

Module 1: Welcome to the Early Childhood Profession

Section C: Child Supervision and Mandated Reporting

Introduction

This section will look at the reasons for the regulation of early care and education programs. The DHS Child Care Licensing Regulations provide the standards and rules that govern early learning programs in providing young children with safe, healthy, and educational environments. As an early learning professional, you must be familiar with and understand the regulations. Ensuring the children's health and safety is always your primary responsibility as an early childhood professional. Parents must be confident that their children will be safe in our programs. Supervision of the children is the most important of all expectations for people working in early care and education programs. Supervision of children involves your full attention and participation in the activities and interactions that take place in the program's facility, the classroom, on the playground and on field trips. This section will provide you with strategies for supervision of young children.

Orientation and on-going training and professional development are important for people who work in the early care and education field. Orientation training in a child care facility is important for developing an understanding of your responsibilities and the expectations of your new position. Since research on how young children learn and develop is constantly evolving, on-going professional development is essential in meeting the needs of the children in your program. As an early learning professional, you will need to have an understanding of the following topics:

- Supervision of children
- Safety
- Field trip procedures
- Transporting young children
- Healthy Environment
- Sanitation Practices
- Nutrition
- Infection Control Practices
- Child Development
- Creating a learning environment
- Educational Programs
- Communication with children
- Child Guidance
- Interactions with parents
- Interactions with other staff
- Interactions with supervisor

Learning Objectives:

After completing this section you will be able to:

- State 3 reasons for early care and education program regulations.
- Explain 3 strategies to use in supervising young children.
- Evaluate 3 areas included in the orientation training where you can improve your skills and knowledge.
- Understand your responsibility as an early childhood professional for the reporting of child abuse.

Guiding Your Learning

As you work through this section:

- Look for specific information on supervising children in an early care and education program. Note how different ages of children require different types of supervision.
- **Orientation Self Checklist Handout 1-C-1:** Reflect on your specific skills and knowledge in working with young children and complete the Orientation Self-Evaluation before you begin this Section. Use the Orientation Self Evaluation handout as your personal learning guide to help you assess your areas of strength and areas where you have questions. Plan your professional development experiences to increase your knowledge in the self-identified areas.

NOTE: The information contained in these sections are partial summaries of the DHS Child Care Licensing Regulations, are not intended to replace or provide an official interpretation of the Arizona Administrative Code and Arizona Revised Statutes for Child Care Facilities.

Summary of Key Arizona Child Care Licensing Regulations

ARTICLE 4 FACILITY STAFF

R9-5-403 Training Requirements

This regulation requires that each new employee or volunteer complete an orientation within 10 days of beginning work in a child care center. See Ten Day Crosswalk located in the Introduction

The following regulations relate to the supervision of enrolled children.

- a. for an enrolled child, knowledge of and accountability for the actions and whereabouts of the enrolled child, including the ability to see or hear the enrolled child at all times, to interact with the enrolled child, and to provide guidance to the enrolled child; or
- b. For an individual other than an enrolled child, knowledge of and accountability for the actions and whereabouts of the individual, including the ability to see and hear the individual when the individual is

in the presence of an enrolled child and the ability to intervene in the individual's actions to prevent harm to enrolled children.

R9-5-101 Definitions – “Supervision” means:

- a) For an enrolled child, knowledge of and accountability for the actions and whereabouts of the enrolled child, including the ability to see or hear the enrolled child at all times, to interact with the enrolled child, and to provide guidance to the enrolled child; or
- b) For an individual other than an enrolled child, knowledge of and accountability for the actions and whereabouts of the individual, including the ability to see and hear the individual when the individual is in the presence of an enrolled child and the ability to intervene in the individual's actions to prevent harm to enrolled children.

R9-5-404 Staff-to-Children Ratios

A. The minimum licensing requirements state that child care programs are required to maintain the following staff-to-children ratios at all times when children are in care:

| <i>Age Group</i> | <i>Staff: Children</i> |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Infants | 1:5 or 2:11 |
| 1-year-old children | 1:6 or 2:13 |
| 2-year-old children | 1:8 |
| 3-year-old children | 1:13 |
| 4-year-old children | 1:15 |
| 5-year-old children not school-age | 1:20 |
| School-age children | 1:20 |

B. Other regulations related to staff to children ratios require that the staff to child ratio for a group of children is based on the age of the youngest child. Staff members who are assigned to work with the children may perform additional duties or responsibilities as long as they do not interfere with their ability to supervise the children.

