

Classroom Guidelines for Teachers

Physical Plant

- Classroom equipment is the appropriate size and developmental appropriate for the age group in each class.
- There is an appropriate amount of toys and supplies for the number of children in each class.
- Equipment and toys are in good repair. No broken equipment, no pinch points, exposed nails, sharp parts, no choking hazards, tripping hazards, torn books, etc.
- Electrical outlets are covered with plastic plugs when not in use.
- Electric cords are not hanging and are taped up to prevent the cords from being pulled by children.
- Extension cords are use appropriately, and outlets are not over loaded.
- The exits of the classroom are kept free of equipment that could prevent an orderly or quick evacuation of the building.
- No peeling paint, holes in the walls or dangling cords from window blinds.
- Cots/mats are individually assigned, labeled with names or a number chart posted, cot/ mat chart available and cots/ mats are sanitized weekly.
- Trash cans have plastic liners and are emptied throughout the day as needed.
- Floors are kept dry to prevent slips around the sinks, art area or water table area.
- Bathrooms have toilet tissue and are kept clean, including free of offensive smells.
- Hand washing sink areas have soap and towels or a hand dryer.
- Water temperature is warm but less than 120° F.
- Classroom is kept at a comfortable temperature. No colder than 68° F.
- Furniture, floors, windows, blinds, and rugs are cleaned.
- Maintenance list to report safety concerns should be in a central location.

Communication

- The classroom staff is warm, friendly and they smile and greet each child and family as the child enters and departs the classroom.
- The classroom has a parent communication board or system to ensure that the parents know about the classroom schedule, lesson plans, special events, menu, staff schedule, etc. Information is kept current. Does your program have an annual plan?
- Parents are made aware and know where to find information about the programs philosophy and curriculum.
- Teachers inform parents immediately of any behavior or developmental concerns with their child.
- Behavior logs kept on children are detailed and behavior plans are created with the input of parents and staff. Outside behavior consultants are contacted when needed.
- Parents are provided the opportunity to have bi-annual conferences on the developmental growth of their child which is based on a written assessment of the child.
- Parents and staff of the program are given an opportunity, at least annually, to share their opinions, ideas or concerns about the overall program.

Ratios and Supervision

- The classroom staff is aware of the staff to child ratio in their designated age group and the staff should provide the program management team on appropriate information about head counts and attendance to ensure that the ratios are followed.
- The classroom staff complete head-count sheet accurately and timely.
- All children are being supervised at all times, including during naptime to ensure the children's safety and well being. Children are never left alone.
- The classroom staff uses positive guidance techniques and foster an atmosphere of helping the children learn to problem solve.
- The classroom staff model and guide children to learn methods of self -control and socially acceptable behavior.
- The classroom staff does not threaten, humiliate, spank, hit the children or use any other negative forms of punishment. The classroom staff will never yell or use loud or harsh voices when speaking with or disciplining the children.

Health and Safety

- Sick children and staff are not permitted to attend the program. At least one person one duty with DHO training.
- If any child or staff member is diagnosed with a communicable illness, all relevant families and staff are to be informed immediately.
- Staff and children follow appropriate hand washing procedures. Upon entering the classroom, before and after eating, after playing outside or playing in a sand and water table, after toileting, diapering, wiping noses, etc.
- Hand washing signs are posted in a visible location at all sinks.
- Proper diapering procedures are followed and diapering procedures are posted in a visible location near all diapering areas.
- Diaper pads are cleaned and sanitized after diapering each child and the pad has no tears or rips.
- Separate trash can is used just for diapers and pull-ups with a liner, foot pedal and the trash bags are emptied throughout the day as needed.
- Nothing is stored on or near the diapering area, including food, art supplies, etc.
- Toys are cleaned and sanitized as needed or at least once a week and left to air dry.
- Food and cleaning supplies should not be stored together.
- Any food brought in from home should be labeled with the child's first and last name and stored properly to avoid it from spoiling.
- A system should be in place to ensure that staff members are aware of children who have food allergies and they should be trained on what to do in case of an emergency.
- Cleaning supplies are labeled with proper contents and are stored not accessible to the children in a locked cabinet or closet.
- Children are not allowed to stand on chairs, tables, countertops, high chairs, windowsills, bookcase or any elevated surfaces.

