

Transcript: Essential Components of a Head Start Classroom

Objectives

In this module you will understand how important your role is in the Head Start Program.

Become familiar with a few of the Head Start classroom requirements regarding:

- Fire safety
- tooth brushing
- playground safety
- meals and snacks
- blood borne pathogens
- handwashing
- child abuse reporting
- transitions

Did you know?

Transitions are an indirect way of getting children to do what we want them to do without a lot of resistance.

Transitions Between Activities

Transitions help staff move children from one activity to the next with minimal distractions, while still having fun!

- a. Transitions focus the children's attention in a positive way.
- b. Transitions move the children from one activity to the next.
- c. Transitions help eliminate many disruptions.

Clear communication

Positive communication and role modeling is key when using transitions.

Follow these suggestions to ensure smooth transitions.

- a. Tell the children ahead of time where they are going, what they're going to do and what behavior is expected of them.
- b. State simply and positively what you want the children to do.
For example... Say, "please walk," instead of "don't run in the room."

Use a finger play that ends with hands on laps instead of saying, “Sit down and be quiet.”

- c. Capture the children’s attention with a song, story, props or poem, to deter them from hitting, poking, or engaging in other inappropriate behaviors. Learning skills are reinforced as they engage in interesting activities. It is important to remember that children can’t, don’t and won’t wait.

Successful Transitioning

Remember, it takes a long time for children to grow up, so be patient. Children need to be gently guided rather than pushed and/or rushed. Transitions help with this guidance.

We all win when we:

- Redirect children
- Ask children to use their own words
- Give children choices

We all lose when we:

- Use food control
- Argue or get into power struggles
- Bribe or make empty threats
- Embarrass them in front of their class
- Yell or use physical punishment

Did you know?

Snack and meal times are a great opportunity to...

- introduce healthy foods
- model healthy behaviors
- provide opportunities for nutrition education

Meal and Snack Times

Head Start Performance Standards require that meal and snack times be structured and used as learning opportunities to contribute to a child’s learning, development and socialization.

How does structured meal and snack times assist in child development?

- It allows children, when developmentally appropriate, and adults to work together sharing such tasks as...
 - serving or passing food among themselves if possible,
 - or by cleaning up afterwards.
- It supports teaching staff-child interactions and fosters communication and conversations.
- Further ensure a positive learning experience by ...
 - providing sufficient time for children to eat,
 - not using food as reward or punishment,
 - or not forcing children to finish their food.

Did you know?

Children's toothbrushes often need replacing more frequently than adult brushes.

Oral Health Hygiene

Head Start Performance Standards require that staff must promote effective oral health hygiene by ensuring all children are assisted by appropriate staff, or volunteers, if available, in brushing their teeth with toothpaste containing fluoride.

Effective dental hygiene practices differ according to the age and developmental level of each child.

The goal is to ensure that children are taught how to brush their teeth.

Tooth Brushing

Staff should always supervise tooth brushing. Follow these instructions when it comes to children brushing their teeth in the Head Start classroom.

Children should brush...

- after breakfast and lunch for two minutes

Have toothbrushes, toothpaste and cups ready. Prepare by placing a pea-size amount of toothpaste on the lip of each cup.

Caring for Toothbrushes

Properly caring for toothbrushes after brushing reduces the chances of contamination. For best practices, follow these simple procedures.

- Rinse after each use.
- Store toothbrushes in a well ventilated area. Do not place in cabinets or closets.
- Toothbrushes should only touch...
 - teeth
 - toothpaste
 - or water
- Ensure that toothbrushes never touch other surfaces...
 - Such as sinks or other toothbrushes
- Always replace when contaminated, this is can happen when the toothbrush falls on floor, a child has been chronically ill or if a child uses someone else's toothbrush.

Replace when... bristles are bent and/or every 6 weeks.

Hand Washing: A Clean Defense

You may be at risk of contamination when performing routine activities in the classroom. Make your classroom a safer and healthier place by practicing proper hand washing. In general, wash your hands in the following situations.

