

# Empowering Kids for a Healthy Future: Arizona's Empower Program

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# Today's Session

Provides example of how a state used collaborative leadership, blended funding streams, and evidence-based practices to change practice and policy for improved health outcomes



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# The Crisis

- Arizona has experienced one of the largest budget deficits in the country
- Historically, child care licensing has been supported by state general funds with only a small portion from fees
- In fall of 2009, Arizona Department of Health Services lost all funding for licensing due to budget cuts

# Affect

- Arizona Department of Health Services was given authority to raise licensing fees
- Proposed fees were a substantial increase for providers
  - From \$30 to \$1,000 for providers with 10 or less children
  - From \$150 to \$4,000 for 11 to 59 children
  - From \$150 to \$7,800 for more than 60

# Impact

- Impending crisis for child health & safety
- Child care providers would raise rates and pass on costs to parents
- Some centers would close down
- Parents would stop working to care for children themselves
- Parents would put children in unregulated care

# Empower Program was born!



## **Empower Pack**



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# Empower

- Offer 50% reduction in child care licensing fees for agreeing to implement 10 Best Practices to improve nutrition & physical activity
- Title V MCH Block Grant, tobacco tax, and WIC lottery dollars support the program

# Ten Empower Standards

1. Structured Physical Activity
2. Limit Screen Time
3. Avoid Sedentary Activity
4. Water
5. 1% Low Fat and Fat Free Milk

6. Fruit Juice
7. Family Style Meals
8. If able, participate in USDA Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)
9. Smoke Free Campuses
10. Tobacco Education for Families

# Empower Program Includes

- **Toolkit** – Child Care Champions Best Practices adapted from Colorado; also posters, activity books, music CDs, games, recipes
- **Window decal** – Identification of enrolled centers
- **Consultation** provided by ADHS and others such as ADE/CACFP, Child Care Health Consultants, and Head Start
- **Training videos** online  
[www.theempowerpack.org/#childcare](http://www.theempowerpack.org/#childcare)

# Family Style Meals Training Video

On YouTube at:

[http://youtu.be/nj\\_s89ydnBs](http://youtu.be/nj_s89ydnBs)



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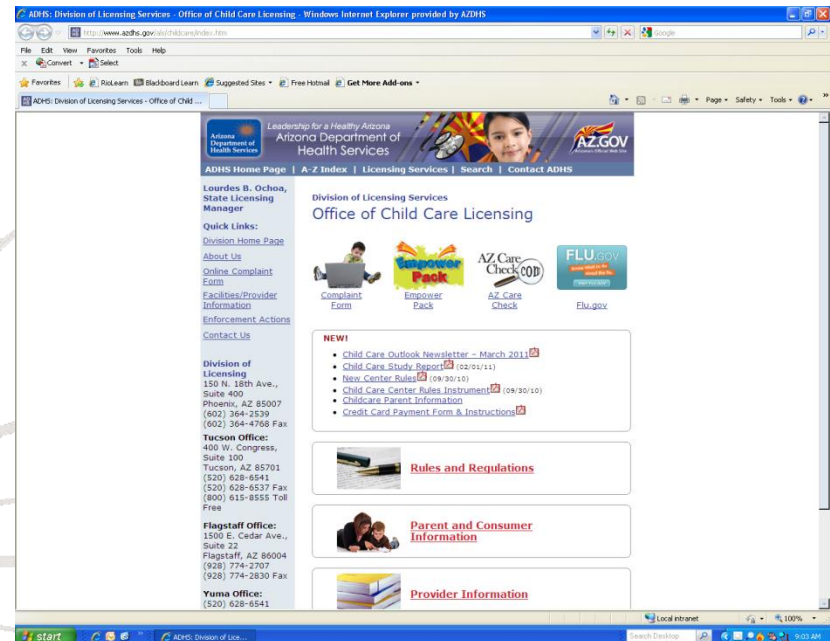
# Childcare Training & Resources

In March, ADHS provided child care professionals with *Cooking Matters* training where participants learned how to prepare healthy meals.



ADHS provides a centralized location for child care resources.

<http://www.azdhs.gov/als/childcare/index.htm>



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# Monitoring & Evaluation

- Only five eligible licensed facilities did not sign up for Empower
- 1,500 centers not needing to renew licenses also signed up for Empower
- Licensing surveyors use 10 questions to review implementation of standards
- Centers are referred for consultation if standards are not met

# Impact

- Up to 247,000 children impacted
- Arizona child care rules changed – five Empower standards became rules:
  1. Screen time
  2. Offer water at least 4 times during the day
  3. Serve 1% low fat or fat
  4. Limit fruit juice
  5. Serve meals family-style

# Impact

Integrated other important public health messages

- booster seats
- infant safe sleep
- oral health
- sun safety