Checklist: Indoor Safety Hazards

Using this checklist, identify safety hazards in your family child care program. It is important to view and move about your room during this activity. Kneel and look at the environment through the eyes of all the children in your care, including infants and toddlers. Remember they look under, over, and alongside. Think about their developmental stage as you examine each potential hazard.

**Directions:**
Mark if a hazard is not present. For remaining hazards, correct and document the date when the hazard was corrected.

Date of indoor hazard review: ____________________ Review completed by: ____________ Area reviewed: ____________________________ Age of children in program: __________

After-review notes:

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**Physical Structure**
- Unprotected electrical outlets; electrical cords accessible to children; strings, cords accessible to children
- Substances labeled “keep out of reach of children” not locked away (e.g., medicines, cleaning solutions)
- Rugs, mats that have foot-catching edges or slide on the floor
- Unprotected radiator or heater
- Open stairwell access
- Doors left open so children have access to closets, exits
- Children playing near doors that open inward
- Peeling paint
- Protruding nails or screws
- Splintering woodwork
Furniture
- Unsteady, shaky to the point of collapsing, or causing a child to lose balance
- Sharp corners or points
- Splintering
- Peeling paint
- Protruding nails or screws
- Light weight; may tip when child pulls up on it
- Bean bag chairs used with infant, toddler or preschool children (Bean bag chairs only allowable for school-age children)
- Too large for size of child using furniture
- Mismatched size and design of equipment for the intended users

Furniture placement
- Tall furniture that interferes with supervision
- Pieces of furniture too close to each other or in the fall zone of climbing equipment
- Lack of protective surface around climbing equipment
- Rocking chairs accessible to mobile infants and toddlers
- Furniture placed in a manner that creates runways that encourage children to run
- Furniture placed near hazards that children could reach if climbed on

Routine care
- Bleach, cleaning chemicals or disinfecting solution used where children can inhale it (e.g., near diapering surfaces and meal, snack table)
- Broken diapering-table or feeding-chair safety straps; straps not used; crib slats more than 2 3/8 inches apart
- Lack of a 6-inch raised edge on diapering table
- Chance of unsupervised access to a container of water, including toilets
- Slippery surfaces; slick tile floor; spilled water on floor
- Lightweight step stool that moves easily when stepped on
- Step stool without handrails
- Water too hot—more than 120 degrees Fahrenheit
- Infants put to sleep on stomach or side
- Crib mattress does not fit snugly, allows two or more fingers to be inserted between mattress and crib side
- Any blankets, sheets, soft items, plush animals, or clothing with hoods or strings in crib; toys hung across crib or crib mobile in reach of a child who can sit or stand
- Microwave ovens used to heat bottles or baby food
- Hot water containers (e.g., slow cookers) can be pulled down by child; access to cord
Teacher Materials
- Staples or push pins used on displays in children’s reach
- Materials (e.g., scissors, pencils, pens, pen caps, stapler, etc.) in reach of children — this will vary depending on the age of children for which you are caring
- Unlocked storage cupboards
- Purses, backpacks, personal belongings in reach of children; music players that can be pulled down by child; access to cord; plastic bags in reach of children

Choking Hazards (excluding food) if caring for children under 3
- Small objects that fit into choke test tube
- Small objects that are less than 1¼ inch diameter and 2½ inches long

Children’s Materials
- Larger or heavier toys stored on top of shelves that can be pulled down
- Art or sensory materials unsafe for children under the age of 18 months (e.g., red kidney beans, Styrofoam, balloons, corn starch and flour, glitter, shaving cream, sand or water)
- Any materials labeled “keep out of reach of children”; any materials used with children younger than the age requirement
- Children’s backpacks, diaper bags containing hazardous materials (e.g., diaper cream, medicine) in reach of children


Health and Safety in Family Child Care Home—Participant Guide. Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, 2010.