

Risk Reduction Plan

Requirement of MN Rule 3 Child Care Licensing

Purpose:
identify
general risks at
each site and
specify how
we minimize
each one

Risk Reduction Plans are a requirement of the MN Department of Human Services for our Rule 3 classroom licenses.

3 specific categories of factors and risks:

- Physical factors
- Environmental factors
- Specific risks

Physical Surroundings and Factors: how each is monitored at every site

- Condition/design of facility

- Are toys age-appropriate?
- Is facility in proper order?
- Are there air pollutants or toxins?

Health and Safety Screener is completed by classroom staff at beginning of year prior to the first day of classes.

- Condition/design of outdoor space

- Is footing of equipment adequate?
- Is the equipment safe and secure?
- Are there any strangulation or entrapments hazards?
- Are there sharp edges or rust, or garbage in the area?

Playground Safety Checklist is used by staff to evaluate area prior to **every** use by children.

- Bathrooms

- Are they kept clean and sanitary?
- Who/how are stall doors closed?

Daily Cleaning Checklist is used; sites in schools also have cleaning services provided.

Staff stand outside stall doors and assist children as necessary.

Physical Surroundings and Factors: how each is monitored at every site

- Storage areas

- desk/office supplies

Hazardous supplies are kept out of child reach.

- purses and bags of employees, volunteers, etc.

All personal belongings are kept in an area inaccessible to children, such as a locker or locked upper cabinet.

- Accessibility of medications

No medications are kept where children can get them. Rescue meds are carried by staff; all others are stored in Safety Sacks within a locked cabinet.

- Accessibility of cleaning supplies

Cleaning products are limited to bleach and soaps. They are kept in a cabinet secured with a child safety lock. The cabinet is out of child's reach if possible.

Environmental Factors: steps taken to reduce risks

- Terrain surrounding the building

- Unfenced play areas

← We try to use only play areas that are fully fenced. In areas where this isn't possible, Lead Teacher will do a head count before releasing children to play and staff space themselves appropriately to ensure children stay in a contained area and are constantly supervised. **See Active Supervision policy.**

- Proximity to hazards

- Busy roads

← Seek extra volunteers to assist on field trips. Avoid busy streets. Do frequent head counts. Children are taught to look both ways before crossing streets and the CA uses a flag for crossings. Staff hold hands of children needing extra support and use a walking rope when needed. **See Active Supervision policy.**

- Lakes, ponds, rivers

← Do not go near bodies of water as a class. If Head Start holds a special event near water, a 1-to-1 adult to child ratio must be maintained at all times.

Environmental Factors: steps taken to reduce risks

- Proximity to hazards

- Parking lots

Children are not allowed in parking lots during classroom hours. During drop-off and pick-up, children are supervised closely to ensure they don't go into the lot unattended. Kids riding the bus home are led on by the CA with another staff following at the end of the line. The CA does a head count before the bus leaves the premises. Staff provide families education about pedestrian and traffic safety during orientation; children receive further education at least 3 times during the year in class, with information sent home for parents to again review as a family.

- Public parks

Seek extra volunteers to assist on field trips. Use Playground Safety Checklist before allowing children on equipment. Do frequent head counts. Children are taught to look both ways before crossing streets and the CA uses a flag for crossings. Staff hold hands of children needing extra support and use a walking rope when needed. Staff strategically place themselves to ensure all children can be seen at all times. **See Active Supervision policy.**

Specific risks identified by MN DHS and steps we take to minimize each risk

- **Closing a child's fingers in doors**
 - ✓ Children cannot act as a "door holder"
 - ✓ 1 staff person stands in doorway and waits before all children to pass through before closing the door
- **Unsupervised children**
 - ✓ Staff do frequent head counts, especially when leaving the classroom
 - ✓ Extra staff/volunteers are sought during field trips
- **Child leaving facility without supervision**
 - ✓ Classroom doors are kept closed
 - ✓ Door alarms are installed and turned on to alert staff anytime the door is opened
 - ✓ Extra help is sought during special events
- **Dislocate a child's elbow**
 - ✓ Staff do not lift or pull children by the arm

Specific risks identified by MN DHS and steps we take to minimize each risk

- **Burns from hot food and beverages**
 - ✓ No hot liquids are allowed in areas where kids are present
 - ✓ Staff only reheat food, not cook it
 - ✓ Catered foods have time to cool before being served to kids
- **Injuries from equipment such as scissors and hot glue guns**
 - ✓ Hot glue guns are not allowed in classrooms
 - ✓ Kids are only allowed to use blunt-tip child scissors
 - ✓ Adult scissors are kept in a secure spot out of children's reach
- **Sunburn**
 - ✓ Staff ask for parental permission to apply sunscreen during enrollment (form is valid for entire school year)
 - ✓ Sunscreen of SPF 20+ is applied when children are outside for 20 minutes or longer and not protected by hats and clothing

Specific risks
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MN DHS and
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- **Feeding children food to which they are allergic**
 - ✓ Opportunities for food allergies to be disclosed include:
 - Child Health History
 - Child Nutrition History
 - Child Medical Exam Form
 - Application, Enrollment, and Orientation
 - ✓ Center-based staff contact Health Manager if an enrolled child has food allergies to determine next steps
 - CACFP Special Diet Statement must be completed and sent to Health Manager for review **before** child can attend class
 - A medical professional may need to complete the form depending on severity/type of dietary restrictions
 - ✓ Center sites must clearly post a list of children with food allergies in their food prep area so anyone working in the class is aware; this list is updated as needed throughout the year
 - ✓ No “outside” foods are allowed into classroom for children to eat

Specific risks identified by MN DHS and steps we take to minimize each risk

- **Child falling from changing table**
 - ✓ A changing mat on the floor is used for preschool children wearing diapers
 - ✓ If a changing table is used, the table is placed against a wall on at least one side and staff remain next to the child the entire time
- **Child access to dangerous items, including cleaning products**
 - ✓ Cleaning products are limited to soap and bleach, which are kept in a locked cabinet
 - ✓ Medications are kept either in a locked cabinet or directly carried by a staff person (rescue meds)
 - ✓ Personal belongings such as purses and bags are kept in a location inaccessible to children
 - ✓ Sharp objects and office supplies such as white-out are kept in drawers to which children do not have access

Specific times
children are to
be supervised
and how...

Key Policies have been developed to address specific situations and risks.

ALL staff must know (click on link to see each policy on our website):

- [Active Supervision](#)
- [Appropriate and Safe Release of Children](#)
- [Field Trip Safety](#)

Specific times children are to be supervised and how...

- **Transitioning from one area to another within a facility**
 - Active Supervision Policy: develop and follow routines; conduct frequent head counts; use attendance board and keep it current
- **Nap and rest time**
 - At least 1 staff is always in the same room as sleeping/resting children to directly monitor them
- **Drop-off and pick-up**
 - Appropriate and Safe Release Policy
- **Outdoor play and field trips**
 - Active Supervision Policy
 - Field Trip Safety Policy
- **Hallways**
 - Active Supervision Policy
 - Lead Teacher at front of line; TA at end of line; CA assists children needing extra support

Risk Reduction Plan at Sites

REMEMBER:

- Each licensed site is required to have a Risk Reduction Plan specific to their site.
- The Risk Reduction Plan must be kept in a location that's easy to access.
- Review Risk Reduction Plans prior to the first day of class and contact Health Manager ASAP if you think there are other specific risks for your site not reflected on the plan.

Complete Knowledge Check.

