Better Kid Care Program Improves Child Care Safety

Dickinson County Extension continues to put the mission of Iowa State University Extension and Outreach into practice by assisting local child care providers in obtaining research-based professional development training and continuing education units.

Local child care providers from both centers and in home sites are better equipped for the early childhood back to school season because of the “Better Kid Care” training series offered in Spirit Lake.

“We created a diverse 3-part continuing education series for the fall including topics of ‘Science for Young Thinkers,’ ‘Keeping Children Healthy & Safe,’ and ‘I Want, I Want” remarked County Extension Director, Karen Byers. “Our goal was to extend the research-based professional development opportunities from the University to the local level with information and topics relevant to child care provider needs.”

Participants in the two-hour Better Kid Care class on Keeping Children Healthy & Safe shared that they learned…

“… proper handwashing techniques & experiments that I can lead with children… the difference between sanitizing and disinfecting toys, play areas, food prep & serving areas, and diapering stations … the importance of reading product labels for standing times, cautions and proper use… the need for thicker mats to improve safety around play equipment”

Child care providers also reported changes they plan to make as a result of what they learned in the Better Kid Care training….

“…on our first day, I plan to demonstrate proper handwashing with the children… we’re going to sing the ABC song while we wash our hands to make sure we’re washing them long enough… I plan to use a timer when sanitizing areas so I know the standing time has been long enough for the product to work effectively at removing germs… I am going to pay closer attention to our playground equipment and use the safety checklist to inspect it for any concerns…”

These child care providers are excited about their new knowledge and eager to implement changes to improve safety for the children in their care.

“By providing research-based professional development training at a local level, childcare providers are able to obtain continuing education units that help them deliver improved quality of care for children in our communities,” Karen Byers, Dickinson County Extension Director 9.15