

2600 N Central Ave  
suite 740  
Phoenix, AZ 85004  
Phone:602.532.0137  
Fax: 602.532.0139  
Email: [director@azaap.org](mailto:director@azaap.org)  
[www.azaap.org](http://www.azaap.org)  
TAX I.D. 94-2493912

# American Academy of Pediatrics

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## Child Care Health Consultants

The Arizona Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AzaAAP) supports the Arizona Department of Health Services budget request for two child care health consultants.

Child Care Health Consultants are like school nurses for child care providers—they are the health experts that are available to help children be safe, healthy and ready to succeed. The Child Care Health Consultant, generally a nurse, will consult with child care staff on health issues to improve health and safety in child care centers. This may involve discussion of issues facing a single child, or center-wide health and safety practices. Overall, the goal is training the child care staff to provide a healthy and safe environment.

Child Care Health Consultants, health professionals with specific child care health consultation training, take a proactive role in training child care staff to talk with families about health topics such as oral health, obesity prevention, developmental screening, the value of physician well-child exams and immunizations. They educate child care staff on caring for young children with special health needs.

Currently, there is only one Child Care Health Consultant in the state, a public health nurse employed by the Pima County Health Department, with partial funding through Title V Maternal Child Health funds through the Arizona Department of Health Services (DHS)/Office of Women's and Children's Health.

Two additional Child Care Health Consultants will be deployed in Maricopa County to assist the more than 945 child care centers, enrolling 101,170 children in Arizona's largest county. The long term goal is to be able to offer consultation first to any licensed child care center in Arizona, then to any out-of-home child care setting. Child Care Health Consultants would operate statewide from regional area bases like County Health Departments, Community Health Centers, or Indian Health Service clinics where a physician provides oversight for the CCHC as well as medical consultation, quality assurance review, standing orders, and requested training in specified health care methods and techniques.

Child Care Health Consultation positively impacts quality. Child care staff knowledgeable about appropriate health practices can contribute to reduced child absenteeism and improved parent work productivity. Through their presence in local child care facilities and homes and their participation in state and national child care committees, Child Care Health Consultants provide data and recommendations to continuously improve health and safety in child care settings.

#### CONTACT:

Anu Partap, MD, MPH  
Medical Director, Healthy Child Care Arizona  
[anu\\_partap@medprodoctors.com](mailto:anu_partap@medprodoctors.com)