

Foundational Quality Standards for Early Learning Programs Covered in this Learning Session

WAC 110-300-0165 Safety requirements.

(1) An early learning provider must keep indoor and outdoor early learning program space, materials, and equipment free from hazards and in safe working condition. Equipment and toys purchased and used must be compliant with CPSC guidelines or ASTM standards, as now and hereafter amended. Playground equipment and surfaces must meet the requirements of WAC [110-300-0146](#).

(2) An early learning provider must take steps to prevent hazards to children including, but not limited to:

(a) Making inaccessible to infants and toddlers any equipment, material, or objects that may pose a risk of choking, aspiration, or ingestion. For the purposes of this section, equipment, material, or objects that have a diameter or overall dimension of one and three-quarter inches or less shall be considered items that may pose a risk of choking, aspiration, or ingestion. Small parts from larger equipment, material, or objects that have a diameter or overall dimension of one and three-quarter inches or less, that may become detached from the larger equipment, materials, or object shall also be considered items that may pose a risk of choking, aspiration, or ingestion;

(b) Eliminating and not using in the licensed space, pursuant to RCW [43.216.380](#), any window blinds or other window coverings with pull cords or inner cords capable of forming a loop and posing risk of strangulation to children.

- (i) Window blinds and other window coverings that have been manufactured or properly retrofitted in a manner that eliminates the formation of loops posing a risk of strangulation are allowed; and
- (ii) A window covering must not be secured to the frame of a window or door used as an emergency exit in a way that would prevent the window or door from opening easily.

(c) Making inaccessible to children straps, strings, cords, wires, or similar items capable of forming a loop around a child's neck that are not used during supervised early learning program activities;

(d) Making inaccessible to children plastic bags and other suffocation hazards;

(e) Ensuring firearms, guns, weapons, and ammunition are not on the premises of a center early learning program. Firearms, guns, weapons, and ammunition on the premises of a family home early learning program must be stored in a locked gun safe or locked room inaccessible to children. If stored in a locked room, each gun must be stored unloaded and with a trigger lock or other disabling device.

The locked room must be inaccessible to children at all times;

(f) Preventing children from walking into or through a glass door, window, or other glass barrier, by placing stickers or art work at the children's eye level on the glass; and

(g) Cribs, play pens, bassinets, infant beds, and indoor climbing structures must not be placed next to windows, to prevent harm from shattered glass, unless the window is made of safety glass.

(3) An early learning provider must take measures intended to prevent other hazards to children in care in early learning program space including, but not limited to:

(a) **Cuts, abrasions, and punctures.** Equipment, materials, and other objects on the premises that have splintered edges, sharp edges, points, protruding nails, bolts, or other dangers must be repaired, removed, or made inaccessible to children;

(b) **Burns.** Equipment, materials, or products that may be hot enough to injure a child must be made inaccessible to children;

(c) **Sheering, crushing, or pinching.** Broken or cracked equipment, materials, and objects must be repaired, removed, or made inaccessible to children;

(d) **Entrapment.** Freezers, refrigerators, washers, dryers, compost bins, and other entrapment dangers must be inaccessible to children unless being actively supervised;

(e) **Tripping.** Tripping hazards must be eliminated. Uneven walkways, damaged flooring or carpeting, or other tripping hazards must be removed or repaired;

(f) **Falling objects.** Large objects that pose a risk of falling or tipping must be securely anchored. Large objects include, but are not limited to, televisions, dressers, bookshelves, wall cabinets, sideboards or hutches, and wall units; and

(g) **Equipment in poor condition.** Equipment in poor condition (loose parts, rusty parts, flaking paint, or other dangers) must be repaired, removed, or made inaccessible to children.

(4) To ensure a safe environment for children in care, an early learning provider must comply with the following requirements:

(a) **Indoor temperatures for the premises.** The temperature of indoor early learning licensed space must be between 68 and 82 degrees Fahrenheit. If indoor licensed space is colder than 68 or hotter than 82 degrees Fahrenheit, an early learning provider must use climate control devices that are inaccessible to children to bring the temperature within the required range;

(b) **Window openings.** Windows within the reach of children must only open up to three and one-half inches or have some barrier or preventative measure to discourage children from exiting through the window. The three and one-half inch opening does not apply to exit windows in family home early learning programs;

(c) **Licensed space lighting.** Early learning program space must have natural or artificial light that provides appropriate illumination for early learning program activities and supervision. A provider must comply with all light fixture manufacturers' installation and use requirements. A provider must also ensure compliance with the following requirements:

(i) Light fixtures must have shatter-resistant covers or light bulbs;

(ii) Lights or light fixtures used indoors must be designed for indoor use only;

- (iii) Free standing lamps must be attached or secured to prevent tipping;
and
 - (iv) Halogen lamps and bulbs are prohibited.
 - (d) **Safe noise levels.** Noise levels must be maintained at a level in which a normal conversation may occur;
 - (e) **Safe water temperature.** All water accessible to enrolled children must not be hotter than 120 degrees Fahrenheit;
 - (f) **Stairway safety.**
 - (i) There must not be clutter or obstructions in the stairway;
 - (ii) All stairways (indoor and outdoor), not including play structures, must meet local building codes pursuant to RCW [43.216.340](#).
 - (A) Open stairways with no walls on either side must have handrails with slats (balusters) that prevent a child from falling off either side of the stairway.
 - (B) Stairways with a wall on only one side must have a handrail with slats (balusters) on the side without the wall that prevents a child from falling off the stairway.
 - (C) Stairways with a wall on both sides must have a handrail no higher than thirty-eight inches on at least one side of the stairway.
 - (iii) Stairways must have a pressure gate, safety gate or door to keep stairs inaccessible to infants and toddlers when not in use. Openings between slats on pressure or safety gates must not be large enough to allow a sphere that is three and one-half inches wide to pass through.
 - (g) **Platforms and decks.** All platforms and decks used for child care activities must meet local building codes pursuant to RCW [43.216.340](#). This does not include play equipment. All platforms and decks with a drop zone of more than eighteen inches must have guardrails in sections without steps.
- (5) To ensure a safe environment for children in care, an early learning provider must comply with the following electrical requirements:
- (a) In areas accessible to children, electrical outlets must have automatic shutters that only allow electrical plugs to be inserted (tamper-resistant) or that are covered by blank plates or other tamper-resistant covers appropriate to the electrical outlet;
 - (b) Outlets near sinks, tubs, toilets, or other water sources must be inaccessible to children or be tamper-resistant and equipped with a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) outlet type;
 - (c) Electrical cords must be in good working condition, not torn or frayed, and not have any exposed wires;
 - (d) Electrical cords must be plugged directly into a wall outlet or a surge protector;
 - (e) Power strips with surge protectors may be used but must not be accessible to children in care;
 - (f) Extension cords may only be used for a brief, temporary purpose and must not replace direct wiring; and

(g) Electrical devices accessible to children must not be plugged into an electrical outlet near a water source such as sink, tub, water table, or swimming pool.