

## Active Supervision: What Would You Do? – Suggested Responses

Active Supervision involves all your skills as a teacher and caregiver. Read the following scenarios. Identify the problems related to supervision. Then, brainstorm possible solutions.

**Scenario:** It's a beautiful day outside. You have taken the children to a nearby playground. All the children seem busy and engaged outdoors. You sit down under a playground awning and begin to write down some documentation notes. Two of your preschool children join you, and before long, you are an honored guest at their pretend picnic.

### What is the problem?

*It is always important to play and interact with children. It is also good practice to record observations of their interests and development. However, your play or documentation cannot be so engrossed that it compromises your supervision of all the children.*

*Especially for family child care settings, which may use more open or unfenced playground areas, it is important that you are able to see the whole play area and account for all children. If you become too engrossed in play, you may not be able to recognize a problem and respond quickly.*

### What are possible solutions?

*Try to involve all the children in the pretend play idea, or help the child find a playmate with which to carry out her pretend idea.*

*Try the pretend play idea in a way that allows you to still monitor, and if you cannot do that in this setting, let the child know and try to adapt.*

*Move around the playground continuously.*

**Scenario:** You have noticed the children's strong interest in camping lately and a family member offers to bring in their tent for you to temporarily borrow. You love this idea, but when the parent brings it in, you realize the fabric is solid on all sides and the doors zip closed.

### What is the problem?

*Supporting children's interests can be incredibly powerful. This space, however, could be unsafe, it is not possible to see inside. Children could zip themselves inside and be hidden from a teacher's site.*

### What are possible solutions?

*Find a different tent that had open or mesh sides.*

*Use the tent only when you can be right there, perhaps even inside, and keep the door unzipped.*

*Explain why this particular tent is not safe for your setting and brainstorm other ways to support the children's interest in camping (could you make a homemade fort with sheer fabric?)*

**Scenario:** A new child has enrolled in your child care program. Although she has only been there for about an hour, she has already found all the doors and tried to run outside. She also knows how to operate the safety gate you have in place.

**What is the problem?**

*It is not safe for children to leave your home without an authorized adult. You cannot leave the home without putting other children at risk.*

**What are possible solutions?**

*You will need to spend time building a relationship with this child and teaching her the safety rules. Teach the child that only adults open doors. Use visuals, pictures, or signs to help her remember. Stay close to the child and use positive guidance techniques at all times. Consider short-term solutions to help you be aware of unsafe situations: bells on doors, etc.*

*Discuss plans with her family. Consider purchasing another gate or different locks to ensure safety.*

*Possibly call for help from another adult.*

**Scenario:** A man you do not recognize arrives at your home and tells you he is Mark's uncle. He tells you that he has come to pick him up. His name is not on the list of names Mark's parents provided.

**What is the problem?**

*Parents should provide you with a list of individuals authorized to pick up, and children can only leave according to these written instructions that parents provide. You may never release a child into care of an unauthorized person. This man is not on the list.*

**What are possible solutions?**

*Call Mark's parents. Do not release Mark. You must never release a child into the care of an unauthorized person. Even if Mark were to recognize the man, you could not release Mark unless the man was authorized to pick him up.*

**Scenario:** The bus arrives and you notice that one of the children, Lily, is not there. Her best friend Susan tells you that she was not at school that day. Since you know that they are best friends you believe her.

**What is the problem?**

*It is not safe for children to leave your home without an authorized adult. You cannot leave the home without putting other children at risk.*

**What are possible solutions?**

*Tell Susan that you understand that she didn't see Lily at school, but that you have to confirm it with the child's parent or the school. If Susan was incorrect and Lily was in school, then you would have to alert the school and the parents and work to report her as a missing child.*