

**Environmental  
Quality  
Division**

# Wee Care

**Summer 2017,  
Issue 7**

We're online!!!  
[www.gptx.org/](http://www.gptx.org/)

**Grand  
Prairie**

T E X A S

Creating raving fans by  
delivering world class  
service.

## The Importance of Immunizations

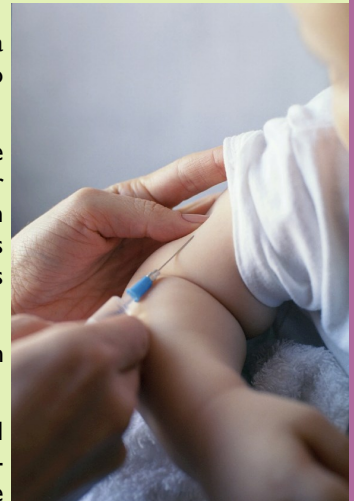
Immunization, or better known as vaccination, is the process of helping the body to create immunity and memory to particular diseases by using small amounts of a killed or weakened microorganism like bacteria or viruses that could cause a disease.

Vaccines stimulate the immune system to react as if there was a real infection, and make the body remember the organism so that it can fight it quickly should it enter the body later.

Some parents may hesitate to have their kids vaccinated because they're worried that the children will have serious reactions or may get the illness the vaccine is supposed to prevent. Modern vaccines are unlikely to cause any serious illness. Some vaccines may cause mild reactions, such as soreness where the shot was given or fever, but serious reactions are very rare.

The risks of vaccinations are small compared with the health risks associated with the diseases they're intended to prevent.

In the State of Texas there are specific requirements for all school age children based on recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Some variations are acceptable and changes in recommendations frequently occur as new vaccines are developed. Many of these vaccines are available as combinations to reduce the number of shots a child receives. For more information visit: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/IMMUNIZE/>



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<b>Handwashing</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Be A Clean Air Kid</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Changing Diapers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Child to Caregivers Ratios</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Poison Prevention</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Get Fit GP</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Foodborne Illness</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Fight The Bite</b>	<b>4</b>

## Mumps

Mumps is a contagious disease caused by a virus that passes from one person to another through saliva, nasal secretions, and close contact. Mumps affects children and adults.

The condition affects the salivary glands and the hallmark symptom is swelling of these glands. Initial symptoms are very similar to the flu and usually appear within 2 weeks after exposure to the virus.

Complications from mumps are rare, but they can be serious if left untreated specially if they involve the brain and the reproductive organs.

The mumps virus also leads to permanent hearing loss in about 5 out of every 10,000 cases. The virus damages the cochlea, one of the structures in your inner ear that facilitates hearing.

Vaccination can prevent

mumps. Most infants and children receive a vaccine for measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) at the same time. The first MMR shot is generally given between the ages of 12 and 15 months at a routine well-child visit. A second vaccination is necessary for school-aged children between 4 and 6 years old.

For more information visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/mumps/>



# Handwashing

Handwashing is a simple thing and it's the best way to prevent infection, illness, and is a key prevention tool for food safety.

The basic rule is to wash hands before preparing food and after changing diapers, handling uncooked meat and poultry, before eating, after coughing, sneezing, using the restroom, or blowing one's nose into a tissue.

When washing hands with soap and water:

- Wet your hands with clean running warm water and apply soap.

- Rub hands together to make a lather and scrub all surfaces for 20 seconds

- Rinse hands well under running water and dry them using a paper towel or air dryer. If possible, use your paper towel to turn off the faucet and open the door.

For more information visit: [www.cdc.gov/handwashing/](http://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/)

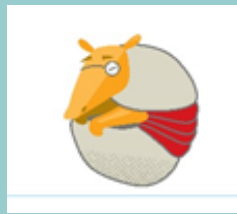
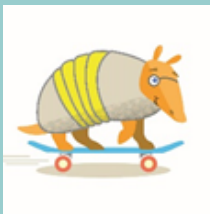


# Be A Clean Air Kid

It's time to be air aware! Ozone season starts on the first day of March and is the perfect opportunity for everybody to be educated on how they can contribute to good air quality, especially kids. One of our favorite ways to introduce clean air is through our friend **Arlo the armadillo**.

**Arlo** educates kids on how to read the Air Quality Index (AQI), promotes good habits and provides tips on how even the youngest of kids can contribute to better air quality. Arlo's shell changes colors according to the AQI for the day. When it is green or yellow, he loves to go outside and play but when it is orange, red, or purple, he protects himself from harmful air quality; especially because he has asthma.

For more information visit: <http://airnorthtexas.org/arlo.asp>



# Changing Diapers

Changing diapers must be done appropriately to prevent the spread of diseases. To ensure a clean diaper changing experience do as follows:

- Gather all the items needed before you pick up the child
- The diaper changing station surface should have been disinfected after the last diaper change
- Put on single use gloves
- Begin the diaper change. Remember, each wipe should only be used for one "swipe". Once the area is

clean, dispose of the diaper, gloves, and wipes. Wipe your hands and the child's hands using clean wipes.

