

In-Home Child Care Health & Safety Checklist

Indoor Environment	Yes	No	N/A	NOTES
All electrical outlets are covered. Safety plugs do not fit into a toilet paper tube.				
Adult scissors, kitchen shears and other sharp or pointed objects are stored out of the reach and out of sight of children (not on the counter, tables, etc.).				
Breakable items are kept out of the reach of children.				
Railings around stairs are spaced less than 3 1/2" apart. If space is 3 1/2" or greater, a protective barrier (ex: netting) is used.				
Furniture and equipment are in good repair (check for broken toys, accessories, etc.). Hardware in furniture/equipment is recessed and securely fastened. Furniture has no sharp edges at a child's eye level.				
Small magnets that could be swallowed are not used by children under 6 years old.				
To minimize the risk of lead-contaminated toys: the CPSC website www.cpsc.gov is checked for recalled toys; non-brand toys, toys from discount shops/private vendors, old toys, toys with chipping paint, and costume jewelry are not accessible to children.				
For children under 3 years of age, strings/cords on toys are 12" or shorter; straps on hats and guitars are removed; purses/bags have short straps or are tied to prevent strangulation.				
For children under 3 years of age, toys/objects are larger than 1 1/4" in diameter and 2 1/4" in length. Round objects are 1 3/4" or larger. Use toilet paper tube to measure.				
Window cords are tied up/out of reach to prevent strangulation.				
Uncooked red kidney beans are not accessible to children.				
Medications, razors, mouthwash, hair dryers, curling/flat irons, chemicals, and other hazardous bathroom items are stored out of the children's reach and sight.				
Firearms, ammunition, and other weapons are stored in locked cabinets, and firearms are unloaded whenever children are in care. Firearms and ammunition are stored separately.				
Fireplaces, woodstoves, baseboard heaters, radiators, or space heaters have protective guards/screens and are separated from objects by 3 feet of space or are not used when children are present. Space heaters are directly plugged into wall.				
Matches, lighters, cigarettes, electric cigarettes/e-juice/el-liquid are out of the reach of children. Candles are not used during child care hours.				
Provider walks through all areas of home accessible to children to look for safety hazards before the children arrive.				
Water that may be in direct contact with children is no more than 120 degrees F.				
Button batteries are not accessible to children.				
Homemade playdough is dated and discarded after one week. The table is sanitized before/after using any modeling material (playdough, clay, play foam, putty, etc.). Children wash their hands before/after use.				
Hot liquids/food are kept out of the reach of children.				
TV is enclosed, anchored, or pushed back against the wall so that children cannot get to its back. TV stand/entertainment center is large/strong enough to support the size of the TV. Nothing is placed/stored on top of the TV.				
Climbing equipment (including slides) indoors is 18" or lower in height. Equipment is placed in an open area to provide a clear fall zone. Equipment is not placed on concrete or other hard surfaces.				

Indoor Environment (Continued)	Yes	No	N/A	NOTES
No plastic bags, foam, or Styrofoam objects are accessible to children under 3 years of age.				
All art supplies state they conform to ASTM D 4236. For best practice, all art supplies have the "AP" seal from the ACMI. See www.acmiart.org for more information.				
Gates to stairways and areas not for children's use are in place and secured. Gates at the top of stairs are mounted to the wall. Caregivers do not step over gates.				
There are working latches or safety locks on doors to places that are off limits to children.				
Balloons/latex gloves are not accessible to children under 8 years old.				
Adult purses, bags and diaper bags are out of reach of children.				
Floors are kept dry. Rugs are secure. Toys are picked up after use to prevent tripping/falls. Floors are kept vacuumed and clean.				
Furniture is arranged to provide optimal supervision and to allow for clear exits in case of an emergency.				
Tall furniture (over 4 feet) is secured to the wall.				
Electrical cords on equipment and appliances are not frayed; cords are secured and/or out of children's reach. This includes phone/iPad chargers.				
There are no indoor poisonous plants. See www.poison.org for list of poisonous and non-poisonous plants.				
Finger-pinch protection devices are installed wherever doors are accessible to children.				
Infant equipment (car seats, bouncers, Bumbo chairs, etc.) is not placed on any elevated surface or near the top of stairs. Equipment is only used 15 minutes two times per day.				
Safety straps are always used when a child is placed in a piece of equipment (ex: highchairs, swings, Bumbo chairs, etc.) and adjusted to fit each child.				
Infants are placed in a safe place (ex: crib or pack n' play) when provider is unable to directly supervise (ex: when using the bathroom).				
Fans are kept out of the reach of children.				
Water tables are emptied and sanitized daily.				
Water beads are not accessible to children under 3 years of age. For children 3 years and older, close supervision is recommended to prevent children from swallowing or putting into nose, ears, etc.				
Outdoor Environment	Yes	No	N/A	NOTES
Outdoor areas are maintained and are clean and safe; no trash, broken equipment/toys, sharp objects, splinters, glass, animal waste present. Areas are checked daily before children arrive or go outside.				
First aid kit, tissues, hand sanitizer and garbage are available.				
Outdoor stationary playground equipment is stable and anchored. Equipment does not wobble or tip when shaken or used.				
No objects or obstructions are under or around equipment where children might fall.				
Climbing equipment is a maximum height for age. One foot of height per year of age of child. (ex. 3 feet for 3-year-olds). Recommended maximum height is 5 feet for children under 5 years of age.				
All pieces of outdoor playground equipment over 18" in height are placed over at least 9" of protective surfaces (sand, wood chips, mulch, or approved rubber mats).				

