Quality practices for supervision

Supervising children is an important job that should be a high priority for caregivers. There are many things that impact supervision. No matter where the children are or what they are doing, it is every staff member’s responsibility to be sure that the children are appropriately supervised at all times.

Know the children
Establish a method to keep track of how many children are in care. Be able to put a name to each face and name all the children in the group.

Maintain ratios
Know and keep state adult-to-child ratios at all times. Prepare for activities before children arrive; staff for the youngest-aged child in the group; plan for emergencies.

Count heads
Count the children often as a part of the daily routine. Pay particular attention when children move from one space to another and when they are on the playground.

Work as a team
Communication between team members assures that together they can maintain the four critical points of supervision.

Be aware of the environment
• Arrange furnishings so all children can be seen at all times.
• Position staff so each can see the children at all times.
• Look for potential hazards before welcoming children, especially on the playground.

Four critical points of supervision
At ALL times every caregiver must be able to:
• See
• Hear
• Direct
• Assess

ALL children in their care

Moving children
Taking children out of the classroom environment for a field trip or even a walk requires planning.
• Place one adult at each end of the line when going for a walk.
• Never leave children alone in a vehicle.
• Provide extra supervision when entering and exiting vehicles.

extension.psu.edu/programs/betterkidcare
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