Daily Health Check Procedure

Purpose
This document tells staff how to perform daily health checks on children in their care. Daily health checks allow staff to become familiar with what is typical for each child, reduce the spread of illness by excluding children with obvious signs of illness, and foster better communication with families. The health check is not a diagnosis of illness or a medical exam. Occasionally, you may need to exclude a child based on your daily health check.

Procedure
Do a quick health assessment of each child every day upon arrival and whenever a change in the child’s behavior or appearance is noted. The health check is done as a casual observation at your initial contact with the child. Check for easily observable, simple signs of well-being. The goal of the health check is to know your children are healthy and ready to learn.

Signs to Observe
When conducting a morning health check, observe for:
- General mood (happy, sad, cranky)
- Activity level (sluggish, sleepy)
- Skin color and temperature
- Unusual spots
- Clamminess
- Swelling or bruises
- Sores
- Severe coughing, sneezing
- Discharge from nose, ears or eyes
- Breathing difficulties
- Unusual behavior
- Unusual odor in their breath, diaper or stool
- Changes in behavior (such as lethargy or irritability)
- Skin rashes, impetigo, itching, or scratching of the skin/scalp or the presence of one or more live crawling lice
- Other signs or symptoms of illness or injury (vomiting, diarrhea, cuts/lacerations, pain, or feeling ill)

Use findings to make decisions
If you have concerns about a child, discuss your concerns with the family immediately. It is your decision, not the family’s, whether the program will accept responsibility for the ill child. If you decide that the child will remain at school, discuss how you will care for the child and at what point you will call the family. At the end of the day, inform the family, verbally or in writing, about changes in the child’s health status including activity level, appetite, food intake, bowel movements and naptime.

Infants and toddlers: Document all findings and parent conversation on the Daily Activity Chart for Infants and Toddlers and place it in the child’s file.