Outdoor Environment (Continued)	Yes	No	N/A	NOTES
All play equipment surfaces are smooth, splinter-free, free from loose-fill materials and dry.				
Protective surfaces (sand, wood chips, mulch, or approved mats) under outdoor playground equipment extend at least 6 feet beyond the perimeter of the equipment.				
All fixed outdoor playground equipment has a minimum of 6 feet clearance space from walkways, buildings and other structures that are not used as part of play activities.				
Openings/spaces on outdoor playground equipment, fences, decks, and handrails are either less than 3½" or greater than 9" wide. If space between slats/railings is 3½" or greater around elevated decks, a protective barrier (ex: netting, lattice, etc.) is used.				
The outdoor play area is enclosed with a fence or natural barrier that allows observation of children.				
Outdoor fences/barriers have at least two exits.				
Outdoor fences/barriers have self-closing gates with self-latching mechanisms that cannot be opened by children.				
Vehicles are kept locked when not in use.				
No water is left standing in buckets or tubs. Wading pools are emptied when not in use and placed upside down.				
Above ground pools and hot tubs are covered, and ladders are removed.				
There are no poisonous plants, trees with berries/seeds/thorns, or mushrooms that could be ingested. See www.poison.org for list.				
There are no frayed cables, worn ropes, and no chains that could pinch. Ropes are attached on both ends. Dog leashes are not accessible when not being used.				
Lawn mowers, yard tools, power tools, chemicals, etc. are stored out the children's reach. Keys are removed from lawn mowers, ATVs, etc.				
Sheds are kept locked.				
Garages are safety proofed or kept locked.				
Fire pits are not used during child care hours. Children do not play around them at any time.				
Riding toys, wagons, and strollers are in good repair (screws tightened, safety belts working and used, adjusted to fit child).				
Helmets are worn when children use riding toys or wheeled equipment (bikes, trikes, skateboards, scooters, etc.). Helmets are removed when children are no longer using riding toys or wheeled equipment. Helmets are not worn by children under one year of age.				
Sanitation	Yes	No	N/A	NOTES
Bleach solution or EPA registered product is used for sanitizing & disinfecting and used according to manufacturer's instructions.				
If bleach solution is used, it is mixed daily.				
Surface/item is cleaned with soap and water if visibly soiled before applying sanitizer or disinfectant.				
Chemicals are not sprayed around children.				
All surfaces/items are dry before using.				