When to wash your hands:

- Before eating and drinking
- After contact with bodily fluids when caring for a child
- Before and after caring for a child
- Before and after touching a child's face or mouth while caring for the child
- Before and after proceeding to a different care activity for a child
- Before and after direct contact between different children
- Before and after putting on gloves and removing them
- After touching an object that is visibly or likely to be contaminated
- After coughing sneezing or using the toilet

Hand Washing Technique

Proper hand washing is the single most important procedure for preventing the spread of infection. To be effective, routine hand washing must include these steps.

Steps to proper hand washing:

- Step 1: Use soap and water. Lather hands with water and a non-abrasive soap.
- Step 2: Lather. Vigorously rub together all surfaces for 10 to 15 seconds.
- Step 3: Rinse. Rinse hands thoroughly under a stream of water.
- Step 4: Dry. Dry hands completely with a clean dry paper towel.
- Step 5: Avoid surfaces. Use a dry paper towel to turn off the faucet.

Did you know?

All blood and bodily fluids are potentially infectious.

In a contaminated area, keep safe by not doing the following:

- eating
- drinking
- smoking
- applying cosmetics or lip balm
- or touching contact lenses

Bloodborne Pathogens

Bloodborne pathogens are serious viral infections that can make you very sick. If you are exposed to someone's infected blood or other body fluids which contain visible blood, they can be passed onto you.

There are several means of transmission. These include the following:

- Contact of contaminated blood with your broken skin, such as cuts, nicks, abrasions, and even acne or dermatitis.
- Infected fluids coming in contact with mucous membranes of your nose, eyes, or mouth.
- A cut from a sharp object contaminated by infected blood.

Bloodborne Pathogens

By following safety precautions, you can minimize your risk of infection by bloodborne pathogens. However, it's not always easy to avoid possible exposure to blood. Because of this, the classroom is stocked with disposable gloves for your use. Good housekeeping is everyone's responsibility and useful in protecting yourself and others.

Follow these guidelines when dealing with potentially infectious substances keep the following in mind:

- Clean and disinfect any possible contaminated surfaces.
- Never use your hand to pick up broken glass, always use a broom and dustpan or call a custodian.
- Transport potentially contaminated items in leak-proof bags.
- Don't push trash down to make room with your hands or feet.
- Regularly inspect and disinfect reusable containers that might become contaminated.

Did you know?

To help keep children and families safe, it is required that all children and family information remain confidential and private at all times, especially if discussing children's family life, behavior or concerns.

Reporting Child Abuse

What is child abuse? An act or omission that endangers or impairs a child's physical, mental, emotional health and development.

If a child tells you about abuse: Be a good listener, be supportive...and don't over react. When you make a report, provide as much information as you can.

It is important to understand that the emotional and physical damage that children suffer can last a lifetime. Society is also affected; the cost in ruined lives and broken families can't be measured.

You can report abuse or neglect by:

- By calling, 24 hours a day, seven days a week: 1-800-252-5400
- Online at this secure website. www.txabusehotline.org

- Or by calling 911 if you feel that child is in immediate danger.

Did you know?

Each classroom has a “red bag” containing emergency information for children and staff.

This includes:

- contact information
- child medical conditions
- child release authorization

Playground Safety

As the supervising adult, it is your duty to take steps to reduce the risk of accident and injury and to help guarantee children enjoy their playground time.

You can ensure this by:

- Remembering to identify potential hazards.
- Supervising children appropriately.
- And by always having a first aid bag available.

Identifying playground hazards

Playground and equipment should be inspected daily. Be sure that all equipment is working properly and that there are no loose or damaged supports (metal framing or wood planks, bolts or screws). Inspect fall zone material to ensure all areas are evenly covered and meet standards for adequate surfacing. Playground hazards can be due to either the design of the equipment or its normal wear-and-tear.

Supervising Children

Help make the playground environment both positive and fun by encouraging safety and taking the time to explain to children why they should play a certain way. Avoid yelling or repeatedly telling them what not to do

When Supervising Children Remember:

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- Avoid using the playground time for socializing with other adults; spread out to get a better view of all of the children.
- Get involved with the children on the playground.
- Make sure children are playing on equipment appropriately.
- Look for any unsafe behavior and redirect appropriately.

