

Supervision for Kentucky Early Childhood Child Care Providers

Supervision is basic to safety and the prevention of injury and maintaining quality care. Parents\Guardians have a contract with child care providers to supervise their children. A qualified staff must be able to hear and see the children to supervise and rescue in case of an emergency. Children who are presumed to be sleeping might be awake and in need of a qualified staff's attention. A child's risk-taking behavior must be detected as well as illness, stress; dangerous behaviors must be noticed and appropriately managed.

Active supervision involves:

- Knowing each child's ability and personality;
- Establishing clear and simple rules;
- Being aware and scanning for potential safety hazards;
- Standing in a strategic position;
- Scanning play activities and circulating around the area;
- Focusing on positives rather than the negatives to teach a child what is safe;
- Teaching children the appropriate and safe way to use equipment (using a slide correctly – feet first only)

**Physical presence of a qualified staff doesn't always ensure adequate supervision.*

Children are going to be more active in the outdoor learning/play environment and need more supervision rather than less outside. Playground supervisors need to be designated and trained to supervise children in play areas. Supervision of the playground is a strategy of watching all the children within a specific territory and not engaging in prolonged dialog with any one child, group of children or other staff.

Children need spaces, indoor and out, in which they can go to for alone-time or quiet play in small groups. However, program spaces should be designed with visibility that allows constant unobtrusive adult supervision. Many instances have been reported where a child has hidden when the group was moving to another location, or where the child wandered off when a door was opened for another purpose. Regular counting of children will alert the staff to begin a search before the child gets too far, into trouble, or slips into an unobserved location. Caregivers/teachers should regularly match name to face of each child (name to face on a scheduled basis, at every transition, and whenever leaving one area and arriving at another), going indoors or outdoors, to confirm the safe whereabouts of every child at all times. Additionally, they must be able to state how many children are in their care at all times.

Lack of supervision is a *frequently* issued civil penalty in Kentucky. Child care providers should directly supervise infants, toddlers, and preschoolers by sight and hearing at all times, even when the children are going to sleep, napping or sleeping, are beginning to wake up, or are indoors or outdoors. Kentucky child care regulation states each center shall maintain a child-care program that assures each child will be provided with adequate supervision at all times by a qualified staff person who ensures the child is:

- a. Within scope of vision and range of voice; or
- b. For a school-age child, within scope of vision or range of voice.

"Range of voice" refers to the child being able to hear the adult's speaking voice and the adult being able to hear the child's speaking voice. Video monitors, baby monitors and walkie-talkies may not be used to extend the "scope of vision" or "range of voice" requirement. Supervision must be provided at all time.

Things to Remember

1. While changing a diaper on the changing table the qualified teacher should position themselves appropriately so they can supervise ALL children in their care.
2. There must be adequate light while children are napping.
3. Using your cell phone for other than emergencies is not appropriate while on the clock supervising children.
4. It is not ever appropriate to leave the children alone! You must have the appropriate coverage inside/ outside to collect supplies, use the restroom and so on).
5. It is not appropriate to send children to the restroom or anywhere alone.