

Indoor Safety Check

Regardless of your childcare setting -- home, center, or school-based --- keeping children safe involves education, supervision, and environment. It's important to teach children what they can do to stay safe. Supervision is essential; a child in our care should never be out of our sight. But the most effective way to prevent injury is to have a safe environment. It's our job to recognize and remove potential hazards. Let's walk through our facility and find some of the ways to make the indoor environment safer.

Entrance/exit: Look for hazards as you come in and go out.

- Are entrance/exits clearly marked and free of clutter?
- Do doors open easily for emergency exit?
- Are there handrails for steps and ramps and non-slip surfaces?

Floor and ceiling: Look high and low for safety.

- Are floors and coverings clean, including the corners? When infants are on the floor, do you place clean sheets or other washable covering?
- Do carpets and rugs lay flat and secure? Are there staples or other items hiding in the carpet?
- Look under furniture. Are there coins, rocks, or other items that could cause choking?
- Are ceiling tiles secure? Are mobiles or other hanging items lightweight and secure?
- Do electric lights or ceiling fans work properly? Are they securely attached?
- Do you have working smoke detectors?

Walls and windows:

- Are unused electrical outlets securely covered? Do you also have outlet guards to cover those in use?
- Are pictures or wall hangings lightweight and securely attached? Are unused nails or picture hangers removed?
- Are bulletin boards free of push pins or thumb tacks?
- Do coat hooks or other protrusions have rounded ends?
- Is shelving securely anchored to walls?
- Do windows that are open have screens? Are there barriers to prevent children from falling through windows?

Furniture:

- Do chairs, tables and shelves have wide bases for stability? Are the corners rounded?
- Is furniture in good repair, free of splinters or loose hardware?
- Have you removed furniture with moving parts that could crush little fingers?
- Do infant cribs meet safety standards? Are cots clean? Are they placed so you can see and access each child during naptime?

Toileting and Diapering Areas:

- Is the area cleaned and disinfected regularly? Are spills cleaned up immediately?
- Is the tap water temperature less than 120 degrees F?
- Is the area free of toxic or potentially dangerous substances or items?
- Are soap, water, and disposable towels accessible? Do you have all necessary supplies ready before you take a child to the diapering area?

These are just a few safety considerations when caring for young children. Remember, it is best to remove potential hazards before an injury occurs!

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