and workshops
- Local health department classes
- CDA (Child Development Associate credential) training
- ECE courses toward a certificate or degree (community college or university)
- Online videos that offer a certificate
- Staff in-service training (Head Start, LEA, corporate, association, etc.)
- Community (CCR&R) trainings

*Still have questions? Just ask!*

## Empower News

Nemours' National Early Child Care Collaboratives Program is what we called **Empower PLUS+**. This was a two-year project that involved almost 150 centers in Maricopa and Pima counties. While Arizona was one of the first six states funded, we are now trying to sustain those best practices through our 'regular' Empower Program. [Here is a video](#) from Nemours. Visit the [ECELC website](#) for fantastic information and more support.

We are currently implementing the [Empower Child Care Group Home \(CCGH\) Training Project](#) with funding from the Arizona Attorney General's Office. We have almost completed training or technical assistance, plus provision of a [generous resource kit](#), to every licensed child care group home in Maricopa, Pinal, Gila and Yuma counties! Beginning this summer through April 30, 2017, the rest of the state's CCGHs will be included.

The [Empower Guidebook, Packet and Website](#) is getting a facelift!

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## Professional Development Opportunities

These websites always have training and professional development offerings. Look for topics that are related to any of the Empower Standards.

[Arizona Center for Afterschool Excellence \(AzCASE\)](#)

CCR&R [ECE Bulletin](#) and [ECE Catalog](#)

[ADE Early Childhood Unit](#)

Penn State Extension's [Better Kid Care \(online learning\)](#)

[Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry](#)

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