U.S. Department of Health & Human Services & Administration for Children & Families

OFFICE OF HEAD START

HEALTH AND SAFETY SCREENER

Introduction

Organizations that serve young children have an obligation to assure that children in their care are in healthy and safe environments.

This health and safety screener will help organizations to identify where they need to make changes and build capacity in order to ensure children are healthy and safe while in their care.

Suggestions for Use

1. Complete a health and safety screening for each site where children receive services
2. Mark each item in the screening form “yes” or “no”. Provide descriptions for items marked “no”.
3. Determine issues, priorities, and staff responsible for actions and improvements within each site and across the program.
4. Follow up to assure improvements are made in a timely fashion.

This screening does not include all applicable Head Start Program Performance Standards, nor does it cover every possible health and safety concern or replace each grantee’s responsibility to ensure ongoing compliance with local, state, and federal health and safety requirements.

HEALTH AND SAFETY SCREENING

Grant Number: _____

Grantee Name: _____

Center or Site Name: _____

Program Option/s and Variation/s provided at this site:

HEAD START

Area #1: Environments

Requirements	Yes	No	Description of Conditions
Equipment, toys, materials, and furniture are safe, age, and developmentally appropriate.			
Environments for infants and toddlers are free of choking hazards.			
Exits are clearly marked, and emergency evacuation routes and other safety procedures are posted in the classroom and in appropriate locations throughout the site.			
Lighting is sufficient and adequate for all classroom activities.			
Emergency lighting is available in case of a power failure.			
Fire extinguishers are available, accessible, tested, and serviced regularly			
Smoke, carbon monoxide, and as necessary, radon detectors are installed, properly located and tested regularly.			
Child care, health, fire, and other applicable licenses and inspection certificates are current.			
Medication is properly stored and labeled and is not accessible to children.			
Cleaning supplies and other potentially dangerous materials are not accessible to children.			
All classrooms meet minimum square footage requirements for indoor space per local, state, Tribal, and Head Start regulations, whichever is more stringent.			
Playground and indoor gross motor equipment is age appropriate, in good repair, and protected from sun. Fall zone surfaces and equipment meet			

Requirements	Yes	No	Description of Conditions
Consumer Product Safety Commission requirements. All playground areas are visible to supervising adults.			
Necessary accommodations and modifications are made to ensure the safety, comfort, and participation of children with disabilities.			
Children are protected from potential hazards presented by windows and glass doors, including falls and breakage.			
Toilets and hand washing facilities are clean, in good repair, and easily accessible for children's use. Supplies including toilet paper, hand soap, and towels are available and accessible.			
Toileting and diapering areas are separated from areas used for food preparation, service and eating and equipped with sanitizing supplies for exclusive use in the area.			
Garbage is stored in a safe and sanitary manner to prevent contamination.			
Children and staff are protected from potential injuries from heating and cooling systems, including burns from hot water (water should not exceed (120 degrees).			
Indoor and outdoor environments are free of mold and pollutants, including smoke, lead, pesticides, and herbicides, as well as soil and water pollutants.			
Child accessible electrical outlets have covers, are tamper-resistant, or have safety plugs.			
Sleeping arrangements for infants are free of soft bedding materials (e.g., soft mattress, crib bumpers, pillows, stuffed animals, fluffy blankets, and comforters). No drop side cribs are in use.			

Requirements	Yes	No	Description of Conditions
Emergency supplies, including parent and emergency contact information, first aid kits, etc. are available in the event evacuation is needed.			
Children are protected from any hazards posed by classroom or family childcare pets.			

HEAD START

Area #2: Health and Safety Procedures

Requirements	Yes	No	Description of Conditions
All staff have criminal background checks, initial health exams, and TB screenings			
All staff are trained in mandated reporter responsibilities, including recognizing suspected child abuse and neglect and following mandated reporting requirements.			
Policies and procedures ensure children are released only to authorized adults.			
Direct service staff are trained in first aid, CPR , and medication administration (including the special needs of children with health issues), and to respond to specific medical emergencies, including asthma and allergies.			
Agency policies and procedures protect children with allergies from known allergens.			
Staff are trained to protect children in emergencies (e.g. natural disasters, community violence, intruders, attempted removal of child by unauthorized adult or adult who appears intoxicated).			
Agency maintains current parent or guardian and emergency contact list. Staff carry list on field trips and during evacuations.			
Staff are trained in using standard or universal precautions and proper hand-washing techniques. Precautions are followed while assisting with toileting and diaper-changing, when administering first aid, and during tooth brushing.			

Requirements	Yes	No	Description of Conditions
Infectious disease policies and procedures are in place and include contacting parents and communicating with the local health department as necessary.			
Staff notify parents when children are sick or injured.			
Indoor and outdoor premises are inspected prior to each use by children. Premises are kept free of undesirable and hazardous materials and conditions.			
Infant toys are cleaned and sanitized as needed between each use by individual children.			

Area #3: Supervision

Requirements	Yes	No	Description of Conditions
Children, including sleeping children, are supervised by staff at all times.			
Children in outdoor areas do not have access to unsafe or unsupervised areas (e.g. body of water, roads or parking lots, or other hazards).			
Staff are trained and implement policies that ensure children are released only to a parent, legal guardian, or other formally designated individual.			
Redundant procedures are in place to ensure that no child is left alone, i.e. a second staff person is designated to check classroom, outdoor play areas, sleeping areas, and vehicles during transitions and prior to departure.			
Required staff to child ratios are maintained at all times per local, state, and Head Start regulations, whichever is more stringent.			

HEAD START

Area #4: Transportation (if applicable)

Requirements	Yes	No	Description of Conditions
Program vehicles are properly equipped (e.g. two-way communication system, labeled and charged fire extinguisher, labeled first aid kit, seat belt cutter, reverse beeper, etc.).			
Vehicles used for child transportation are registered and inspected per local, state, Tribal and federal regulations.			
Children are seated using age and weight appropriate child passenger safety systems unless the agency holds a current waiver.			
Bus monitors and drivers have been trained on child boarding and exiting procedures, use of child passenger safety systems, emergency response, evacuation procedures, and child pick-up and release procedures.			
Bus monitors and drivers complete pre- and post-trip vehicle checks, including second or third complete interior inspections to ensure no child is ever left on a vehicle.			
Bus drivers possess CDL licenses with passenger endorsement and meet all other health, training, and safety qualifications prior to transporting children.			
Bus routes are planned to include only curbside pick up and drop off and no backing up or U turns. Children are escorted as they board and exit vehicles.			