Sanitation (Continued)	Yes	No	N/A	NOTES
Cleaning products are labeled and stored in their original containers (except bleach solution). Cleaning products and other hazardous products are in locked cabinets or in high cabinets/ places out of children's reach. Cleaning products are kept separate from food and medication in cabinets.				
Non-mouthed toys are washed with soap and water weekly.				
Mouthed toys are sanitized daily. Toys are washed with soap and water before applying the sanitizer or sanitized in a dishwasher. Toys are dry before use.				
Handwashing	Yes	No	N/A	NOTES
Children's handwashing sinks(s) are accessible by a step stool. Step stools are sturdy, have wide base and rubber tread.				
Provider review the recommended handwashing procedure with the children often and supervises when able.				
Liquid/foam soap, running water, and disposable towels are always accessible for handwashing. If cloth towels are used, they are separate for each child and laundered daily.				
Used paper towels are placed in an uncovered garbage.				
Providers clean their hands at least at the following times: before bottle/food prep and service, before/after eating, after diapering, after toileting, after handling body fluids (first aid, handling mouthed toys, wiping noses, etc.), after being outside, before/after administering medication, after handling animals/animal food/items, after using chemicals, after handling garbage, when visibly dirty, after applying sunscreen or insect repellent.				
Children clean their hands at least at the following times: upon arrival, before/after eating, after diapering/toileting, before/after water play/play dough, after playing outside, after blowing/wiping their nose, after sand play, when visibly dirty, after handling animals/animal food/items, after applying sunscreen or insect repellent.				
Hand sanitizers are used only by adults and children over 24 months. Wipes are used to clean hands of children under 24 months.				
Hand sanitizers are kept out of reach of children and used with close supervision. Alcohol content is 60% or higher. Hand sanitizer does not contain methyl alcohol/methanol.				
Bathroom sinks are disinfected before children wash their hands before eating.				
Oral Health	Yes	No	N/A	NOTES
All children (over 35 months) brush their own teeth or have their teeth brushed at least once a day.				
Toothbrushes are labeled with child's name and stored properly (bristles up, open to air, not touching, away from toilet.)				
Each child has their own toothpaste. If tube of toothpaste is shared, it is placed on a disposable barrier instead of directly on each toothbrush. Toothpaste is not required.				
Toothbrushing is done at a sink that is not used for diapering/toileting or is disinfected before use.				

Oral Health (Continued)	Yes	No	N/A	NOTES
Toothbrushes are replaced every 3 months and if child has had case of strep throat.				
A sturdy step stool is provided if needed to ensure children can safely reach the sink for toothbrushing.				
Children are closely supervised when toothbrushing.				
Healthy Practices	Yes	No	N/A	NOTES
Children are taken outside daily unless weather conditions are extreme.				
Windows are opened daily for fresh air.				
Children and providers practice proper cough/sneeze etiquette.				
Coats and other personal items are stored separately without touching.				
Pacifiers are labeled, stored open to air, and separate from diapering area. Pacifiers are cleaned with soap and water, not with chemicals. Nipple is free from tears and fluid.				
No chemical air fresheners are used (ex. plug-ins, sprays, diffusers, candles, etc.)				
No aerosols are used.				
Food Preparation / Eating	Yes	No	N/A	NOTES
No perishable food/beverage is left out of the refrigerator for more than two hours.				
Food preparation and eating areas, including counters, tabletops, and highchair trays are cleaned/sanitized before and after food prep/meals. Floors are cleaned/swept after meals/snacks.				
Disposable utensils and Styrofoam cups/dishware is not used with infants/toddlers.				
Food is not placed directly on the table or highchair tray. Food is placed on a disposable barrier (ex. napkin) or on dishware. Paper napkins are not used for infants.				
Refrigerators have a thermometer and are equal to or less than 40 degrees F. Thermometers are checked daily.				
A current weekly menu of all food and beverages served in the program is posted.				
Children under 4 years old are not served food that causes choking. Food is cut into ¼" pieces for infants, ½" for toddlers.				
Children are closely supervised and always in sight when they are eating.				
Infants are held when given a bottle or within reach. Bottles are never propped. If not held, the infant's head is elevated, and infant can hold his/her bottle.				
The sink used for bottle/food prep/service is not used for diapering/toileting or is disinfected before use.				
Water used for bottles/drinking is from a sink not used for diapering/toileting, disinfected sink, or bottled water.				
All bottles are labeled with the child's name and time prepared/warmed.				
Unfinished bottles are discarded after feeding.				
Bottles are heated in warm water or bottle warmer. Microwaves are not used to heat bottles or infant food.				

