

Active Supervision Procedure

ACF-IM-HS-15-05 Information Memorandum

SUBJECT: Supervision and Transitions

INFORMATION:

The Office of Head Start (OHS) asks all Head Start and Early Head Start program leaders to remind staff to prioritize children's safety by providing continuous supervision. Governing bodies, Tribal Councils, Policy Councils, directors, and managers must create a culture of safety within their programs. Everyone shares responsibility for keeping children safe. Grantee staff must ensure that "no child will be left alone or unsupervised while under their care" (45 CFR1304.52 (i)(1)(iii)).

1302.47

(a) A program must establish, train staff on, implement, and enforce a system of health and safety practices that ensure children are kept safe at all times.

You are responsible for the safety of all children. As part of our Standards of Conduct, you have agreed at the beginning of the year that you will never leave a child unsupervised.

1. **Site Supervisor and DST: Complete Active Supervision Site Plan Form by October 31st for each site.**
2. Set up the environment
 - Set up the environment so that you can supervise children at all times.
 - Keep children in your line of sight and make sure you can hear them at all times.
 - Clear play spaces so that you can observe children both indoors and outdoors at all times.
 - All doors leading out of the classroom are required to have a bell or chime to alert staff. (This includes doors going outside or to other parts of the building.)
3. Position Staff/Zoning
 - Plan where to position yourself in the environment throughout the daily schedule.
 - Place yourself so you can see and hear all of the children
 - Clear paths to where children are playing, sleeping and eating so you can respond quickly.
 - Stay close to children who need additional support.
 - Stay close in the outdoor play area so that children can be seen and prevented from taking dangerous risks or playing in an unsafe manner.
 - Staff must supervise children in the bathroom at all times, and know how many children are in the bathroom and classroom.
4. Accurate accounting of attendance, location of children, transitions, numbers within groups
 - Teach children the rules of coming and going from classrooms, play areas and other environments.
 - Implement and post a visual system of communication about the locations of children in the classroom and any changes in group size throughout the day. (chart, dry erase board, tags for each child, etc.)

- At the start of the day count the number of children and compare with the children signed in and reconcile if different.
 - Keep track of the numbers of children in separate groups or in separate locations within a center whenever a class is divided into small groups.
 - Supervisors and Technical Support Staff visiting the classroom will ask staff how many children are present when they first arrive and check the classrooms posted, visual system of communication.
5. Scan and count
- Be able to account for all of the children in your care.
 - At pick up and drop off, station one teacher near the door to monitor children/adults entering and exiting the room. All teachers in the room will need to be aware of and account for children as they arrive at school and prior to departure at the end of the day.
 - Continually scan the environment to know where every child is and what they are doing.
 - Count the children frequently. The Lead Teacher is responsible for assuring that all adults in the classroom are counting children.
 - Count the number of children aloud prior to a transition to a new area of the center, (e.g. library, music, kindergarten,) as well as to and from outdoor play area.
 - Check classrooms, outdoor play areas, bathrooms, sleeping areas and other learning areas during transitions and prior to departure.
6. Listen
- Listen for specific sounds, or the absence of them, to identify reasons for concern or signs of potential danger.
 - Staff will count children in response to hearing the door alarm or bells and when visitors enter and leave the room.
7. Anticipate children's behavior
- Use information about individual children's abilities and interests to predict what they will do.
 - Recognize when children might wander, get upset or take a dangerous risk.
 - Know what to expect from individual children so that you are better able to protect them from harm.
8. Engage and redirect
- Know when to offer children support.
 - Offer different levels of assistance or redirection, depending on each child's needs.
9. Monitoring
- Supervisors will complete Active Supervision Monitoring Checklist three times a year. This form can be used by any Technical Support Staff visiting the classroom.

When to be attentive

There are certain times when children are at greater risk to be harmed or unsafe. Staff should count children and communicate between each other about the number of children in their care before, during, and after these situations or times:

- During transitions when children are moving from one location to another
- When in the outdoor play area
- During drop off and pick up from the bus or parent
- When children arrive late or leave early
- When staff are leaving or returning from breaks
- When there is substitute staff in the classroom or center
- When children use the bathroom
- When on a field trip or other special outing
- When specialists are taking children in and out of the classroom
- When there are unscheduled visitors in the classrooms
- During emergencies and drills

Important Notes

- Volunteers, Substitute Teachers and Permanent Staff who are not “cleared” are not to be left alone with children.
- Parents should never be left alone with children other than their own.
- **Notify your supervisor immediately when a child is unaccounted for. In the first minute of unaccountability, call for help or ask someone to call for help (school secretary, teachers next door, our office.)**