D. A licensee shall ensure that a staff member assigned to provide child care services to enrolled children does not perform duties that may affect the staff member's ability to provide child care services to the enrolled children.

ARTICLE 5 FACILITY PROGRAM AND EQUIPMENT

R9-5-501 General Child Care Program, Equipment, and Health and Safety Standards

Staff members must supervise each enrolled child at all times.

R9-5-506 Supplemental Standards for School-age Children

School age children are supervised to and from the bathroom and allowed privacy while in the bathroom. Staff are required to ensure children's safety by checking on the school age child who is in the bathroom for over 3 minutes.

R9-5-306 Admission and Release of Children; Attendance Records

Staff members are required to record daily classroom attendance of enrolled children including a method to account for the child's temporary absence from the classroom or other child care area.

R9-5-307 Suspected or Alleged Child Abuse or Neglect

A licensee shall ensure that the licensee or a staff member documents and reports all suspected or alleged cases of child abuse or neglect. Suspected or alleged child abuse or neglect must be reported to Child Protective Services or to a local law enforcement agency. Within 3 days of the initial report of child abuse or neglect, written documentation of the report must be sent to the same agencies. The written documentation of the child abuse or neglect report must be maintained at the center for 12 months.

Supervision of Children

Supervision of children is defined as being a staff responsibility. Each staff member is required to have knowledge of and accountability for the actions and whereabouts of the children in their care. Staff must have the ability to see or hear the enrolled child at all times, interact and provide guidance with the each child.

Many would argue that providing appropriate supervision is the most important responsibility of an early learning professional. Supervision does not simply refer to "watching the children play". Supervision requires your full attention to the children in your classroom. It includes interacting with the children in your care. Young children may challenge your ability to supervise their interactions and explorations so it is important that you remain alert and focused on the children and their activities. A constant awareness of the whereabouts of each child helps to keep the children safe by preventing accidents or incidents that may occur in a split second.

Active supervision includes your involvement in activities, being responsive to the children's needs, and providing attention to all of the children in the classroom. It is important to be alert and responsive to the children at all times. Sometimes this can be a difficult challenge. At times you may find yourself engaged in talking to another teacher about a classroom issue, preparing for an activity, facilitating classroom routines such as mealtimes, or involved in a conversation with a parent. All of these activities

are important in maintaining an effective classroom; however, such activities are secondary to your main responsibility which is to monitor the safety of the children in your care. In some cases you may have two teachers in a classroom at different times of the day which provides you with the opportunity to talk to a parent, gather materials for activities, or work with an individual child.

Different age groups may create various supervision challenges. Toddlers are curious and love to explore the environment. This combined with the fact that they have not yet mastered their physical skills leads them to taking risks that could result in them getting hurt. Toddlers do not yet have the abilities to remember rules and will need constant reminding. Preschool children have the fine motor ability to reach door handles and gate latches which present situations where they may wander away from the group. An awareness of individual children's interests can help with supervision. For example, some children may like to hide or play under or behind furniture or playground tunnels. Sometimes school-age children have the experience and knowledge to try and avoid supervision. Your supervision skills will alter depending on the age of the children in your group. It is important to be aware of the situations in the classroom that present a risk to effective supervision of the children.

Outdoor play and activities provide more opportunities for children to explore their surroundings and develop their motor skills. Teachers need to maintain vigilant supervision of the children during outdoor times as they experiment with climbing, running, riding toys, and interacting with other children. Playground equipment, riding toys, and other activities are often the cause of children's injuries. Teacher(s) should be positioned around the playground to provide supervision and interact with the children as needed.

Applying Your Knowledge

How does this information affect your work with young children?

Supervision and care of children in your care is your first responsibility as an early childhood professional. Developing your abilities to supervise the entire group of children is critical for the safety of the children in your classroom. Regular and consistent use of head counts throughout the day is one of the key supervision skills. Supervision helps to prevent accidents and incidents in the classroom including injuries to children and behavioral issues. Keeping a focus on the children is the best way to ensure effective supervision and the safety of each child.

