



COMMON SAFETY HAZARDS

Note: These are safety hazards, both minor and major, found indoors and/or outdoors, that are commonly observed in child care programs. This is **not meant to be a complete list** but rather a reference of some potential safety hazards that may be present in the environment where care is provided for children. If safety hazards are observed in the child care environment, scores will reflect those hazards.

1. Major Indoor/Outdoor Safety Hazards

- Picking child up by arm
- Items labeled “Keep out of reach of children” (KOR) not locked away (personal care, medicines, cleaning supplies, etc.)
- Items labeled as hazardous to children, or stipulating that they must be used with close supervision for certain age groups, within reach of children
- Use of KOR items without close supervision (must be age appropriate)
- First Aid kit containing unsafe item(s) in reach of children
- Less than 6” edge on diapering table
- Evidence of insect or rodent infestation
- Heavy objects or furniture children can pull down
- Bleach water solution sprayed where it can be inhaled
- Hot water or surface that is accessible (stove)
- Unprotected radiator or heater in use
- 5 gallon bucket with any amount of liquid
- Open stair wells; Play areas in front of doors (blocked exits)
- Use of Pack n Plays or drop-side cribs
- Mats or rugs that slide
- Cracked tiles or flooring that is not stable
- Peeling paint in areas accessible to children
- Inadequate cushioning under indoor play equipment
- Children sleeping on two levels of a building with one provider to supervise
- Outlets uncovered
- Buttons on microwave accessible to children
- Clear glass doors or windows within 36” (for centers) or 24” (for Lg. Family & Family Child Care) of the floor are not clearly marked with a vision strip such as decal(s), sticker(s), rail(s), or mesh.

- Foods that pose choking hazards for children under the age of 4 years including:
 - Nuts and seeds if not chopped finely
 - Large chunks of cheese or meat (e.g., hot dogs)
 - Whole grapes, chunks of hard fruit (e.g., apples) and chunks of raw vegetables
 - Peanut butter if spread thickly or chunky peanut butter
 - Ice cubes
 - Raisins if not cooked in food
 - Popcorn
 - Dried fruits and vegetables
 - Hard, gooey, or sticky candy, chewing gum
- Non-Food items that pose a choking hazard for children under the age of 4 years including:
 - Balloons (latex/rubber)

2. Major Outdoor Safety Hazards

- Trampolines
- Unsupervised access to container of water or standing water or pool
- Play area unfenced & porches/elevated walkways without barriers
- Sharp equipment, opportunity for entrapment or pinching, or broken or rusty equipment
- Climbing equipment too high; Insufficient spacing, cushioning, or fall zones
- Unsafe materials on walkways (broken glasses, trash, cigarette butts)
- Walking on busy streets and crossing busy intersections
- Uncovered/contaminated sand
- Riding bikes without safety helmets when required
- Items that are unsanitary and pose health risks; exposed and accessible trash
- Broken or splintered wood
- Unlatched gates or insufficient locks that may permit escape
- Insect hives/nests, anthills, toxic plants, stumps and roots
- Holes, wells, cesspools, unprotected utility equipment
- Glass, broken equipment
- Sharp rocks
- Building supplies and equipment
- Grease traps
- Children playing in parking lots
- Unprotected ditches

- Open spoke steering wheels that spin (should be locked or solid)
- Uncovered cooking grill accessible

3. Minor Safety Hazards

- Bleach water solution in reach of children
- Uncovered trash that is accessible to children
- Small puddles outdoors that do not pose a drowning risk
- Tripping hazards (carpet edges, barriers, tree roots, etc.)
- Uncovered electrical outlets, including power strips up high in rooms where all children are non-mobile
- Items labeled “Keep out of reach of children” (KOR) not locked away (personal care, medicines, cleaning supplies, etc.) up high in rooms where all children are non-mobile
- Sand/water play accessible to children under 18 months

4. Major Safety Hazards for children under the age of 3 years

- Staplers, adult scissors, or other office supplies in reach
- Thumbtacks, push pins, or staples on walls/bulletin boards in reach
- Items that are marked not for children under 3 years of age (art supplies, bubbles) are freely accessible to children or are used by children without close supervision
- Styrofoam, foam, plastic bags (grocery type) accessible
- Bean bags used for infants
- Infant bottles/baby food that is heated in a microwave
- Babies put to sleep on stomach
- Strings, cords, elastics, straps greater than 12 inches long that may cause strangulation (pull toys, ties, scarves, purse handles/straps that fit over child’s head)
- Glitter (loose, paint, glue, etc. that include glitter pieces)
- Discovery bottles with insufficient or loose lids
- Safety straps not used on strollers, high chairs, and infant seats when in use
- Small objects that pose choking hazards, including eyes on stuffed animals/dolls/puppets and small wheels on cars