

Module 2: Safety, Health, Nutrition

Section A: Safety

Introduction

In this section you will learn about basic safety procedures that apply to Arizona child care centers. Providing a safe environment requires administrators and staff to constantly monitor the child care facility, classroom, and playground for safety hazards. Parents expect a licensed child care center to provide a minimum level of safety and they assume that their child will be safe. This section will introduce you to procedures that keep children safe on a daily basis and during emergency situations. Information on transportation and field trip safety practices will provide you with best practices to ensure children are safe on field trips or when transported to and from elementary schools.

Learning Objectives

After completing this section you will be able to:

- Identify 3 safety practices for both the classroom and the playground.
- Explain security precautions involved in releasing children.
- Provide an explanation of your responsibilities when taking children on a field trip.
- List 6 different times you should take attendance during a field trip.

Guiding Your Learning

As you work through this section think about how you will ensure that your classroom and the playground are safe and free of hazards. Make a list of questions you may have for the Center Director about the safety systems and procedures at the center including precautions to ensure that children are only released to authorized persons.

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 Licensing Child Care Licensing Regulations

Article 3 Facility Administration

R9- 5-301 General Licensee Responsibilities

E. Visitors to the center who are not staff members or parents must be supervised by a staff member when children are present.

H. Staff are prohibited from using alcohol, drugs, or firearms during hours the center is open. Staff may use medications that are prescribed by a doctor.

Article 5 Facility program and equipment

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

A. Child care facilities are required to maintain their facilities and equipment in good condition and with an absence of hazards.

R9-5-304 Enrollment of Children/ Emergency Information

All parents are to complete emergency information prior to the child's first day of attendance and have the emergency information readily available to staff. Information on the State required form includes: emergency contact information, immunization records, permission for the child's emergency medical care, and specific information on the child's medical or physical conditions that effect care of the child.

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

Staff who are not familiar with an individual picking up a child must verify the person's identity with picture identification before releasing the child to the individual. Additionally, this regulation requires that an enrolled child may only be released to the child's parents or person who has the parent's written authorization. Telephone requests for an alternate person to pick up a child must be verified prior to the center releasing the child. Children cannot be admitted or leave the program without a parent unless the child is school age and the center administration has obtained written permission from the child's parent.

Article 3: Facility Administration

R 9 -5-301 General Licensee Responsibilities:

Monthly fire drills and emergency evacuation drills are conducted, documented, and involve all children in the facility including infants, toddlers, and children with special needs.

R9-5-514 Accident and Emergency Procedures

Child care centers are required to develop a written fire and emergency plan for the center. Important elements of the plan include the names of staff members with CPR and First Aid training, location of the first aid kit, information on contacting the fire department, procedures for notifying an injured child's

parents, required telephone services, and posting of the emergency plan to serve as a reference for staff. This section includes procedures to follow if a child is injured including communication with parents.

R9-5-516 Medication

H. Prescription and nonprescription medications are required to be kept in a locked cabinet or container that is used only for storage of medications or in the refrigerator in a locked container if the medication requires refrigeration. Medications must be kept out of the reach of children.

J. Prescription medication for staff members or an enrolled child that is required to treat life-threatening symptoms may be kept in a classroom. The medication must be inaccessible to the enrolled child unless needed for treatment.

R9-5-518 Field Trip

Preparations for field trips need to include providing directions for planning the trip, written permission from parents, items and information to take on the trip such as emergency information, taking attendance, supervision on the trip, staff to child ratios, and other safety practices for the field trip.

Article 6: Physical Plant of a Facility**R9-5-603 Outdoor Activity Areas**

Child care center playground areas are required to have fencing, ground cover, shaded areas and other physical safety considerations.

Emergency Preparedness

The safety and security of the children enrolled in a child care program is a basic expectation of parents. If this is your first experience working in a child care program, you may not think about the various emergencies or incidents that may occur. Young children are curious and active and will occasionally have an accident that involves minor first aid. However, there are emergency situations that may occur that require child care center administrators and staff to be prepared to respond. The Arizona Licensing Regulations for Child Care Centers provide guidance on creating a safe environment for young children and care of the children during emergencies. Every child care center must have an emergency plan that provides information for all staff in case of emergencies

Although the specifics and the information of an emergency plan may vary between centers the Arizona Child Care Licensing Regulations require the following information be available to staff:

1. Emergency phone numbers for the fire department, local law enforcement agency, child care center licensing, closest hospital, and other important phone numbers should be posted by the all telephones in the building

2. Fire Safety and Evacuation Planning includes having monthly fire drills, an evacuation plan and a fire evacuation diagram which is posted in each classroom. Each classroom evacuation diagram should indicate two exits from the classroom.
3. A listing of staff that have current First Aid and CPR Training.
4. Location of the first aid kits.
5. Location of the emergency information for each child.