Supervision and caring for children in your care requires that you:

- Be aware of the Arizona Licensing Child Care Regulations that pertain to your role as an early childhood professional.
- Get to know the children in your care, their interests, abilities, and personality.
- Create a classroom environment that allows for supervision of the children at all times.

- Use attendance sheets and complete head counts of the children throughout the day.
- Interact and communicate with the children throughout all daily routines and activities.
- Be aware of both your abilities and areas to improve your skills as an early childhood professional.
- Keep accurate attendance sheets with you at all times that have the names of the children for whom you are responsible.
- Don't leave your classroom out of ratio for any reason.
- Do not allow children to leave the classroom unsupervised.
- Never allow children access to areas of danger such as the kitchen, laundry room, utility closet or locket cabinets.
- Arrange furniture and equipment so children can be seen at all times.
- Take a physical headcount of children before going outside, while outside, and then upon return to the classroom. This will avoid children being left on the playground.

** Talk to your Center Director about the procedures in your center if you need assistance from another staff person or need to leave the classroom.

Child Abuse Reporting: Child care professionals are mandated to report suspected instances of child abuse.

** Talk to your Center Director regarding your center's specific policies on reporting child abuse.

Arizona has mandatory child abuse reporting laws for professionals who work with children. The mandatory child abuse reporting law requires child care professional to report suspected child abuse. Suspected child abuse must be reported to Child Protective Services or a local law enforcement agency. It is not your duty to determine if abuse is occurring but to understand and report signs or symptoms of abuse.

Types of Abuse

PHYSICAL ABUSE: Physical abuse is any physical injury inflicted other than by accidental means, any injury at variance with the history given of them, or a child's condition which is the result of maltreatment such as malnutrition, deprivation of necessities or cruel punishment.

Signs of Physical Abuse

Consider the possibility of physical abuse when the child:

- Has unexplained burns, bites, bruises, broken bones, or black eyes
- Has fading bruises or other marks noticeable after an absence from school
- Seems frightened of the parents and protests or cries when it is time to go home
- Shrinks at the approach of adults
- Reports injury by a parent or another adult caregiver

Consider the possibility of physical abuse when the parent or other adult caregiver:

- Offers conflicting, unconvincing, or no explanation for the child's injury
- Describes the child as "evil," or in some other very negative way
- Uses harsh physical discipline with the child
- Has a history of abuse as a child

NEGLECT: *Neglect is the failure, whether intentional or not, of the person responsible for the child's care to provide and maintain adequate food, clothing, medical care, supervision, and/or education.*

Signs of Neglect

Consider the possibility of neglect when the child:

- Is frequently absent from school
- Begs or steals food or money
- Lacks needed medical or dental care, immunizations, or glasses
- Is consistently dirty and has severe body odor
- Lacks sufficient clothing for the weather
- Abuses alcohol or other drugs
- States that there is no one at home to provide care

Consider the possibility of neglect when the parent or other adult caregiver:

- Appears to be indifferent to the child
- Seems apathetic or depressed
- Behaves irrationally or in a bizarre manner
- Is abusing alcohol or other drugs

SEXUAL ABUSE: *Sexual Abuse is any incident of sexual contact involving a child that is inflicted or allowed to be inflicted by the person responsible for the child's care.*

Signs of Sexual Abuse

Consider the possibility of sexual abuse when the child:

- Has difficulty walking or sitting
- Suddenly refuses to change for gym or to participate in physical activities
- Reports nightmares or bedwetting
- Experiences a sudden change in appetite
- Demonstrates bizarre, sophisticated, or unusual sexual knowledge or behavior
- Becomes pregnant or contracts a venereal disease, particularly if under age 14
- Runs away
- Reports sexual abuse to a parent or another adult caregiver

Consider the possibility of sexual abuse when the parent or other adult caregiver:

- Is unduly protective of the child or severely limits the child's contact with other children, especially of the opposite sex
- Is secretive and isolated
- Is jealous or controlling with family members

EMOTIONAL MALTREATMENT: *Emotional abuse or maltreatment is the result of cruel or unconscionable acts and/or statements made, threatened to be made, or allowed to be made by the person responsible for the child's care that have a direct effect on the child.*

Signs of Emotional Maltreatment

Consider the possibility of emotional maltreatment when the child:

- Shows extremes in behavior, such as overly compliant or demanding behavior, extreme passivity, or aggression
- Is either inappropriately adult (parenting other children, for example) or inappropriately infantile (frequently rocking or head-banging, for example)
- Is delayed in physical or emotional development
- Has attempted suicide
- Reports a lack of attachment to the parent

