

Safety Rules

Policy

Staff practice and enforce practices to reduce the risk of accidents or injuries to children, families, and themselves.

Injuries

- Complete a health/safety screening checklist of physical environment prior to the first day of class each year.
- Inspect indoor and outdoor environments daily prior to children or families arriving.
- Remove all potential hazards immediately. Contact Management Team if assistance is needed.
- Clearly post an emergency sheet listing phone numbers for fire department, police, and other emergency services next to the phone.
- Only blunt-tip scissors are used by children. Any hazardous office supplies used by staff are kept in a secure drawer in areas where children are not allowed.
- Regularly inspect all toys, furniture, and other materials to ensure they are in good condition and free of sharp edges or loose pieces.

Burns

- Hot beverages are not allowed where children are present.
- The temperature of hot water in classrooms should be no more than 120° F.
- Head Start does not cook food. Any re-warmed food or meals provided by a licensed food service vendor should be checked prior to serving to children. It should be warm, but not hot.
- Hot glue guns are not allowed where children are present.
- Use protective covers on all electrical outlets that are not GFI (Ground Fault Interrupter) including “power strips”.
- Head Start is a smoke-free program.
- Any electrical cooking appliance (toaster oven) used to re-heat food is unplugged and stored out of the reach of children reach when not in use.

Poisoning

- All bleach, cleaning supplies, and other hazardous materials are kept in their original containers and stored away from food and in a locked cabinet out of reach of children.
- Solutions such as those used for sanitizing or disinfecting mixed by staff are clearly labeled with the name of the solution, date, and initials of the person who prepared it.
- Clean up spilled liquids right away.
- Only non-toxic plants (as listed by *Minnesota Poison Control*) may be kept at a site.
- All non-emergency medications are kept in a cabinet that is locked. Rescue medications are kept directly by staff.

- Staff purses, bags, and other belongings are stored out of the reach of children and outside of the classroom whenever possible.
- Classrooms are kept free of pesticides. If any treatment of a facility is needed, the owner will be contacted to do so when children are not present, and they are not allowed to return until it is safe to do so.
- The phone number for Poison Control is listed on the emergency phone number posting.

Choking and Suffocation

- Foods known to be choking hazards are not served to infants or toddlers. If these foods are served to preschool-age children, they are cut properly and children are closely supervised.
- Children are reminded to chew their food well and to stay seated while eating.
- Remove small detachable parts from toys that could be a choking hazards.
- Store all small or sharp items in a childproof container out of reach.
- All plastic bags, latex balloons, and other materials that could cause suffocation are kept away from children.
- Regularly inspect all toys, furniture, and other materials to ensure they are in good condition and free of sharp edges or loose pieces.

Traffic and Pedestrian Injuries

- Whenever transporting a child, the restraint system most appropriate for the child's height and weight is used.
- Any car seat used by Head Start must meet Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 213.
- Staff serving as bus monitors satisfactorily complete training on the proper use and installation of child restraint systems at new employee orientation and at least every five years thereafter.
- Closely supervise children near traffic and position staff accordingly.
- When crossing the street with children, a staff person will lead the group and another will follow at the end. Additional staff and other adults will be strategically placed within the group.
- Teach children to follow basic pedestrian safety rules, such as to look both ways when crossing streets, but never assume they will do so.
- When on field trips, seeks volunteers and parents to serve as extra helpers.

Safety rules are reviewed with staff at orientation and annually at all-staff training thereafter.

This policy complies with Head Start Performance Standard 45CFR Section 1304.22 and Minnesota Department of Human Services Child Care Center Licensing Health Standards.

Approved by Policy Council on 8-23-2016.