In addition, the center will have an Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Plan for situations such as a fire or flood that may require the evacuation of the building, a lost child, or other major emergencies.

****Ask your Center Director for information on the Emergency Plans for your center and the location of the Emergency Plan.**

****Check with your Center Director for procedures to follow if a child is injured.**

Classroom Safety - Use your eyes to look for safety hazards

The classroom is the area where children in the child care center spend the majority of their day. Typically children play, eat snacks and meals, take naps, engage in learning activities, and interact with teachers and other children in their classroom. Classrooms need to provide children with a safe and child centered environment to engage in their daily activities and routines. Developing a safe classroom requires the teacher (s) to be aware of the safety of the equipment, materials, general room condition and appearance.

Children explore, play, and are curious about the things in their environment. Young children do not have the wealth of experience to recognize a situation or material that presents a safety hazard. As an early childhood professional it is your role to be aware of potential hazards that young children may encounter while engaged in play and exploration. Keep in mind that the younger the child, the more you need to be aware of potential hazards. The following is a list of classroom safety hazards and precautions:

- Take daily attendance as the children arrive for the day and take periodic head counts and compare to daily attendance sheets throughout the day.
- Classrooms areas need to be clear to allow for children, staff, and parents to move through the area without falling.
- Classroom doorways should be clear of materials or equipment and accessible to children, staff, and parents.
- Toys and materials that represent a choking hazard to young children should not be accessible to young children.

- Toys should be checked on a regular basis to ensure there are no loose screws, sharp points, or ragged edges.
- Furniture should be stable. Large cabinets and shelf units should be bolted to ensure they do not fall.
- Beware of doors that may pinch small fingers.
- Cover electric outlets and be certain that electrical cords or wiring is inaccessible to children.
- Shelving units should not present a climbing hazard for young children. (Example: the book display shelving with step-like book shelves).
- Cords from window coverings should be inaccessible to children.
- Cleaning and toxic materials are stored in locked cabinets or are inaccessible to children.
- Prescription and non-prescription medications are stored in locked cabinets and are inaccessible to children.
- Medications for life threatening conditions that are required for children or staff may be kept in an inaccessible location in a classroom.
- Staff purses are inaccessible to children or stored in locked closets or cabinets.
- Sand/water table areas are swept or mopped to prevent falls.

****Check with your Center Director for specific safety rules for your center and classroom.**

Classroom Security

The safety of children includes ensuring their security. Security in a child care program is focused on limiting children's parents and other authorized adults access to enrolled children. Child care programs have security procedures in place to ensure only authorized people have access to the classrooms during hours of operation. In many programs parents must pass through the main entrance to the center where center administrative personnel will ensure that only authorized persons enter the classrooms and pick up children. In addition, some programs have security doors that require a code to enter the center. Other centers may have doors that separate the classroom areas of the center from the public areas of the center. Fenced playground areas are another safety feature that provides a secure play environment for young children.

As an early childhood professional your responsibility is to make certain that only authorized people have access to the children in your classroom. The following guidelines can help you make certain the classroom environment is secure:

1. Become familiar with the names of the parents in your classroom. The children's Emergency and Immunization Record Cards contains the names of each child's parents and designated adults who are authorized to pick up the children.
2. Children cannot be released to adults who are not authorized **in writing** by the child's parents.
3. If you are not familiar with a parent or other adult who is picking up a child ask to see their driver's license. **
4. Parents and authorized adults are responsible for signing in enrolled children as they arrive for the day and signing out children when they leave the center.
5. Other adults who visit the center are required by the Arizona Licensing Regulations for Child Care Centers to be accompanied by a staff member.
6. Conduct head counts of the children on a regular basis and at the end of the day mark attendance sheets as children leave the program.

**Check with your Center Director for procedures on how changes in the child's normal release to parents are communicated to staff.

**Check with your Center Director on policies for emergency release of children to adults without written permission to pick up a child.