Playground first aid

The reality is that no matter how closely you supervise children and examine a playground, accidents can still happen. Preparation is the key to preventing more serious injuries.

To be prepared, remember the following:

- Always have your first aid bag available and follow your school's emergency protocols for responding to an injury.
- Remain calm because children react to how you act.
- Send an adult for help or call front office for additional support.
- Never move a child you suspect may have suffered a head, neck or back injury.
- And protect yourself from potential infections by wearing disposable gloves.

Did you know?

Teachers and assistants are trained in first aid and CPR in order to respond in an emergency situation that needs immediate attention. Each classroom is stocked with a first aid kit and first aid bags that staff take with them when they leave the classroom.

Fire Safety: What to do when fire strikes

Fire moves fast and when it breaks out in your school, you have to act fast! Therefore, it's important to have read and understood your school's emergency plan before a fire occurs.

Know the primary and secondary evacuation routes for you and children under your supervision. Fire drills are designed to test the plan and spot problems—before it's too late.

The importance of teamwork- Each person should know their specific duties, so when the alarm sounds, the actions of the ENTIRE school are second nature.

Your responsibility is to ensure that all children are out of the building.

Once outside, teachers need to take a head count and report any missing children to the principal's or administrative office staff immediately.

Fire Safety: What to do when fire strikes

If You Must Use an Extinguisher. Remember the PASS method:

Step 1 – pull the pin

Step 2 – aim at the base of fire

Step 3 – Squeeze the lever

Step 4 – Sweep side to side

Fire Safety: What to do when fire strikes

In the event of fire you need to:

- Be familiar with your school's emergency plan.
- Know your evacuation route and assigned duties.
- Know the role of others and react as if it were second nature.
- Follow safe evacuation procedures.
- Be ready to respond in the event of a small, contained fire by using the fire extinguisher properly.
- Know the STOP/DROP/ROLL rule if you or someone else were to catch fire. Know to NEVER RUN.

Be ready to respond with basic first aid care for those suffering burns or smoke inhalation.

Did you know?

Volunteers play an essential role in the classroom, however they should never be left alone with children. A volunteer can be in the classroom with both the teacher and assistant or with just the teacher or just the assistant.

Class Monitors & Volunteers Role in the Head Start Classroom

Remain with the class so there is always 2 adults and no more than 20 children (or 1 adult and no more than 10 children) This is called keeping adult-child ratio.

Help keep children safe by communicating concerns and observations to the teacher and Head Start management staff.

Class Monitors & Volunteers Role in the Head Start Classroom

Ask questions to get familiar with the children, classroom, school and routines.

The class monitor says, "What do the children do after lunch"?

The teacher says, "After lunch the children will take a nap"?

Ask the teacher for guidance as to how you can assist with routines and activities in the classroom.

The class monitor says, "How can I help the children in learning centers"?

The teacher says, "You can sit with them and ask questions about what they are doing".

Did you know?

Children learn appropriate behavior through role modeling, reminders and lots of encouragement.

If you have questions about behavior, please talk with the teacher or Head Start management staff.

Teacher and assistants' role in the head start classroom

Remain with the class so there is always 2 adults and no more than 20 children or 1 adult and no more than 10 children. This is called keeping adult-child ratio.

Help keep children safe by communicating concerns and observations to the principal and Head Start management staff.

Teacher & Assistants' Role in the Head Start Classroom

Utilize volunteers during routines and activities in the classroom to enhance instruction.

The teacher says, “Will you pass out the art supplies while I begin instruction”?

The volunteer says, “Sure, no problem”.

Ask questions to help get familiar with program requirements and staff roles to support you.

The teacher says, “What staff support will be available in the classroom?”

The administrator says, “Each classroom will have a teacher, assistant and a class monitor”.

Conclusion

Congratulations! You have finalized this module.

Thank you for helping our Head Start classrooms meet federal Performance Standards requirements. Head Start staff are always available to guide and support you.

In this module, you learned to understand the importance of your role in the Head Start program. You also became familiar with the Head Start classroom requirements concerning:

- roles and responsibilities,
- fire and playground safety,
- child abuse reporting,
- bloodborne pathogens,
- hand washing and tooth brushing,
- meals and snacks and
- transitions between activities.

