

7e. Playground Safety/Behavior Policy and Procedure

- Created 11/00
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Policy

Children's safety on the playground is vital in preventing childhood accidents. There will be routine inspections of the playground environment and rules will be established and maintained at all sites within the program.

Procedure

1. All classroom staff will actively supervise children during outdoor time.
2. [EDUC 7b. Counting of Children and Name to Face Checklist - link coming soon \(lowercolumbia.edu/_resources/_training/web-editor-training/gmontes/EHS/Education/health-safety/counting-children-name-to-face\)](http://lowercolumbia.edu/_resources/_training/web-editor-training/gmontes/EHS/Education/health-safety/counting-children-name-to-face) will be used by the assigned staff upon leaving and re-entering the classroom.
3. Staff will be strategically located on the playground to ensure each area of the playground is supervised. All areas of the playground are to be easily seen and quickly reached by an adult.
4. Best practice and program recommendations is for a minimum of two staff on the playground during outdoor time.
 - a. If a staff must leave the playground in the 3-5 year old program, the ratio must never fall below 1 staff per 10 children.
 - b. If a staff must leave the playground in the EHS program, it must never fall below 1 staff to 4 children.
 - c. NO child is to be left unattended.
5. The Area Manager and/or School Readiness Specialist must approve division of the class (half go outside while half stay inside). This decision will be based upon group dynamics, teacher and assistant experience, as well as other center factors.
 - a. The group must remain in close vicinity to the classroom. Staff must have a form of communication to another staff person in the building that can assist if necessary.
 - b. If a substitute is in the classroom then the class may not be divided.
6. First Aid packs must be taken out on the playground.
7. Each day, staff will thoroughly inspect all areas of the playground and address identified health and safety hazards prior to the children's outdoor time. This inspection will include but is not limited to the following:

- A broom and dustpan are to be used for picking up needles, glass and other sharp objects. These swept-up objects are to go directly from the dustpan into the "sharps" container. (Staff members are to wear gloves. However, hands will not be used to directly touch or pick up any sharp objects.) The container lid is immediately placed on the container and secured (screwed on tightly or snapped on and sealed by tape). The container is then to be placed with the site biohazard container and the Health Specialist contacted by a Direct Service Team member or CFDS for container pick up.

Important Note: After placing the "sharps" container with the biohazard container, immediately remove and appropriately dispose of your gloves. Then wash your hands.

- Equipment that may cause falls, pinching, cuts, scrapes, bruises and/or puncture wounds or serious injuries.
 - Areas underneath play structures and swings where the depth of ground cover should be no less than 9 inches.
 - Movable play structures that are brought outside, must meet Caring for Our Children requirements.
 - Other dangers may include: poisonous or hazardous foliage, including sharp branches, thorns, poisonous mushrooms, bee or wasp nests, animal feces and wood structures that have sharp splinters, bolts, nails, etc.
 - Screen for any suspicious person(s) that may be on the playground and do not have a reason to be present. Take appropriate steps to keep self, others and area safe.
 - Gate latches are in working order and prevent children from leaving premises or getting into unsafe or unsupervised areas.
8. The children will be taught safety concepts regarding any objects that they may find on the playground.
 9. Staff will routinely review the playground safety rules with children and will consistently reinforce the rules. These rules should be written and include appropriate pictures or visual cues.
 10. All sandboxes will be covered to avoid hazards such as: contamination from neighboring animals, broken glass, and other sharp objects that can easily be hidden within the sand play area.
 11. There needs to be an establishment of playground boundaries. Some type of visual marker must be used and introduced to children as the playground boundary. Children are to stay within the visual boundaries indicated by teachers.
 12. At a minimum, playground rules should include:
 - Establishment of areas that are safe for running (i.e., not under play structures where a child might be jumped on).
 - Safety rules regarding elevated areas where children of this size and age should not be jumping from: Anything at or above four feet is too high for children ages 3-5 to safely jump from play structure. Please

adjust this height restriction according to the appropriate height for children younger than three.

- Staff will guide children in appropriate play for slides.
- Sand/rocks/ground covering stay on the ground.
- Tricycles, Wagons, etc. play:
 - Talk with children about traffic safety (driver and pedestrian) rules when going over tricycle safety. Establish a specific direction of travel and safe location for children to ride without running into pedestrians. Add crosswalks if necessary.
 - Bicycle helmets are worn when riding a tricycle or wagon and cleaned between uses. For more information, refer to HLTH 9d. Bicycle Helmets Outdoor Procedure - **link coming soon**.
 - Wagons are to be pulled by hand, not by tricycles.
 - Children are to ride sitting in the wagon.
 - Children are to sit on the tricycle seat to ride.
 - Tricycle riders must stay within the indicated boundaries.
- Staff is to make sure they have considered any safety/health issues when they plan for the outdoor activities.
- In the event of inclement weather, the class will remain in the classroom for gross motor activities or use the gross motor room. When the regular daily routine for outdoor time is interrupted during inclement weather, staff will have preplanned activities for the classroom and gross motor room and will give additional diligence to active supervision at transitions and throughout all activities.