

The Parent's Page: The Importance of Health & Safety Procedures

Child safety continues to be an issue parents and providers face daily. There are endless reasons as to why child safety is important and how advocates for child safety take extreme measures to ensure safe environments for children in a variety of different settings. Focusing on the positive effects of child safety can help families avoid the potential burdens of physical and emotional stress, negative effects on child development, and can even help with avoiding financial pressures.

Firstly, it is important for parents and providers to understand and recognize child safety education and what it entails. According to the National Center for Health Statistics, 44% of deaths in children aged 1 to 4 years old were related to injuries and 52% of deaths were injury related in children aged 5 to 14 years of age (THE IMPORTANCE OF SAFETY EDUCATION, 2019). Regardless of the situation or setting, all children deserve access to a safe and caring environment.

Parents, caregivers, educators, and/or any adult responsible for the supervision and protection of children are subject to ensure a protective and safe space. A useful way providers and parents can practice child safety education is by heavily focusing on health and safety education at home, childcare settings, and in schools. Health and safety procedures can easily be overlooked, so it should be a top priority for both parents and caregivers.

There are many different areas parents and providers should focus on when it comes to a safe environment for child safety. The top areas that should be of utmost importance in a childcare setting are: first aid, cleanliness, and physical setting.

Avoiding injuries entirely is not plausible but limiting the severity of injury in a childcare setting is possible through proper first aid procedures. A first aid kit should always be

easily accessible and should be stocked appropriately. Also, providers should have an up to date first aid training and CPR qualifications. This way, in case of an injury related emergency, a caregiver can act in a timely manner that ensures the injured child and all children in care are safe.

Along with that, a clean and organized childcare setting not only looks promising to parents but can also help prevent the spread of illness. The environment should be organized and disinfected daily. It is not only important for the physical environment to be clean, but the children in care and staff are required to practice frequent handwashing to prevent the spread of germs. Staff handling food should also practice safe food handling as well. A clean childcare setting can help with the safety of children in care by eliminating risk of illness.

Lastly, the setting in a childcare facility is extremely important. Providers and parents should keep an eye out for possible dangers in the physical environment of the childcare setting. This includes placement of certain objects (heavy objects and dangerous chemicals, etc.) that can potentially create a serious injury for a child. For example, a heavy object on a shelf can be a tipping hazard for a child. Or, a poorly placed toxic cleaner can be in reach of a child and create a risk for ingestion and injury. Paying close attention to the surrounding of a childcare setting can help prevent potential dangers (Importance of Health and Safety in Early Childhood, 2019).

In conclusion, focusing on the potential dangers in a childcare setting can easily be done by taking a closer look at Health & Safety procedures. These procedures are not only useful in a childcare setting, but they can also be utilized in the home setting as well. Children are at a larger risk for injury and it is the responsibility of adults to provide competent, safe, and informed supervision.