- After putting the child's new diaper and clothes back on, wash your hands with soap and water
- Clean and disinfect the diaper changing station and allow disinfectant to air dry

For more information on diaper changing and preventing diseases visit: [http://www.fightbac.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/All\\_Diapering.pdf](http://www.fightbac.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/All_Diapering.pdf)



# Child to Caregiver Ratios

Trying to take care of too many kids at one time is not only a risky business, but it's also illegal. The child/caregiver ratio, according to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) is the maximum number of children one caregiver may be responsible for. Each child must have a caregiver who is responsible for the child and who is aware for details of the child's health, habits, interests, and any special problems.

Child/caregiver ratios are based on children's ages. To determine child/caregiver ratios the chronological age, as well as, the mental and physical development of a child must be taken into consideration.

Some children with special care needs may require more attention than other children of the same age. When calculating ratios, all children present, including children related to the personnel, drop-in, and part-time children must be counted regardless of how much time they are present.

The total number of children in care at a Licensed Child Care Center (LCC) or a Registered Family Home (RFH), must never exceed the licensed capacity of the facility determined by the DFPS.

For more information visit:  
[www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child\\_Care/](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/)

Age of children	Maximum # of children one caregiver may supervise
0-11 months	4
12-17 months	5
18-23 months	9
2 years	11
3 years	15
4 years	18
5 years	22
6-8 years	26
9-13 years	26

Sample ratios for LCC. For RFH the maximum number of children at any given time may never exceed 12 provided that at least 6 of them are after school children.

# Poison Prevention

Each year, the nation's 57 poison centers receive more than 35,000 calls about exposures to art products; the vast majority are about children younger than 6. Although most exposures cause only minor effects, and very few require treatment by a doctor, it's still important to handle art supplies with care. Remember to follow these tips:

- Read the label carefully and follow all instructions for safe use

and disposal

- Discard products that have passed their expiration dates.
- Don't eat or drink while using art products
- Wash up - skin, equipment and environment - after use
- Never use products to paint skin or decorate food unless the product is labeled for that use.

- Store art products in their original containers locked up and out of reach of children.

For more information visit:  
<http://poisoncontrol.org/home/>



Learn more on how to live a healthier lifestyle, take a pledge, and enter a monthly drawing to win a prize by visiting:

[www.gptx.org/GetFitGP](http://www.gptx.org/GetFitGP)



This newsletter is a publication of:  
Environmental Services Department,  
Environmental Quality Division  
Submit your comments /suggestions to:  
Editor: Werner Rodriguez  
Phone: 972.237.8056  
Fax: 972.237.8228  
Email: wrodriguez@gptx.org

## Foodborne Illness

Food illness is also known as food poisoning and it is usually caused by the ingestion of contaminated food or drinks. Microorganisms such as bacteria, viruses, and parasites are the most common causes of food poisoning.

### Prevention

Microorganisms that cause foodborne illness grow well in temperatures between 41°F and 135°F. This area is known as the “danger zone”. All foods and drinks that require refrigeration or heat for safety purposes (known as potentially hazardous food items) must stay out of this zone or be discarded after 4 hours of exposure to this temperature zone.

Proper sanitation is also a good prevention method because clean utensils and food contact surfaces give bacteria little chance to survive. Washing hands properly is considered the most important step to prevent outbreaks of food borne illnesses.

The symptoms of food poisoning include, but are not limited to, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal cramps, and fever. Prevention is important. However, sometimes even with good practices a child can get sick. Remember that babies and toddlers are at a higher risk from getting food poisoning due to their immature gastrointestinal tract. If in doubt always consult with the parents or the child’s physician.

For additional information visit: <https://www.foodsafety.gov/poisoning/>



## Fight The Bite

Spring weather is almost here and along with it comes mosquito season. Mosquitoes live part of their lives in aquatic environments and breed in almost any body of water. By eliminating sites with stagnant water the potential for mosquito breeding and transmission of diseases like West Nile, Zika, and Chikungunya is greatly reduced.

What you can do to help:

- Clean rain gutters free of debris and leaves around your property
- While outside use an EPA-approved insect repellent. Be careful when applying it to young children. Always read the label before using it
- Repair leaky pipes, outdoor faucets, and ensure the proper operation of landscape sprinklers
- Cover or turn upside down any

container that may collect water

- Fill in or drain any low places (puddles, ruts) around your facility
- Cover trash containers to keep out rain water
- Keep drains, ditches, and culverts clean of weeds and trash
- Fill in any tree holes and hollow stumps that hold water with sand or concrete
- Keep grass cut short and shrubbery well trimmed around your property

Remember, NO standing water, No mosquitoes. Keep mosquitoes under control.

For additional information contact the Environmental Quality Division at 972-237-8056 or visit us on-line at [www.gptx.org/fightthebite](http://www.gptx.org/fightthebite)

