

Parenting Matters

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**Colorado
State
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Quarterly Newsletter

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For Colorado Parents

BODY PIERCING

Body piercing is becoming the new fad – or is it? The practice of body piercing has been around for many centuries. In the past, it was intended to make a statement about an individual. Piercings suggested royalty, courage, virility and masculinity. Egyptian pharaohs pierced their navels as a rite of passage. First century AD roman soldiers pierced their nipples to exhibit their manhood and courage. Mayans (circa 300-900 A.D.) are known for both their detailed body art (tattoos) and stretched piercings. Since the 1980's, body piercing has gained popularity among Americans and Western European teenagers.

WHAT'S BEING PIERCED?

Common areas include the nose, navel, tongue, lips and eyebrow. The most popular areas are the ear lobe and ear cartilage.

WHO'S DOING THE PIERCING?

Pediatricians sometimes offer piercing services and are the most highly recommended, especially for young children's ears. The entire procedure is guaranteed to be sterile when performed in a clinical environment. Other outlets include mall retail merchants and individually owned

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piercing shops. Before committing to the procedure, make sure the practitioner is trained and uses sterile piercing equipment. **DO NOT** have a friend do the piercing or attempt to pierce yourself.

WHAT YOU SHOULD WORRY ABOUT?

There are serious risks that come with body piercing. The most common risks are bleeding and infection. Deadly diseases can be transmitted if the practitioner is untrained and uses non-sterile equipment. Worst case scenarios include contracting hepatitis and HIV. Be on the look out for improper skin preparation and use of gloves during a piercing procedure.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW?

- Jewelry inserted at piercing sites should be made of non-corrosive metals (i.e. 14K gold, titanium, surgical stainless steel).
- Pierced area must be cleaned two times a day by washing with anti-bacterial soap – Do not apply alcohol, peroxide or betadine.
- Wait the recommended healing time before changing the jewelry.
- Clothing should fit loosely and be clean if it comes into contact with the piercing.
- Hot tubs should be avoided until the piercing is healed.
- If you have diabetes, thrombocytopenia, neutropenia, hemophilia, endocarditis, cancer or keloid formation you shouldn't pierce.
- Fake body piercing devices are an option. They use a magnet to hold the jewelry in place.
- You can't make blood donations for one year after a piercing
- Your local health department can educate you on the rules that apply to piercing shops (i.e. licensing and regulations).

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HIV & AIDS: Who, What, Where, Why and How?

Whom does HIV and AIDS affect? Who is at risk for the virus and disease?

Everyone is affected by the HIV virus and AIDS disease: those at risk, those infected, friends, loved ones and the community. HIV and AIDS has become a worldwide epidemic and should be a concern to everyone.

Anyone is susceptible to contracting HIV. It does not matter if you are young, old, male, female, heterosexual, bisexual or homosexual. HIV does not discriminate! It does not matter who you are or where you live. It is **WHAT A PERSON DOES** that puts them at risk!

What are HIV and AIDS? What effects do they have on the body?

The Human Immunodeficiency Virus, better known as HIV, is the virus that causes the disease AIDS. It is a retrovirus that contaminates human cells and uses their energy and nutrients to survive and reproduce. HIV multiplies in the white blood cells that protect us from various illnesses. The

virus kills off the specific immune cells called T-helper/CD4 cells.

HIV develops into AIDS when the T-cell count has dropped below 200 and patients experience more than one AIDS-related infection/illness.

The disease AIDS, Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome, disables the body's ability to ward off infection. With a weakened immune system, persons with AIDS are more susceptible to infections and cancers that are uncommon and mild in healthy people.

In the initial stages of the virus, there may be no outward signs that a person is infected and they appear completely healthy. In most cases, the infection is dormant for 10 years or more, allowing the virus to spread. As the viral infection progresses, symptoms that are both lasting and extremely severe to the body arise. An infected person may notice:

- ◆swollen lymph glands (neck, groin and underarm area).
- ◆periodic fever and "night sweats."
- ◆a quick loss of weight, a decreased appetite.
- ◆tiredness.

- ◆diarrhea.
- ◆odd blemishes in the mouth.

Once infected with HIV, the person's immune system begins to slowly weaken. Most with HIV go on to develop AIDS. HIV may also affect the person's nervous system, making them confused, forgetful, irritable, indifferent, indecisive, paralyzed, uncoordinated and/or somewhat blind and deaf.

Presently, there is no known cure for HIV or AIDS. There are treatments available to aid in the prolonging of life for those infected.

These include:

- ◆Antiviral drugs that prevent HIV from reproducing.
- ◆Drugs that boost the immune system.
- ◆Radiation, surgery or various drugs that aid in fighting infections, illnesses and cancers.

Experts are hoping to see a vaccine to prevent HIV infection within the next decade.

Where can I get more help understanding HIV and AIDS?