Consider the possibility of emotional maltreatment when the parent or other adult caregiver:

- Constantly blames, belittles, or berates the child
- Is unconcerned about the child and refuses to consider offers of help for the child's problems
- Overtly rejects the child

If you suspect a child in your care has been abused it is your responsibility to:

- Report the incident to your Center Director and/or contact Child Protective Services or local law enforcement agency.
- Document the child abuse report by recording only the facts of what you observed and the information you provided Child Protective Services or the local law enforcement agency.
- Send the written documented report to Child Protective Services or the local law enforcement agency within 3 days of the initial report.
- Maintain a copy of the documented report of abuse or neglect at the center for a minimum of one year.

Why is it important to report child abuse?

Arizona state law requires that incidents of child abuse or neglect be reported to Child Protective Services or local law enforcement agencies. People in the early learning field must be advocates for children as they can't speak for themselves. Not only do we have a social and legal obligation to protect our children, abuse can have a detrimental effect on a child's growth and development.

The following comments are taken from Dr. Ross Thompson's testimony to the United States Senate and emphasize the effects of child abuse and neglect in the lives of young children and stress the importance of reporting the neglect and abuse of young children.

"The influence of early experience is a double-edged sword because the experiences that shape brain architecture can be positive or negative, nurturing or stressful. Each is incorporated into developing brain architecture. There are many young children in the United States, that experience chronic stress, neglect, or deprivation which become the major architects of their brain development, and helps to account for some of the difficulties they face. This is because of how the brain responds to stress. Chronic experiences of severe stress, especially early in life, can alter the functioning of brain-based stress systems – potentially causing the person to become hyper-responsive even to mild stressors – and can have important effects on the child's physical health, immunological capacity, and psychological well-being for this reason. Chronic stress can also influence cognitive functioning because, over time, the release of stress hormones can damage brain structures involved in learning and memory. These are some of the reasons that early deprivation and stress can have enduring, detrimental consequences for brain development, psychological growth, and physical health. Children in socioeconomic hardship are especially vulnerable to these stresses, and to the hazards they pose." (Thompson, 2007)

Dr. Ross Thompson is a professor of psychology at the University of California- Davis.

Check Your Understanding

- ✓ After spending time in your new classroom develop a supervision plan to share with your Center Director that includes 3 main supervision strategies you will use in supervising the children and 2 changes to the classroom environment to improve the ability to supervise the children.
- ✓ Explain three reasons for licensing regulations.
- ✓ Explain your role as a mandated reporter.
- ✓ Complete the Orientation Self-Assessment and talk with your Center Director about how you can best apply your strengths in working with children and the ways that you can improve your abilities as an early childhood professional.

Resources

Handouts attached to this section

Tips for Supervision

Self – Assessment

Printable Resources

DHS – Abuse/Neglect Reporting Form

http://www.azdhs.gov/als/childcare/documents/providers/forms/abuse_neglect_documentation.pdf

References

Thompson, R. , United States Congressional Committee on Education and Labor, Hearing on Improving Head Start for America's Children, February, 28, 2007. Retrieved from

http://main.zerotothree.org/site/DocServer/Ross_ThompsonEHSTestimony_3_19_07.pdf

[Arizona Child Care Licensing Standards](#)

[Healthy Child Care website](#) Retrieved from <http://www.healthychild.net/librarysearch.php>

[National Association for Regulatory Administration](#)

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/signs.cfm>

Arizona Office of Child Care Licensing: [A Parent's Guide to Child Care](#) <http://www.azdhs.gov/als/guides/guide.pdf>

Module 1-Section C Worksheet

Identify three main supervision strategies you will use in supervising the children.

1.

2.

3.

List 2 changes to the classroom environment to improve your ability to supervise the children.

1.

2.

List 3 reasons for licensing regulations.

1.

2.

3.

Explain your role as a Mandated Reporter:

From your Orientation Self-Assessment, what is the one area that you need the most additional training and support:

1.

Tips for Supervision – 1-C Handout

What are some of the ways to maintain effective and safe supervision of the children in your classroom?

