



Safety in Your Child Care Environment

This handout contains best practices and recommendations. Please check to make sure your program is in compliance with all Department of Health and Human Services regulations.

MOST INJURIES CAN BE PREVENTED	
Step 1	Identify the Risk What can happen, where, when, and why?
Step 2	Evaluate Current Risk Reduction Effects What works well? What doesn't work well.
Step 3	Implement the Risk Reduction Remove or avoid the risk entirely; put measures in place to prevent risk from occurring; or increase supervision.
Step 4	Monitor and Review Ensure that the most appropriate action has been taken.

Use Active Supervision

- Use clear and simple safety rules with children.
- Teach children how to safely use toys and equipment.
- **Best practice:** directly supervise infants, toddlers, and preschoolers by sight and hearing at all times, both indoors and outdoors.
- Keep school-age children either within sight or hearing at all times.
- Avoid being on one floor level of the building, while children are on another floor. Strive to be in the same room as the children.
- Use "name-to-face" counting to keep track of children. Call each child's name and visually match the name with the child.
- Use "touch supervision" for hazardous activities such as playground or water play. Be close enough to reach the child at all times.

Know the Number!

1-800-222-1222

Immediately call the Iowa Poison Control Center if you suspect a child may have been poisoned, even if you are not sure.

Don't wait for the child to become sick and don't try to treat the child yourself.



SAFETY CHECKLIST

Drowning is the leading cause of accidental death for children under age 5. Children can drown in less than an inch of water.

Use Stair Safety

- Install a secured gate at the top and bottom of each open stairway in facilities with infants and toddlers.
- Use gate latching devices that only adults can open in case of an emergency.
- Mount stairway gates to the wall using hardware for stability.

Prevent Choking or Strangulation Hazards

- Common food choking risks include hotdogs and grapes, cut these items into small pieces. Hard candy, carrots, nuts, popcorn and chips should not be given to young children.
- Test small objects using a choke tube tester to be sure an object isn't a choking hazard before making them accessible to small children.
- Closely supervise young children who play with small items.
- Remove hood and neck strings from children's clothing and outerwear.
- Avoid using the following around children.
 - Un-inflated or popped balloons.
 - High-powered magnets and small button batteries.

Anchor It

- Anchor furniture with inexpensive anti-tip brackets.
- Remove toys or items from the top of furniture that might tempt children to climb or cause furniture to flip over.
- Place televisions only on furniture designed to hold a television.
- Mount flat-screen TVs to the wall or to furniture.

Reduce Electrical Hazards

- Use tamper-resistant electrical outlets when possible. Attach all "safety covers" with a screw to prevent children from removing them.
- Keep extension cords out of children's reach.
- Never use electrical cords that are frayed or overloaded.
- Never place extension cords through doorways, under rugs or carpeting, behind wall-hangings, or across water-source areas.

Prevent Poisoning

- Store all chemicals and medicines in cabinets out of reach of children.
- Use a medicine lock box or locked cabinet. (center requirement)
- Use child resistant caps on all medication.
- Keep products and poisons in their original containers and their original labels intact.
- Keep purses and diaper bags out of the reach of children.

Use Water Safety

- Always use constant and active supervision of children when they are in and around water.
- Use "touch supervision" when younger children are around water; be close enough to reach the child at all times.
- Keep current on CPR!
- Keep a portable phone close by in case of an emergency.
- Keep pool rescue equipment near the pool.
- **Required:** Place fencing around pools and ponds that are least four feet high and flush with the ground.

Prevent Burns

- Keep the hot water temperature between 60-120°F.
- Install anti-scald protection devices for faucet and shower/bathtub fixtures.
- Be safe when cooking. Use the back burners and turn the handles of pots and pans inward.