Playground Safety

Young children love to be outdoors! Ask a child about their day at school and a majority will report. "I played outside." Outdoor play experiences are important for children's healthy growth and development. Opportunities for climbing, running, playing with other children, and nature exploration of the playground provide children with experiences in thinking, language, motor, social, and emotional development. However, playgrounds can provide safety hazards for young children. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission stated that each year an average of 218,850 children under the age of 14 visit the emergency room for playground-related injuries every year. Of these injuries 57% occur at playgrounds or schools, including child care centers. Your responsibility as an early childhood professional is to prevent injuries by actively supervising the children and preventing accidents by checking for possible hazards on the playground.

- Active supervision on the playground includes being involved with the children, developing a plan for zone supervision where teachers are stationed in different areas of the playground. For example, one teacher supervises the playground equipment while another teacher supervises the children who are playing with the riding toys.
- Possible hazards on the playground include broken equipment, sharp or loose pieces on playground equipment that includes the climbing equipment, riding toys, or playhouses, sensory play areas (sandbox or water table) that are not clean.

- Conduct a safety check of the playground each morning before the children have access to it for items that may not belong and for safety issues. Examples include checking the sandbox and walking the perimeter of the fence.
- Take attendance and conduct head counts of the children before, during, and after returning to the classroom.
- Ensure children are using the equipment appropriately for its intended use.
- Check on your center's policy for young children to be supervised if they need to return to the classroom to use the restroom.
- In Arizona, it is important that young children have access to water while playing outdoors to prevent dehydration. Check on your center's policy for providing water to the children.
- Be aware of the requirements for the length of outdoor times during periods of extreme heat.
- Young children should be dressed for the weather when playing outside. In cooler weather children need to wear sweaters, jackets, and other outerwear.
- Appropriate shoes for outdoor play should be encouraged to parents. Flip flops can be dangerous when running outside both for teachers and children.

** Check with your Center Director about how to report safety issues that involve maintenance on the playground equipment.

Injuries

Despite our best efforts to protect the children in our program, injuries do occur. It is important to remain calm as the children are looking to you for guidance. It is strongly suggested that you become CPR and First Aid certified to better prepare yourself for accidents and injuries. If the injury is severe or life threatening, 9-1-1 should be called for immediate emergency assistance. Basic steps for minor first aid care are listed below. It is important to only use soap and water to clean and disinfect injuries.

Basic First Aid Care

- **Heavy Bleeding:** Apply direct pressure with clean sterile gauze.
- **Amputation:** Apply pressure with clean sterile gauze at the site of amputation. Find the amputated limb, wrap it in a clean cloth and put on ice.
- **Impaled Object:** Do not remove object as it might be stopping the blood flow. Allow medical professional to remove object.
- **Avulsions (*flap of skin*):** Wash with soap and water and place flap of skin where it should go.
- **Scrapes or Small Cuts:** Wash with soap and water and apply bandage. Never use anything but soap and water on injuries.
- **Burns:** Apply cold water.

- **Head, Neck or Spinal Injuries:** Do NOT move or pick the child up. Let him/her move on their own.
- **Broken Bones or Sprains:** Stabilize the injured area. Do not move child, let child move the affected area on his/her own.
- **Swelling and Bruising:** Apply ice
- **Bites:** Wash with soap and water and apply ice.
- **Insect Stings or Bites:** Have a member of management remove sting. Bites should be washed with Soap and Water and a cool cloth can be applied.
- **Tooth Knocked Out:** Apply pressure to bleeding with a clean cloth or paper towel. Find tooth and put in milk.
- **Nose Bleed:** Apply direct pressure by pinching the nose with a clean cloth or paper towel.
- **Head Injury:** Apply ice and watch for signs of concussion.

When a child is injured at your program you are required to document it in writing. DHS requires that all accidents, illnesses and injuries are logged by the center. Ask your center director for the appropriate procedure for documenting injuries at your program.

Sun Safety for Young Children

Part of playground safety includes awareness of how the weather effects children's outdoor play periods. The two major factors associated with outdoor play in Arizona are sun safety and air quality.

Arizona has the 2nd highest rate of skin cancer in the world. Skin cancer which occurs later in life is the result of sun exposure and sunburn during childhood. Protecting young children from the sun during outdoor play should be a focus for early childhood professionals. The following are suggested actions to prevent overexposure to the sun.