- Maintain a daily attendance roster of the children in your classroom as each child enters the classroom in the morning.
- Throughout the day use the daily attendance roster when conducting head counts of the children in attendance as the children move their daily schedule of activities such as, group times, before and after playground activities, after toileting and diapering, during naptime, and as the children leave for home.
- Before exiting areas survey the area to ensure no child is left behind. Do a check of the classroom, bathrooms, playground, or other area in the child care facility.
- Use a system for older children to use the bathroom that monitors the number of children and the length of time children are in the bathroom. Younger children must be supervised by teachers.
- Be clear about the group of children you are responsible for supervising.
- Never leave children unattended.
- Actively supervise the children by interacting with them. Recognize that there may be times the children may want to engage in individual or group play without adult interactions.
- Ensure that the classroom arrangement does not interfere with supervision of the children by using furniture that is not taller than the children and that does not divide classroom spaces and learning areas.
- During children's independent play or activities monitor the children's activities by rotating through the classroom and interacting with the children.
- Scan the classroom if you are involved with a group or an individual child by sitting or standing in a position that provides you with a full view of the classroom and making eye contact with the children.
- Classrooms with two staff may share supervision of children by alternating the responsibilities for conducting individual or small group activities and a whole class (rotating) supervision of children in independent choice activities
- During outdoor play each teacher should be stationed in a different area of the playground to ensure children are safe while playing on the playground equipment, participating in games, using riding toys, or engaging in sensory play. Supervision of the fence surrounding the playground and the gates that provide exits from the playground are important areas to supervise.
- Understand the communication system that notifies administration and classroom staff of changes in a child's pick up or drop-off routine, including a new person who may be picking up the child.
**** Ask your Center Director about the specific supervision procedures at your center.**

Orientation Self- Assessment 1-C Handout

Directions:

1. Review the various areas of responsibility for early childhood professionals who work with young children in a child care center.
2. Reflect on the responsibilities in each area and evaluate your knowledge, skill, and understanding of the various responsibilities in your new child care center.
3. Record a professional development learning goal for areas where you want to improve your knowledge and skills.
4. In the final column record questions in each area of responsibility for the Center Director.

| Areas of Responsibilities for Early Childhood Professional | Professional Development Learning Goal I | Questions for Your Center Director |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Supervision of children Has the capability to actively supervise a group of children. Maintains accurate head counts of children throughout daily routines and transitions. | | |
| Safety Accident prevention in classroom and on playground. Awareness of and participation in emergency procedures | | |
| Field trip procedures Knows and follows the supervision and safety procedures for field trips | | |
| Transporting young children Knows and follows the policies for transporting children including safety and supervision procedures. | | |
| Healthy Environment Promotion healthy habits and prevention of illnesses. Conducts daily health checks. | | |
| Sanitation Practices Uses accepted practices to maintain a clean and sanitary environment for children. | | |
| Nutrition Provides young children with healthy eating routines. | | |

| Areas of Responsibilities for Early Childhood Professional | Professional Development Learning Goal | Questions for Your Center Director |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| <p>Infection Control Practices Uses hand washing, diaper changing procedures, and other measures that reduce the incidence of infection. Ensures that children participate in hand washing and other measures to reduce the incidence of infection.</p> | | |
| <p>Child Development Understands and implements classroom activities in the developmental areas of language, cognitive, social, emotional, large muscle, and small muscle development.</p> | | |
| <p>Creating a learning environment Develop a classroom environment that provides young children with opportunities to make activity choices, participate in group activities, and explore a variety of concrete materials that encourage learning.</p> | | |
| <p>Educational Programs Develops lesson plans and activity schedules that provide young children with appropriate developmental learning activities.</p> | | |
| <p>Communication with children Demonstrates positive and respectful verbal and non-verbal communication skills with individual young children</p> | | |
| <p>Child Guidance Uses positive guidance methods in working with young children. Has the ability to resolve guidance issues in a proactive and positive manner</p> | | |
| <p>Interactions with parents Demonstrates positive written and verbal communication skills with parents.</p> | | |

| Areas of Responsibilities for Early Childhood Professional | Professional Development Learning Goal | Questions for Your Center Director |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Interactions with other staff Maintains positive, respectful, and confidential communications with other staff members. | | |
| Interactions with supervisor Maintains respectful, positive and confidential communication with supervisor. Is open to honest and constructive feedback on performance. Asks questions to determine unclear expectations. | | |