Policy: Supervision of Children

Policy

At Stepping Stones Child Care Centre, a rule of care is that no child will be left unsupervised, at any stage of the day. This rule applies to both indoor and outdoor activities, during toileting and sleep. Childcare staff requires skills to be able to assess potential risks while supervising and be able to implement changes immediately to reduce the risk of accident or injury. Young children are not able to realise or assess risks to themselves or others, so correct and adequate supervision is essential to minimising accidents and to ensure that children's safety is held in the highest regard every day.

Implementation

Staff will:

- Never leave a child unattended on a change table or mat, this includes staff moving to reach objects, a hand MUST be held to the child at all times.
- Ensure infants are safely buckled into their highchairs at meal times and the drop side of the cot is never left down while a child is in it.
- Ensure that children are correctly positioned at sleep/rest times so staff can still supervise effectively.
- Adjust supervision depending on a child's age, children over 3 do not need such close supervision, and should be encouraged to be able to take simple risks. Nonetheless, staff will be aware of the children's whereabouts at all times and be able to assist if necessary.
- Never leave children unattended during mealtimes, including having drinks. (Please remember, choking is often silent).
- Ensure all children are within sight or hearing at all times, including when children use the bathroom. (Staff should encourage children to alert them when they are going to the bathroom).
- Ensure students, volunteers or visitors are NOT given the responsibility of supervision.
- Communicate effectively with other staff members if you have to leave an area. Do not assume that someone will cover for you.
- Be aware of who we are releasing a child to at departure time. Ensure a staff member knows the authorised person, or check the person's identification against the child's enrolment form before releasing them.
- Make sure that tea and lunch breaks are structured as to allow for maximise supervision during busy times of the day.
- Position themselves, (do not have your back to the children) arrange furniture, equipment and activities to maximise the best possible supervision.
- Make sure the building is correctly supervised, to ensure that unauthorised persons cannot access the children's areas.
- Be aware of cultural and individual supervision for the needs of each child: eg, a child may like to have some private space but must still to be supervised.
- Do regular head counts of all the children in their group and the groups as a whole. (Especially when moving inside/outside or moving rooms).
- Ensure experiences involving water, are closely monitored and the water is removed when the children are leaving the area.
- Question any stranger to the Centre with a "Hello, can I help you"? (Make observations of the person actions if they appear suspicious).
- Be aware that staff/children ratios are being followed at all times for maximum supervision.

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- Discuss and highlight the best areas of supervision (especially outside) to avoid being clustered in spot. Supervision is supposed to be active and involve interacting with children, not standing & watching.
- Follow the Centre lockup" procedure when closing up, each room will be walked through; attendance sheets will be checked over to ensure no children are still within the Centre.

Families will:

- Hand their child over to a staff member on arrival, and sign the child in. Once **signed in**, children are the responsibility of the staff; upon being **signed out,** the responsibility is on the parent or guardian
- Families are not to leave children unattended within the Centre. (If staff are in the process of opening or closing the Centre, families are not to leave children in a room to wait for staff to return, please stay with your child).
- Inform staff if someone other than those who are authorised will be collecting your child, and inform that person their ID will be required. (Please remember to inform children who will be picking them up).
- Ensure your "authorised person to collect" is up to date.
- Inform Director & staff of any Current or Pending Court orders affecting the child and provide the Centre with a photocopy of relevant paperwork.
- Ensure you shut all gates or doors as you enter and leave the Centre.
- Adhere to correct "sign in and sign out" procedures.
- Approach a staff member upon departure to notify them that their child is going home and to find out about the child's day. It is the family's responsibility to inform staff that they have arrived to collect their child.
- Receive the "Excursion Policy" and a copy of the Information pack if you volunteer to be parent helper. (See Excursion Policy).

To minimise potential risks for accidents/ injuries, we aim to have all staff and families aware of the variables that relate to supervision. Staff and families are encouraged to make comments, document and evaluate areas of supervision that need improvement. Evaluations help us identify potential hazards, blind spots and places of accessibility that may need repair. We have developed a Continuous Improvement Plan and a Maintenance Register, so we are documenting evidence that can improve supervision.
New staff/students etc will be allocated time to read this policy as soon as possible, then they will be instructed on how to supervise effectively and recognise danger spots by existing staff.

Source:

- ACT Centre Based Conditions for Approval in Principle & Licenses (Areas1, 2, 3 & 4)
- Ablaze Total Solutions www.ablazetotoalsoloutions.com.au

This policy links to the following CCQA Principles:
Quality Practices Guide (2005) Principles- 1.5, 4.5, 5.2, 5.3 & 5.4

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