

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

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PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE: (CFR 1304.22) The Head Start program will establish and implement policies and procedures for responding to Emergencies. All staff will be trained and familiar with these policies and procedures. Emergency evacuation routes and safety procedures for other emergencies (e.g., fire or weather-related), will be practiced regularly.

PROCEDURE:

1. During a drill or actual emergency, the Cook must wear the red "Emergency Response Team" cap, so that he/she can be easily identified by first responders. In the absence of the Cook, the responsibility for being the Emergency Response Team Leader will fall to the Family Resource Specialist and then the Teacher, in that order.
2. Other staff should report important information to the Emergency Response Team Leader as soon as possible.
3. The red "Emergency Response Team" caps must be stored in locations that provide easy access. An air horn used to signal a Drill or actual emergency must be located in close proximity to the red "Emergency Response Team" cap.
4. Missing caps and missing or inoperative air horns should be reported to the Director of Human Resources at the central office as soon as possible.
5. Although drills should be unannounced; centers should pre-plan drills in order to practice emergency preparedness with different staff and situations. (The Fire Department should be contacted on the non-emergency Fire Station telephone number and advised if we are going to practice a fire evacuation drill ahead of the actual drill to avoid an unnecessary dispatch called in by some well-meaning neighbor.)
6. Center staff are responsible for briefing substitutes and volunteers on emergency procedures and responsibilities.
7. All staff should also be familiar with the Agency Emergency Action Plan located in Tab-8 of the white "Safety Policies and Procedures" manual.

Fire:

1. Centers will conduct and document building evacuation fire drills at least once per month.

2. Area Supervisors have overall responsibility for their centers, and the Cook and Teacher in each center will be familiar with the operation of the fire alarm system.
3. Drills should be unannounced and must utilize the building fire alarm system. When the fire alarm is sounded, each classroom and staff person will evacuate using their respective evacuation route.
4. During a fire drill, the Teacher is responsible for the children and the Cook is responsible for all staff, volunteers, and visitors in the building. Each Teacher must report their status to the designated Emergency Response Team Leader as soon as possible, to determine that all children and adults are accounted for.
5. The Family Resource Specialist is responsible for ensuring that appropriate fire evacuation drills are performed on a monthly basis and documented in a center file using the proper form. A copy of the documented monthly drill will also be sent to the Coordinator of Transportation and Facilities.
7. The Area Supervisor is responsible for assigning a person in each center to check (and document) fire extinguishers and emergency lighting on a monthly basis.
8. Cooks, Teachers, Family Resource Specialists and Area Supervisors are responsible for ensuring on a daily basis that exits are clearly visible and evacuation routes are clearly marked and posted so that the path to safety outside is unmistakable.
9. In the event of a fire and the center's fire alarm system is activated; the local Fire Department must be contacted as soon as possible, by calling 911 or the local designated emergency number. Head Start fire alarms are not automatically connected to the local Fire Station. Staff should not endanger themselves by remaining in the building to make the call. If necessary, go to the nearest phone to contact the authorities.

Tornado:

1. At least one tornado drill per month will be held and documented during the months of February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September and October. Documentation will be kept in a center file and a copy will be sent to the Coordinator of Transportation and Facilities.
2. Drills should be unannounced and will be identified by three short blasts from the air horn. All building occupants will move quickly to the designated safe area. Each Teacher will report their status to the designated Emergency Response Team Leader as soon as possible to determine that all children and adults are accounted for.

3. Each center must develop a system to monitor dangerous weather conditions. For example, a center could arrange for the Sheriff's Department or other resource in the community to contact them when weather conditions are threatening. Each center will have an AM/FM radio to monitor weather alerts.

Other Types of Emergencies:

1. Bomb threats should be treated in the same manner as a fire drill. Please refer to the Agency Emergency Action Plan in Tab-8 of the Safety Policies and Procedures Manual for detailed information.
2. In the event of a severe thunderstorm, avoid using telephones (cordless or cellular telephones may be used), electrical appliances and plumbing fixtures. If you can hear thunder, you are close enough to the storm for a potential lightning strike.
3. In the event of an earthquake stay where you are and remain calm. Earthquakes usually last for a very short time and most earthquake-related injuries occur when people attempt to either enter or exit buildings. Family Resource Specialists will sweep the building and ascertain damage and potential hazards prior to a decision to possibly evacuate the building.
4. Threats of violence usually require an individualized response based on the situation. However, common responses would often include:
 - A. Verbal attempts to de-escalate or neutralize the situation.
 - B. Asking the individual to leave the building.
 - C. Calling the Police.

When possible, attempts should be made to keep the individual as far away from children as possible. At no time should an employee place themselves at risk in an attempt to deal with the situation. The primary goal of any situation regarding threatened violence is ensure the safety of children, staff and visitors.