Medication

- Staff should be properly trained and follow the centers policy for medications.
- Medication should be locked and only administered by someone with the proper training.
- Medications are not stored in the classroom. Except includes: "emergency medications" or diaper creams, sunscreens or insect repellents. Those exceptions should be stored in a location that is inaccessible to the children but clearly labeled for staff.
- Medications are to be labeled with the child's first and last name, proper authorization must be available and staff in the classroom should know when and how to use the medications.

Emergency Information and Procedures

- A diagram of the evacuation plan should be posted in all rooms and near all exits. Emergency numbers are posted near all telephones.
- Center has a main first aid kit centrally located. Each classroom should have a small first aid kit.
- Center has at least one battery operated flashlight and one battery operated radio, with spare batteries available. Include a weather radio.
- At least one person at all times should have current certification in First Aid and CPR. Assess the number of staff members who need this training, based on the number of teachers, classrooms and children.
- Center has emergency suitcases, containing supplies relevant to the age groups of the children in care.
- Center has a written Emergency Plan that covers emergencies such as but not limited to floods, power outages, water outages, fires, tornados, hurricanes, gas leaks, wildfires, fires, nuclear power plant disasters, Intruders, chemical spills, SIDS, etc.
- All staff should be knowledgeable of Emergency Plans and know where all emergency supplies are located and what to do in case of the above emergencies.
- Centers conduct monthly building emergency evacuation drills and the details of that drill are documented.
- Centers conduct quarterly shelter-in-place drills and the details of that drill are documented.
- One staff member at all time should be in charge of the safety of the school, including emergencies and the staff member should know where the fire alarm panel is and they know the procedures of the overall Emergency Plans.

Emergency Procedures continued...

- The Emergency Plan is reviewed at least yearly or when there is a change in management.
- Staff and child emergency contact numbers and health information should be available at all times.
- Parents and staff update emergency contact and health information and numbers at least yearly.
- All staff who work with children with special needs or children with allergies and medical conditions should know what to do and know where to find and use “emergency” medications if needed.
- Injury reports should be written on any child who gets injured in the program, even if there is no mark.
- If a child sustains an injury to the head, a bite that breaks the skin, if someone other than the parent is picking up the child or if you think you should call the parent, call the parent to inform them of the injury.
- Hazardous materials, including cleaning supplies should be locked at all time.
- If a cleaning solution is not in the original bottle, contents should be labeled. All medications should be locked and only administered by a person with the required medication training.

Infant Program

- Staff should have a system for keeping all written information organized for each infant enrolled, example a notebook with dividers.
- The notebook should have the infant information form from the parents, health form, emergency information form and diaper cream form if applicable,
- Infant daily sheets should be completed throughout the day, not at the end of the day.
- There should be an extra bottle, extra formula, extra baby food and/ or cereal, extra diapers, extra wipes, and extra clothes on site for each infant.
- Cribs should be labeled with the infants name, sheets are changed daily and the crib should not have filled comforters, bumper pads or pillows.
- Emergency crib should be close to the exit and labeled.
- Infants should be put to sleep on their backs or on their side with their arm pulled forward.
- Sleeping infants should be checked on AT LEAST every 15 minutes.
- Staff should be trained in the area of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and know what to do in case of an emergency.
- Infant seats or carriers should not be placed on an elevated surface.
- Bottles are labeled with the infant’s name and date.
- Infants should be held while being given a bottle, no propping bottles.
- Bottles should be heated in warm water. Microwaves create hotspots.
- Consider special labeling for bottles that have breast milk.
- Safety straps are buckled for high chairs, strollers, infant seats, swings, etc.
- Tummy Time provided and documented.
- Infants diapers are changed as needed and checked every 1/2 hour.
- Diapering area is clean, procedures posted and followed.
- Comfort infants as needed and make EXTRA efforts to use diapering time and feeding time as a way to bond with the infant individually, don’t just go through the motions.
- Have the parents and staff in the infant room remove their shoes when they enter the classroom. Use large socks or booties.
- Plan individual lesson plans and activities for each infant based on appropriate developmental milestones.

Playground

- The playground should be checked for safety BEFORE the children go outside. Don’t forget the gates! Walk over and check them by pushing and pulling.
- A detailed weekly playground check should be completed on the equipment and the resilient material.
- Teachers should know and follow the playground safety plan.
- The program Playground Safety Plan should include positions near the equipment, how to communicate in the case an emergency, interacting with children, schedules, etc.