Helping Parents Manage Minor Illness and Injury Using “What To Do When Your Child Gets Sick”

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References


What To Do When Your Child Gets Sick

An Overview

What To Do When Your Child Gets Sick is a book that covers the management of more than 50 common childhood illnesses, injuries, and health problems. It is written in easy-to-read language for parents and caregivers of children from birth to eight years of age. Over 6,000 Kansas parents have been educated on how to use the book effectively, resulting in significant reductions in unnecessary doctor and emergency room visits.

National research has shown that, when parents are given the book, and trained on its usage, it helps:
- parents manage their children's care,
- decrease non-emergent use of the ER,
- decrease the number of days children miss school and parents miss work.

What To Do When Your Child Gets Sick is available in several different languages.

The Program: Vision, Goals and Approach

Vision: All parents will have the knowledge to make appropriate choices about their children’s health care for minor illness and injury, resulting in healthier children, better resource utilization and decreased costs.

Goals:
- Professionals working with families understand the impact of low health literacy in health care.
- Professionals use research-based methods to teach parents how to use the book What To Do When Your Child Gets Sick. Outreach efforts to parents of children enrolled in Medicaid and HealthWave will be a priority.
- Parents attend the class, receive the book and then use it to help make appropriate choices about their children’s health care.

Approach:
- Professionals attend a workshop on health literacy and teaching methods.
- Professionals teach parents how to use the book in one-on-one, small or large group settings.

The Reason: Working to increase Health Literacy for parents and caregivers of children

Health literacy is the primary predictor of a person’s health status. Persons with low health literacy lack the skills and confidence to choose the most appropriate type of care, resulting in over-utilization of emergency rooms and unnecessary health care costs.

Forty-five percent of families participating in a pilot project in public health settings reported that the hospital emergency room was their primary source of care.