- Outdoor playtime needs to be limited when the temperatures exceed 90 degrees or below 30 degrees.
- Playground schedules may be used to provide times for different age groups to have access to the playground. Limiting the ages and the number of children on the playground makes outdoor play safer as teachers can gear activities to the developmental level of the children.
- Children need to be encouraged to play under the shaded play areas of the playground when the temperature is above 90 degrees and during the hours of 10:00 AM and 4:00 PM.
- Water, sand, cement, and snow reflect sun rays and may cause sunburn.
- Outdoor play equipment and surfaces can become hot to the touch during the summer. Be aware of these areas on your playground.

- Protect children from sunburn by applying sunscreen. Parents may provide sunscreen for the child or if the center provides sunscreen written parent approval is required. ** Talk to your Center Director about the sunscreen policy at the center.
 1. Dress children for the sun by encouraging parents to bring hats and sunglasses for the children to wear outside.
 2. Spray bottles are a great way to keep the kids cool outside when it's hot.

Monitoring Air Quality

Some children have asthma or other respiratory conditions that require them to avoid outdoor play when the air quality is poor. Be aware of the children in your group that have restrictions for outdoor play.

Poisoning

Because children are active explorers it is important to keep all toxic materials locked and out of reach. You must also be aware of any poisonous plants that children could be exposed to in your care. If a child were to ingest a chemical, poisonous plant or unknown substance contact 9-1-1 if it an emergency or Poison Control at 800-222-1222 if it is not life threatening. Do not do anything such as inducing vomiting unless you are guided to by Poison Control. Prevention is the best protection against poisoning.

Transportation and Field Trip Safety

There are occasions when you may be asked to drive the center's bus or van. On other occasions children may be transported on a special field trip in a third party vehicle. In either situation there are policies and procedures to be followed that ensure the safety of the children.

Field trips provide an opportunity to expand the learning process beyond the classroom. Young children learn best through concrete experiences that they can see, hear, touch, and smell. For instance children learning about animals might take a field trip to the zoo or a farm. Field trips for school age children can provide fun and challenging activities during out of school times. For example trips to local parks for a baseball game or visiting a science museum can provide fun and learning. While field trips provide ways to enhance the classroom activities and learning, field trips may present safety risks. Following the transportation, attendance, and head count policies listed above provide some of the important safety guidelines. The following field trip guidelines provide additional suggestions to ensure a safe and fun field trip experience for children and teachers.

Basic requirements for transportation of children and field trips:

- Driver qualifications:
 - Van driver qualifications: Eighteen (18) years of age and has a valid Arizona's Driver's License.
 - If vehicle seats more than 16 passengers including the driver, a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) is required.
- A field trip permission form is created for each field trip that provides the specific day, times of departure and return, the address and phone number for the destination. Parents must sign the permission form authorizing their children to participate. If parents do not sign the permission form the child is not allowed to participate in the field trip. A copy of the permission slip is kept at the center and the original is taken on the field trip to take attendance at a minimum of every hour; however, half hour counts are recommended for field trips.
- A teacher with current First Aid and CPR training must be with the children at all times.
- Adequate staffing for transportation and field trips is a critical factor in providing supervision for the children participating. Field trip ratios:
 - Five children or less: 1 teacher to 5 children
 - 6 Children and above: 2 teachers
 - The driver of the child care center vehicle used for transportation may be counted in the staff to child ratio when transporting school age children if the driver meets teacher qualifications.
 - When transporting children who are not school-age, the driver can be counted in the child-staff ratio if four or fewer children are transported and the driver meets teacher qualifications.
- A copy of the Emergency and Immunization Record Card for each child must be carried in the vehicle at all times.
- Drivers are aware of the route plan and time schedule for routine drop-offs and pick-ups is maintained at the center for elementary school transportation.
- For a field trip, a written plan must be prepared that includes the name of the destination, address, times, directions and a route plan that includes the emergency facilities along the route to the field trip, and safe areas to load and unload the vehicle. A copy of this plan is left at the center and one is taken on the field trip.
- Attendance sheets with the names of children being transported is taken in the vehicle and head counts are completed at the following times during any transportation event including both

routine transportation and field trips. See the field trip form that includes attendance checkpoints for the following:

