

## **Basic Health and Safety Training Topic 1: INDOOR & OUTDOOR SAFETY**

**Slide 2** - In this section we will cover indoor and outdoor safety, traffic considerations and unattended children in vehicles. Child care facilities should have a policy on the use and maintenance of all play areas, both inside and outside. The equipment available to children for the development of gross motor skills should be appropriate to the age group using the equipment. Supervision is extremely important in ensuring that children are safe and staff must be trained on proper supervision of children at all times.

Smoking is prohibited at all times in any indoor area of a child care center and any outdoor area of the center which is approved for child care use during the programs hours of operation.

In a small center located in a private residence, smoking is prohibited during the programs hours of operation in any indoor or outdoor area approved for child care use.

**Slide 3** - Staff must ensure that furnishings, activity materials, and equipment, whether intended for indoor or outdoor use, are used in a safe and appropriate manner by each employee and each child in attendance; and in accordance with manufacturer instructions or recommendations

Storage of all potentially harmful items, including but not limited to petroleum and flammable products in locations which are inaccessible to children in care must be stored in an approved manner.

Cleaning and sanitizing agents and poisonous products must be stored apart from food and beverages. Containers of poisonous products may not be kept on the premises unless they are labeled clearly as to nature, content, and approved purposes.

A pesticide may be used only if it is approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and is used according to the manufacturer's instructions and only when children are not in care. These items must also be stored apart from food, beverages, and cleaning agents.

A firearm may not be kept on the premise unless maintained in a small center located in a residence. The firearm must be kept in a location not used by children in care and unloaded and partially disassembled in a locked container with ammunition stored in its own separate locked container.

Window coverings must not have unsecured cords, beads, ropes, or strings that are accessible to a child in care.

Each electrical socket that is accessible to children in care shall be plugged or capped with tamper-resistant and securely attached covers as required by the applicable fire code. This is to prevent children from placing fingers or sticking objects into exposed electrical outlets and to reduce the risk of electrical shock, electrical burns, and potential fire. Electrical cords must be out of children's reach and the use of extension cords is discouraged. No electrical device or apparatus accessible to children should be located so it could be plugged into an electrical outlet while a person is in contact with a water source, such as a sink, tub, shower area, water table, or swimming pool.

-Each room used for child care shall have a trash container with a disposable liner.

-In each area used for changing diapers, there shall be a separate trash container reserved for diaper discards that:

- a) Has a disposable liner and tightly fitting lid and;

- b) Makes the contents of the container inaccessible to children in care.

All trash containers in child care areas shall be emptied when full but at least daily.

Equipment, materials, furnishings, and play areas should be sturdy, safe, and in good repair and should meet the recommendations of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission for control of safety hazards such as:

- a) Openings that could entrap a child's head or limbs;
- b) Elevated surfaces that are not properly guarded;
- c) Lack of specified surfacing and fall zones under and around climbable equipment;
- d) Mismatched size and design of equipment for the intended users;
- e) Insufficient spacing between equipment;
- f) Tripping hazards;
- g) Components that can pinch a child's skin or clothes
- h) Sharp points or corners;
- i) Splinters;
- j) Protruding nails, bolts, or other components that could entangle clothing or snag skin;
- k) Loose, rusty parts;
- l) Hazardous small parts that may become detached during normal use and may present a choking, aspiration, or ingestion hazard to a child;
- m) Strangulation hazards (e.g., straps, strings, etc.);
- n) Flaking paint;
- o) Tip-over hazards, such as chests, bookshelves, and televisions

JUST TO NAME A FEW! It is important to inspect equipment daily to ensure that it is safe and in good repair.

Equipment, furnishings, toys, and play materials should have smooth, nonporous surfaces or washable fabric surfaces that are easy to clean and sanitize, or be disposable. Walls, ceilings, floors, furnishings, equipment, and other surfaces should be suitable to the location and the users. They should be maintained in good repair, free from visible soil and in a clean condition.

The placement of equipment and furnishings plays a significant role in the way space is used. If furnishings are placed in such a way that they create large runways, children will run in this area. If furnishings are placed where children can climb in locations where climbing is unsafe, this adds risk to the environment. Placement of furnishings should address the needs of the children for stimulation and development and at the same time help to prevent collisions and injury. Equipment and furnishings should be arranged so that a caregiver can easily view the children from different positions in the room. Effective supervision is vital to the safety of everyone. Always consider supervision issues when selecting toys and equipment. The developmental needs of all children must also be considered. For example, a five-year old child may be able to use blunt nosed scissors with only some guidance whereas a 4-year old may require more supervision for the same task.

Supervision is critical at all times to ensure safety.

**Slide 4** – Outdoor play areas must be checked daily for hazards such as broken glass, discarded cigarettes, stinging insect nests, nails, inadequate energy absorbing surfaces under swings and slides

such as shredded or recycled rubber, sand, wood chips and equipment hazards. Children with special needs may require a variety of playground modifications for accessibility and safety. Consult the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) website for more information on accessibility for play areas.

Drowning is the leading cause of death for children aged 1-5 and can be prevented. It is important to supervise children at all times when near a body of water or during water play. Empty all tubs, buckets, containers or kiddie pools immediately after use. Store these items upside down or in a storage area where they cannot collect rainwater. Close toilet lids and use toilet locks to prevent drowning in bathrooms. Installation of fences around pools is a requirement. Check for open gates or damaged fencing around pools and immediately repair. Know what to do in the event of an emergency. Learning CPR may help you save a life.

