

The dark future of American child care ^[1]

States are loosening their child care rules to cut costs — in ways that could harm young children

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AVAILABILITY

Access online ^[2]

Excerpt

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Nationwide, child care deaths are rare, with most states reporting small numbers, if any, each year. But Ava, Aniyah, and Zachary were just three of the 30 children who died in child care programs in Kansas between 2007 and 2009 in accidents that, for the most part, could have been avoided: the consequence of unsafe napping conditions, lack of supervision, or being left with another minor.

The tragedies spurred the passage of Lexie's Law in 2010, a state law named for a 13-month-old who died while she was unsupervised on her third day at a home-based child care program. The new, stricter requirements for licensing, inspections, and health and safety training catapulted Kansas to the top of the national child care policy rankings. Caregivers there were now required to take more classes in safe-sleep practices, first aid, and child development, and to follow new rules about supervising and monitoring the children in their care.

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