Food Preparation / Eating (Continued)	Yes	No	N/A	NOTES
Breastmilk is heated separately from other bottles in individual containers of warm water.				
The temperature of bottles and food are tested before serving to children.				
Children sit when eating or drinking.				
If highchairs are used, safety straps are always used and adjusted to fit the child. Tray snaps securely in place.				
Water bottles are emptied and washed daily.				
No perishable food/beverage is left out of the refrigerator for more than two hours.				
Food preparation and eating areas, including counters, tabletops, and highchair trays are cleaned/sanitized before and after food prep/meals. Floors are cleaned/swept after meals/snacks.				
Disposable utensils and Styrofoam cups/dishware is not used with infants/toddlers.				
Food is not placed directly on the table or highchair tray. Food is placed on a disposable barrier (ex. napkin) or on dishware. Paper napkins are not used for infants.				
Refrigerators have a thermometer and are equal to or less than 40 degrees F. Thermometers are checked daily.				
A current weekly menu of all food and beverages served in the program is posted.				
Children under 4 years old are not served food that causes choking. Food is cut into ¼" pieces for infants, ½" for toddlers.				
Children are closely supervised and always in sight when they are eating.				
Infants are held when given a bottle or within reach. Bottles are never propped. If not held, the infant's head is elevated, and infant can hold his/her bottle.				
The sink used for bottle/food prep/service is not used for diapering/toileting or is disinfected before use.				
Water used for bottles/drinking is from a sink not used for diapering/toileting, disinfected sink, or bottled water.				
All bottles are labeled with the child's name and time prepared/warmed.				
Unfinished bottles are discarded after feeding.				
Bottles are heated in warm water or bottle warmer. Microwaves are not used to heat bottles or infant food.				
Breastmilk is heated separately from other bottles in individual containers of warm water.				
The temperature of bottles and food are tested before serving to children.				
Children sit when eating or drinking.				
If highchairs are used, safety straps are always used and adjusted to fit the child. Tray snaps securely in place.				
Water bottles are emptied and washed daily.				
Diapering / Toileting	Yes	No	N/A	NOTES
Diapers/Pull-ups are visually checked at least every 2 hours.				
Diaper-changing procedure is followed (see procedure).				
Diaper-changing surface is water-resistant, non-absorbent, and free of cracks/tears.				
Diaper-changing surface is disinfected after each use.				

Diapering / Toileting (Continued)	Yes	No	N/A	NOTES
Soiled diapers are directly disposed of in a plastic bag or in a separate covered garbage. Individual plastic bag is tied and placed in a covered garbage.				
Children are not allowed to stand on the diapering surface.				
Barrier (mat, diaper pad, paper, etc.) is placed on floor for child to sit on when re-dressing instead of directly sitting on the floor.				
Soiled clothing is placed in a plastic bag after changing and stored for parent pick-up.				
Diaper ointment/creams are stored out of the reach of children. Diaper powder is not recommended to use.				
Diapering is done in an area separate from kitchen/eating area.				
Diapering procedure is posted and followed.				
Kitchen sink is disinfected if used for handwashing after diapering.				
Providers always keep hand on child and provide close supervision during diapering.				
Providers are aware when children use the toilet independently; providers stay close by in case a child needs assistance.				
Providers monitor bathroom(s) to ensure supplies are stocked, toilet seats are unsoiled, and toilets are flushed.				
Bathroom is safety proofed if children use the bathroom independently.				
Sleeping / Napping	Yes	No	N/A	NOTES
All infants under 12 months are placed completely flat on their backs for sleep.				
Infants sleep only in safety approved cribs/pack n plays with a tight-fitting firm mattress (for pack n plays, only the manufacturer's pad is used), mattress/pad lays flat and meets on all 4 corners of frame, not in any other equipment (swing, bouncer, car seat, etc.).				
No soft bedding/items are accessible to infants under 12 months in their sleeping area.				
Infants do not sleep with blankets. *Written parental permission required to use blanket.				
Infants' heads/faces are always uncovered.				
Infants are not swaddled, and swaddle sleep sacks are not used once an infant shows signs of attempting to roll.				
Bibs, hooded clothing, necklaces (including teething), headbands and hats are removed.				
Pacifiers are not clipped to clothing or attached to stuffed items.				
Properly fitting fitted sheets are used for cribs and pack n plays. Mattress/pad maintains shape when fitted sheet is used. If the sheet doesn't fit properly, the pack n play is used without a sheet. Sheets are laundered weekly, sooner if soiled. If crib/pack n play is used for more than one child, sheets are changed between users, or the pad is cleaned with soap and water if a sheet is not used.				
Infant monitor is used if provider is unable to remain in the same room with the children when sleeping. All infants are visually checked every 10-15 minutes.				
Cribs/pack n plays are spaced 2 feet apart if infant can pull up to standing. 2-foot aisles are provided and kept clear. For best practice, cribs/pack n plays are spaced 3 feet apart.				
Weighted blankets/sleep sacks are not allowed.				
Shoes are not removed for nap/sleeping in case of fire.				
Sleep sacks are not allowed once a child is no longer in a crib/pack n play.				
Nap mats/cots are spaced 3 feet apart, separated by a solid barrier, or alternated head to feet.				