- Before the children leave the center.
 - After the children board the vehicle.
 - After each routine drop-off or pick-up of children.
 - On field trips, prior to the children leaving the vehicle, after the children have left the vehicle, each half hour during the field trip, prior to boarding the vehicle, after boarding the vehicle.
 - Before the children leave the vehicle.
 - After the children return to the center. This needs to occur prior to the children returning to their classroom.
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- When arriving to or returning from a destination, the driver needs to walk through the vehicle from front to back to ensure that no children are left.
 - Seat belts need to be worn by the children. No double buckling. One child per seat belt.
 - Younger children must be transported in car seats that are secured into the vehicle seats.
 - Children are **NEVER** left unattended in a vehicle.
 - Teachers or other adults are the only occupants of the vehicle who can open and close windows or doors.
 - Teachers or drivers may not use ear phone for radios, cell phones, or other video or audio products while driving the vehicle. Cell phones may be used in an emergency and when the vehicle is turned off and parked.
 - Safe loading and unloading locations should have been previously identified prior to the vehicle reaching its destination.
 - Keys are never left in the vehicle.
 - Children are required to remain seated with arms and legs inside the vehicle.
 - Vehicle doors are locked during driving time.
 - Drinking water is always available in the vehicle, and a complete first aid kit, and clean towels or blankets are in the vehicle.
 - For field trips, all children must wear in plain view a written identification stating the facility's name, address, and telephone number **and** also ensure that each enrolled child is wearing out of view a written identification stating the enrolled child's name.

Arizona Child Booster Seat Law took effect on August 2, 2012 and requires vehicles that seat 10 or fewer passengers to be restrained in a booster seat for each child under the age of 8 who is transported in the vehicle.

** Talk to your Center Director about the specific transportation, field trip policies and driver qualifications for the center. Policies and requirements for safe maintenance of the vehicle and qualifications for drivers are included in a handout in the Resource Section of this Section.

Applying Your Knowledge

How does this information affect your work with young children?

Providing young children with a safe environment is one of the primary responsibilities of an early childhood professional. Providing a safe environment for young children requires that you are alert and proactive in evaluating potential safety hazards to children. There are many safety hazards that are beyond this initial orientation. Using your observational skills and making well considered judgments is important to maintaining a safe environment for children in your care. Supervision and head counts, following your center's security procedures, and ensuring the safety of your classroom and playground are primary responsibilities for an early childhood professional. Any time you take children out of the center be certain to follow all safety process to ensure a successful trip.

Check Your Understanding

- ✓ Evaluate your classroom and playground for safety practices that are instrumental in keeping the children safe. Identify two practices that you feel are most important.
- ✓ A parent you do not recognize arrives and states he is taking one of the children home. What do you do?
- ✓ Name all the times that you should take head counts and take attendance during a field trip. Why is this important to children's safety?
- ✓ You have decided to take the children on a field trip. What process and procedures do you need to follow in planning and preparing for the field trip?

Resources

Printable Resources

DHS – Emergency Preparedness Check List

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

DHS – Field Trip Permission Form

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

DHS – Accident, Injury, Emergency, Illness, Infestation and Absence Log

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

DHS - New Booster Seat Law <http://www.azdhs.gov/als/childcare/documents/news/ChildRestraintLaw-ChildCare.pdf>

Additional Websites

DHS – Sun Safety <http://www.theempowerpack.org/documents/Sunwise.pdf>

[Choking Prevention for Children](http://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/injury_prevention/choking_prevention_for_children.htm) (New York State Department of Health) Retrieved from

http://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/injury_prevention/choking_prevention_for_children.htm

References

[How Safe is Your Classroom? Identifying Hazards Before Accidents Happen](http://www.earlychildhoodnews.com/earlychildhood/article_view.aspx?ArticleID=273) (Dr. Charlotte Hendricks) Retrieved from http://www.earlychildhoodnews.com/earlychildhood/article_view.aspx?ArticleID=273

Arizona Sun Wise http://www.azdhs.gov/phs/sunwise/pdf/tip_sheet.pdf (Arizona Department of Health Services)

Module 2-Section A Worksheet

Identify two practices that are instrumental in keeping children safe.

1.

2.

A parent you do not recognize arrives and states he is taking of the children home. What would you do?

Name all the times that you should take head counts and take attendance during a field trip.

You have decided to take the children on a field trip. What process and procedures do you need to follow in planning and preparing for the field trip?
