



Lock-Outs and Lock-Downs in Child Care Facilities

Prepared by Child Care Aware® of North Dakota

Lock-Down or Lock-Out procedures are used in situations that may result in harm to persons inside the child care facility such as a shooting, hostage incident, intruder, trespassing, disturbance, or at the discretion of the director, designee or public safety personnel.

To prevent unauthorized individuals from entering and walking through the child care facility, implement a standard practice for all staff to question unfamiliar people who want to enter the facility or if they see an unfamiliar individual unattended somewhere within the building by asking "May I help you?" If the person states that she or he is here to pick up a child, he/she should be asked to see photo identification and verify that the person is listed on the pickup authorization. If the person is not in the facility for a legitimate reason, he/she should be asked to leave.

If the intruder is already in the building, initiate the "lock-down" procedure. If there is criminal/unsafe activity occurring outside the building, initiate the "lock-out" procedure. Doors/windows will be locked, but adults and children will be allowed to move between the rooms inside the building.

LOCK-DOWN procedures if an intruder is inside the building

- Call 911
- The director or designee will announce "Lock-Down" or "Lock-out" over the intercom or other designated system. The alerts may also be made using a pre-selected code word.
- In a "Lock-Down" situation all children are kept in classrooms or other designated locations that are away from the danger. If not in a classroom, but in an unsecured location, such as in hallway or in the gym, staff/children should enter the nearest room.
- In the event that staff and children are not inside the building, such as outside, on a field trip, or on a walk, ensure/establish a way to communicate with staff to inform them of the situation. If children are on the playground, designate a safe location where staff and children can be securely sheltered.
- Staff members are responsible for accounting for children and ensuring that no one leaves the classroom or safe area.
- Facility maintenance personnel, director, or designee secure building entrances, ensuring that no unauthorized individuals leave or enter the building.
- Staff and children remain in the classroom locking the classroom door, securing the door with available furniture to create barricade, or use a doorstop or other wedge to keep door closed; turning off the lights & audio equipment, covering the windows if possible (black paper, blinds, curtains), staying clear of windows and doors, encourage children to get under tables, behind cabinets, turn a table on its side to use as a shield, etc. and (if possible keep quiet and act as if no one is in the room) or engage in quiet story time activities with the children in order to maintain as calm an atmosphere as possible. Have cell phone within reach at all times. Turn cell phones to vibrate mode.
- Ignore any fire alarm activation.
- Contact parents as soon as it is safely possible.
- Remain in room until director or designee announces the end of the lock-down

LOCK-OUT procedures if an unsafe activity is occurring outside the home/facility

- Call 911 if unsafe activity is observed outside home/facility.
- Lock all exterior doors and windows.
- Cover all windows if possible.
- Keep children away from windows and exterior doors.
- Maintain a calm atmosphere in the home; try not to alarm the children. Pay close attention to the emotional needs of the children. Activity within the home/facility may continue, but no access to the outside is permitted.
- Keep cell phone within reach at all times.
- Contact parents to inform them of the situation.
- Keep children in home/facility and exterior doors/windows locked until the threat is over.

References:

Family Home Child Care Crisis/Disaster Response Handbook, Glackamas County Community Health.

LSU Child Care Center Emergency Response Plan

NDSU CCD Emergency Response Plan

Lockdown Communication Procedures, Freemont Unified School District

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