Sleeping / Napping (Continued)	Yes	No	N/A	NOTES
Nap items are stored separately for each child.				
Infants do not use blankets. Written parental permission is required to use blanket. If allowed, blankets are placed only nipple high.				
Nap items (blankets, pillows, stuffed toys) are laundered weekly, sooner if soiled.				
Nap mats/cots are cleaned with soap and water daily if not labeled, weekly if labeled, between children. Disinfected if soiled with blood, vomit, or urine/poop.				
Special Needs	Yes	No	N/A	NOTES
All children with diagnosed special health needs have a current care plan signed by a health care provider and parent/guardian, as well as a release of information form signed by parent. *Licensing only requires a care plan be signed by a parent.				
Each care plan is reviewed by all staff and renewed at least yearly.				
Emergency medication (ex. EpiPen) and equipment along with the child's care plan are always available at the child care program and when the child is taken off site during child care hours. All staff know where items are kept.				
Emergency medication is stored out of reach of children and unlocked to ensure quick administration. A copy of the care plan is always kept with the emergency medication for reference.				
All staff are aware of children with special needs. Children's pictures are posted to ensure identification.				
Medication Administration	Yes	No	N/A	NOTES
Medications are stored out of the reach and sight of children; medications are in their original container and labeled with the child's name.				
Over-the-counter medications are only given with written instructions and permission from the child's parent/guardian (to reduce the likelihood of a parent lawsuit, it is recommended to obtain written instructions and permission from a health care provider and the child's parent/guardian). Medication is given according to the instructions on the label.				
Prescription medication is only given with written instructions and permission from a health care provider and the child's parent/guardian. The label on the prescription medication can serve as the written instructions and permission from the health care provider.				
Written parental permission is obtained before applying any product to a child. Examples of over-the-counter products: sunscreen, insect repellent, diaper cream/ointment, lotion, etc.				

Emergency Preparedness	Yes	No	N/A	NOTES
Provider stays on the same level as the children when sleeping. It is recommended for all children to sleep on the main level in case of fire.				
Emergency disaster plan is posted.				
There is a plan for escape in case of fire and tornado, and practice drills are held and recorded each month. Plans are posted.				
Smoke detectors and fire extinguishers work properly, and batteries are functioning. Detectors are tested monthly, and batteries are changed at least yearly.				
Parents' and other emergency numbers are up-to-date and posted by the phone. Programmed into cell phone.				
An operating flashlight is available for use in case there is a power failure. Extra batteries are available if needed				
Children wear shoes at all times in case of fire/emergency evacuation.				
The first aid kits for the home and vehicle (if provider transports) are fully stocked, readily accessible, and kept out of the reach of children.				
First aid kit and phone are taken outside or on a field trip in case of an emergency.				
Emergency preparedness kit (diapers, food, activities, etc.) is stocked and ready to go in case of an emergency.				

Adapted from:

CCHP Health and Safety Checklist – Revised, CCHP, 2005.

Child Care Health & Safety Daily Checklist, Early Childhood Center Indiana Institute on Disability and Community Quality Inclusive Child Care Checklist, CCHP, 2008.

CFOC, 4th Edition, 2019

Form provided by Child Care Aware® of North Dakota Health & Safety Specialists.

Revised 1/23/23

Child Care Aware® of North Dakota grants users' permission to reproduce this document for educational purposes.
