



Quality ChildCare

For Registered Home-Based Providers

LEARNING TO GROW ★ WINDWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Vol. V, No. 6

10 Hallmarks of Quality Child Care

- ★ Build trusting relationships
- ★ Provide consistent care
- ★ Support children's health
- ★ **Provide a safe environment**
- ★ Provide positive guidance
- ★ Provide a language-rich environment
- ★ Foster curiosity and development through play
- ★ Individualize care and learning activities
- ★ Partner with parents
- ★ Pursue personal and professional growth

This Month's Hallmarks of Quality Child Care

Provide a Safe Environment

Active Supervision

Have you ever taken your eyes off a child for a few minutes and he got into something he wasn't supposed to? Children are naturally curious. They are actively exploring their environment and if not properly supervised, they can easily get into dangerous situations. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

- Unintentional injury is the leading cause of death for young children.
- For children less than 1 year of age, two-thirds of injury deaths were due to suffocation.
- Drowning was the leading cause of injury death for those 1 to 4 years of age.
- Each year, approximately 2.8 million children had an emergency room visit for injuries from a fall.

The most effective strategy for preventing injuries is active supervision. Active supervision involves intentional focus and observation of all children in your care. It involves knowledge of each child's development and being responsive to each child's needs.

According to the Early Childhood National Centers, active supervision includes six essential strategies: Setting up the environment, Positioning Yourself, Scanning and Counting, Listening, Anticipating Children's Behavior, and Engaging and Redirecting.

In this newsletter, we will discuss these active supervision strategies and have included additional tips to keep infants, toddlers, and preschoolers safe.



Strategies for Active Supervision

- **Set up the environment** so your line of sight allows you to easily supervise children. Place higher shelves against the walls with lower furniture defining the play space. This will allow you to see all children, even if you are across the room with another child. Adding visual supports such as mirrors or cameras to your environment can also make it easier for family childcare providers to supervise “blind spots”.
- **Position yourself** where you can see and hear all of the children in your care. For example, if two children are still eating breakfast and the other children are playing in another room, stand in close proximity to both groups of children. Make sure there are clear paths in order for you to get to where the children are quickly.
- **Scan the environment and count** the children frequently. Look around the environment and make sure that each child is accounted for. This is especially important when transitioning from one activity to another, especially from outdoors to indoors, and even when going on field trips such as a walk to the nearby farmer’s market.
- **Listen closely for signals of danger.** One strategy might be to attach bells to the door or gate, which would help alert you to a child leaving or entering.



- **Anticipate behavior** by knowing the developmental abilities of the children. For example, Maya has discovered how to jump from the steps to the grass. You may position yourself so that you can help the other children, knowing that their motor skills are not as advanced.
- **Engage and redirect** children by providing individualized care. For example, if you know that Noah bites when he is frustrated, you can prevent the escalation of a conflict and support him by helping him resolve the problem.

Infants

Young infants completely depend on adults to meet all of their needs. Mobile infants who are beginning to crawl, cruise, or walk may be able to get to objects that were once out of their reach. Active supervision with infants includes setting up the environment so that an infant cannot access materials that he/she may choke on. An easy way to check for toy safety is by using an empty toilet paper tube. If the toy fits through the tube, it is too small and should be kept out of reach.

Active supervision with infants also means that you have baby within your line of sight at all times. Listening for sounds (or absence of sounds) could alert you to a situation in which a baby is in trouble. Regular visual checks (for example, every 15 minutes) are a good practice to have in place, especially when an infant is asleep.

Toddlers

Toddlers are especially at risk for injuries, as they are mobile and curious explorers of their environment. Setting up the environment for toddlers includes getting down to their level and looking at the world from their point of view. From this vantage point, you can see unsecured shelves that might look like a staircase or dangerous objects that are not as inaccessible as you once thought. Look for items that may appear to be candy, such as button batteries and laundry detergent pods and store them out of a child's reach and/or in a locked cabinet.

Use safety locks and gates to ensure that toddlers do not access areas that are unsafe.

Young children need to be constantly supervised around water, as they can drown in as little as 2 inches of water in a matter of seconds. This means drowning can happen where you least expect it, such as in buckets, holes in the backyard filled with rainwater, inflatable pools, ponds, bathtubs, or even toilet bowls.

Toddlers need to be closely supervised as they are developing self-regulation skills. Active supervision with toddlers often means anticipating that a child may need support in certain situations. For example, toddlers often need extra support as they play. By anticipating that they will likely need support, you might provide duplicate toys, facilitate taking turns, or put other visual supports (e.g., sand timers) in place to show children when their turn will be.



Preschoolers

Preschoolers have growing cognitive abilities to understand and avoid risks, however each child's temperament plays into his decision to take risks. It is still important to actively supervise preschoolers. Implement daily safety checks to identify potential hazards both indoors and outdoors:

- Store and lock all cleaning products, pesticides, and medicines.
- Check your indoor spaces for equipment and materials that may have broken down and become unsafe.
- Inspect your outdoor equipment for sharp edges, rust, and other unsafe conditions.
- Ensure that all unused electrical outlets are covered with child proof caps.

Doing these safety checks daily is important in your family child care home, where safety is your top priority.

Active supervision with young children from infant through preschool should be part of the daily child care practice. Having active supervision stated in your policies and shared with parents will help to keep the child safe in all settings.



Citations:

American Academy of Pediatrics. *Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs, 3rd Edition* (2011) http://nrckids.org/files/CFOC3_updated_final.pdf

National Association for Family Child Care Foundation. *Quality Standards for NAFCC Accreditation, 5th Edition* (2017) <https://www.nafcc.org/file/bfae1239-d67e-41d9-820d-96c059842fac>

National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, CDC (2016) https://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/pdf/leading_causes_of_death_by_age_group_2016-508.pdf

National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness. (n.d) *Active Supervision* <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/active-supervision.pdf>

Reflection Sheet, Award Book, and Training Certificates

- Providers who fill out the caregiver's reflection sheet and return it by the posted deadline to the Learning to Grow Program are *guaranteed* a children's book in return. A postage-paid envelop is provided.
- Providers who thoughtfully complete the reflection sheet **question #5** can be awarded a certificate indicating one hour of training completed. Training hours will align with the topic areas required to meet DHS requirements.
- Reflection sheets do not need to be returned by the due date in order to earn the certificate. However, the supply of award books is limited and after the due date, award books will be sent only as available.
- Indicate on Question #8 if you would like to receive free technical assistance or support related to a child care issue.



Join us on Facebook!
University of Hawaii Learning to Grow
www.facebook.com/learningtogrowhawaii/

Learning to Grow Quality Child Care for Registered Home-Based Providers is a project of University of Hawai'i, Windward Community College with funding from the Hawai'i Department of Human Services ★ 808-462-4700 ★ www.learningtogrowhawaii.org