

## **Playground / Gross Motor Area Safety**

### POLICY:

Routine playground / gross motor area safety inspections and rules will be established and maintained at all times. The Consumer Product Safety Commission and National guidelines related to playground safety will be followed.

*. This policy relates to Head Start Performance Standards 45 CFR Part 1304.22*

### PROCEDURE:

1. Staff will thoroughly inspect the playground / gross motor area each day prior to the children's indoor /outdoor play time. This check will include, but not be limited to a search for the following hazards:
  - . glass, needles, or sharp objects
  - . dangerous equipment that may cause falls, cuts, pinching, puncture wounds, or serious injury
  - . inadequate ground cover underneath play structures and swings
  - . unfamiliar people who do not have a legitimate reason for being in or around the playground area
  - . poisonous foliage, bees/wasps nests, animals/animal feces, trash/garbage
2. Teaching staff must keep a checklist that shows each day that the children went outside or to a gross motor area. The list should be initialed by the teacher or assistant to verify that someone evaluated the space prior to children's play beginning. If staff took action to correct a problem (picked up trash, remove dangerous material, etc.), it should be documented on this checklist.
3. Some equipment located on public school playgrounds is inappropriate for very young children. Head Start children should not be allowed to play on these structures.
4. Staff will establish and routinely review playground / gross motor area safety rules with the children. Playground rules will minimally include:
  - . Establishment of area that is safe for running (i.e. not under/around play structures).
  - . Playground boundaries (if fences are not present).
  - . Appropriate play for slide safety: sitting down facing forward on the slide.
  - . Inappropriate sand play: throwing, eating, putting down clothing, etc.

- . Wheel toy play: traffic boundaries and safety rules for both the driver and pedestrians. Children should be encouraged to wear helmets during outdoor trike riding.
5. Proper supervision is of foremost importance in preventing playground / gross motor accidents/injury. There will be a minimum of two (2) staff persons with the children at all times including during indoor / outdoor play. Only Head Start staff will be considered the supervising adults when children are on the playground / gross motor area. Parents and other volunteers may increase the ratio of adults to children but they will not replace the staff
  6. Staff must be strategically located on the playground / gross motor area during play so that all children are within site at all times.
  7. First Aid kits must be taken to and carried by a staff person when on the playground / gross motor area. First Aid kits are not to be placed on a bench or other areas where they are in reach of children.