- ◆Log on or call The Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

WEB: www.cdc.gov

PHONE: 1-800-342-2437

- ◆Contact your local health care provider.

continued as a two-part series in October's Parenting Matters newsletter

Body Piercing continued from page 1

AVERAGE HEALING TIMES FOR PIERCINGS:

○Ear lobe	6-8 weeks
○Ear cartilage	4 months-1 year
○Eyebrow	6-8 weeks
○Lip	2-3 months
○Navel	4 months-1 year
○Nose	2-4 months
○Tongue	4 weeks

WHAT A PRACTITIONER SHOULD HAVE:

- A machine called an autoclave (equipment sterilizer).
- A clean work area.
- Clean hands that are washed and covered with surgical gloves.
- Written information about caring for the piercing .
- References.

-Source: Steven Martel, MD, and Jane E. Anderson, MD, "Decorating the 'Human Canvas': Body Art and Your Patients," *Contemporary Pediatrics* (August 2002)

Available in Spanish on Request

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CHOOSING THE BEST CHILDCARE

For various reasons, whether it is going back to work or school after having a baby, re-entering the job market, being a single parent or parents of dual income household, many parents are faced with looking for someone other than themselves to care for their children. Options for childcare range from care in your own home, care in a provider's home or care in a center. Costs vary depending on the location and the type of childcare you wish to use.

When choosing the best childcare, you should start out by asking your friends and relatives for any advice and recommendations. It is important to give yourself enough time to find the very best for your child.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF CHILDCARE TO RESEARCH:

- Au pair
- Babysitters
- Childminders
- Family
- Nanny
- Nursery/Daycare center

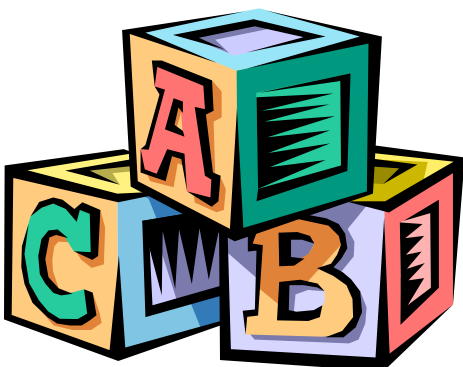
WHEN RESEARCHING YOUR CHOICES:

- LOOK-at how safe the setting is for your child.
- at how the caregiver interacts and behaves around your child.
 - at the resources available within the setting.
- LISTEN-to the setting and what it sounds like.
- to whether or not the children sound content and happy.
 - to the way the teachers/caregivers sound (Are they patient and happy?).
 - to the activity going on (too quiet may indicate little activity and too much noise may indicate a setting, which may be out of control).
- COUNT-how many children are in the group.
- how many staff members are on site.
- ASK-questions related to the experience and background of the caregiver, center or staff.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF AND THE CHILDCARE PROVIDER:

- Does the provider have a current childcare provider license?
- What are the hours of operation?
- Are meals USDA-approved?
- Will the provider offer overtime care?
- What are the provider's discipline policies?
- What activities are available for various age groups?
- How much television will the children be watching?
- What supplies will be needed from home?
- What are the policies when the child is ill?
- What safety precautions does the caregiver offer?
- What is the nap and quiet-time schedule?
- Will field trips be offered?
- What type of transportation will be used when the child travels away from the center?
- Does the provider hold membership in professional childcare organizations?

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ACCORDING TO YOUR CAREGIVER:



- A CAREGIVER'S OPINIONS AND COMMENTS ARE VALUABLE. At times they spend more time with your child than you are able to. And although you know your child best, they are there to offer you helpful information.
- STICK TO THE RULES. This helps your caregiver in reinforcing the same rules consistently day after day.

- ALWAYS HAVE EMERGENCY CASH STASHED AWAY. When needed, the caregiver can take from the petty cash and leave behind receipts for documentation. Don't make them worry about expenses when your children are their first concern!
- BE CONSIDERATE OF THEIR TIME. Be on time and give the caregiver enough notice when your plans change.

Alcopops Manufacturers Chastised for Targeting Youth

The Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) released a study showing that kids are getting surprisingly high exposure to network television ads for 'alcopops'-sweet-tasting, fizzy alcoholic beverages such as Smirnoff Ice, Bacardi Silver, Skyy Blue and Captain Morgan Gold. On July 16, 2002, CADCA Chairman and CEO General Arthur T. Dean, Congressman Elliott L. Engel (D-NY) and Connecticut Attorney General Richard Blumenthal joined George Hacker of CSPI at the press conference to criticize the liquor companies' unacceptably lax voluntary advertising standards that made such exposure possible.



The study, conducted by Global Strategy Group, found that millions of teens watch television after 9:00 p.m. on school nights when these ads run, and remember these slick, easy-to-

identify alcopop ads. According to Advertising Age, the industry spent an estimated \$77 million on TV ads in 2001. That figure was expected to be five times higher in 2002.

“Let there be no mistake, these alcohol companies need to stop force-feeding their messages to our teens,” General Dean said. “Alcopops manufacturers must take responsibility and stop these tactics that appeal to underage drinkers.”

-Published with permission by Team Fort Collins, *TEAM works* September 2002

-To read General Dean's full statement, visit <http://www.cadca.org/PressGallery/Speeches/AlcopopsConference.htm>. To view the complete study results, visit www.cspinet.org.

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