There must be prior written approval from a child's parent for the child's participation in a water activity.

If a wading or swimming area is 4 feet or less in depth, each child engaged in a water activity shall receive continuous supervision by a staff member. If the water exceeds 4 feet in depth, there shall be a lifeguard present who: Holds a current certificate of approval for lifeguarding from a recognized agency such as the American Red Cross. The lifeguard must be present at waterside during any swimming activity and is not included in the required staff/child ratio.

Please see the link on your screen for more about Playground and Water Safety Guidelines.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, injuries from accidents with wheeled toys such as tricycles, bicycles and scooters are the leading cause of visits to the emergency room for children. Many of these injuries are head injuries. The best way to prevent such injuries is by requiring children to wear approved safety helmets when using wheeled toys. Helmets should fit properly and meet the Consumer Product Safety Commission standards. In addition, children should also wear knee and elbow pads especially when using scooters.

Children must be supervised at all times and the play area must allow providers to see and hear all children in care.

**Slide 5** - Our bodies create a tremendous amount of heat. Normally, they're cooled through sweating and by heat radiating through the skin.

But in very hot weather, high humidity, and other conditions, this natural cooling system may begin to fail, letting heat in the body build to dangerous levels. This can cause heat illness, such as heat cramps, heat exhaustion, or heatstroke.

Children are at risk for heat cramps when they aren't drinking enough fluids. Although painful, heat cramps on their own aren't serious. But cramps can be the first sign of a more serious heat illness, so they should be treated right away to help avoid any problems. Have children rest in a cool place and drink water. Gently stretching and massaging cramped muscles may also help.

Heat exhaustion is a more severe heat illness that can occur when someone in a hot climate or environment hasn't been drinking enough fluids. Symptoms can include:

- increased thirst
- weakness
- fainting
- muscle cramps

- nausea and/or [vomiting](#)
- irritability
- headache
- increase sweating
- cool, clammy skin and
- elevation of body temperature

Bring the child to a cooler place indoors or shady area. Remove any excess clothing the child may be wearing. Encourage the child to drink cool water. Put a cool, wet cloth or cool water on the child's skin. Call the child's parents or guardian for additional medical care. If the child is too exhausted or ill to drink, attention from a medical professional for treatment with intravenous (IV) fluids may be necessary. Call 911.

- If left untreated, heat exhaustion can develop into heatstroke, which can be fatal.
- Pay attention to the Heat Index Codes in extreme temperatures. On hot days, frequent water breaks should be provided for children and staff and shorter periods of play outdoors are recommended. The heat index changes as the day progresses. A heat index in the morning, for instance, may increase to a more dangerous level later in the day. Therefore, restrictions that would apply to a morning activity may be different than in the afternoon or evening. A high heat index can also affect children who have asthma. Degrees reaching 105 degrees should prompt you to stay inside with children and participate in low exertion activities.

It is important to use sunscreen when playing outside. Sunscreen supplied by a child's parent or guardian with written authorization may be applied without prior approval of a licensed health practitioner. Sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or more is recommended for children over 6 months of age. Sunscreen may be applied by the child if developmentally appropriate and with appropriate supervision. Read the sunscreen label for appropriate age usage and age recommendations. Sunscreen should be applied 30 minutes before going outside to absorb into the skin and should be applied every two hours. If playing in water, sunscreen must be applied more often. Limit sun exposure between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. daily. Refer to the Academy of Pediatrics Guidelines website ([www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)) for additional information using the link at the bottom of your screen.

**Slide 6** - In the playground pictured, what are the areas of highest risk?

For example, the slide is metal and there is no shade for the slide. You would want to ensure that it was not hot before allowing children to use it to avoid injury.

The Safety Report Card pictured here can be found in the publication "Caring for Our Children" and is a helpful tool for assessing the safety of your playground.

**Slide 7** - It is always important for children to walk safely with the group when going to a designated play area or meeting area. Children should walk in a single file line with staff at the beginning, middle and end of the line when possible. In case of an emergency, keeping children calm and orderly will help with evacuation. Remember for fire drills or emergency situations, you must evacuate to a minimum of 300 feet from the building. Safety vests and guide ropes must be used when crossing a busy street or intersection. Staff must wear safety vests so they can be easily seen by children and vehicles. When crossing roads, you must cross at a crosswalk and you must walk children down sidewalks. Safety ropes

are necessary when you have a large group of children. It is best to use nylon reflective rope that is tied off every 12 inches having children hold a knot. For a smaller group, it is recommended that you use the buddy system and have older children hold the hands of younger children.

Play should occur in designated areas away from heavy traffic and play areas should be fenced when necessary to protect children from traffic, water hazards, rail lines or other environmental dangers.

Unless being transported in a licensed school bus or contract motor coach, each child who is transported in a vehicle while in care must be separately secured in a child car seat or seat belt which is appropriate for the child's age and weight, as specified by Maryland law.

A vehicle used to transport a child in care must comply with all applicable State and federal safety requirements.

Children must never be left unattended in a vehicle. Let's view this safety video together to hear an important message about transportation safety and unattended children.

As always, supervision is of utmost importance. When walking with or transporting children in a vehicle, you must continue to know where your children are, what they are doing and prevent injuries from occurring. Check often to make certain all children are accounted for and check a vehicle - all seats and under seats - to ensure all children have been evacuated before locking up. A simple check may save a life.

“Look Before You Lock”