

## **CHOOSING AND MAINTAINING APPROPRIATE, SAFE FACILITIES**

### **POLICY:**

UMCHS will choose and maintain appropriate, safe facilities within the guidelines of state and federal regulations and in keeping with developmental guidelines.

### **PROCEDURE:**

#### - Indoor environment

- All classrooms will have at least 35 sq feet of usable space per child. In order to ensure that spaces have adequate room for children, the Executive Director or designated Operations Directors will physically measure the usable classroom space for a proposed classroom site (the total square feet = the number of enrolled children x 35 feet). The usable space must be equal to or greater than (length of the space x the width of the space) the requirement.
- All proposed spaces must be free of hazards. To ensure facilities are free of hazards, the on-site education staff must observe the classroom area on a daily basis to maintain a safe environment. Broken or unsafe equipment must be reported to the site Team Leader or Education Manager upon discovery. When facilities have un-safe components or structures, a plan for abatement must occur within 30 days. Using the Work Order form, the Education Manager or Team Leader will complete a request, sending the completed form with level of urgency to the appropriate Operations Director. The Operations Director will designate the appropriate personnel to complete the repairs or maintenance as quickly as possible.
- Centers will be regularly inspected by the Sanitation Inspector for environmental hazards. Any hazards discovered will be fixed immediately. UMCHS staff will also seek out professional assistance in testing surfaces painted prior to 1978 for lead and will have the area fixed immediately by a qualified professional. Reports will be kept on file to show that necessary follow-up was completed to protect children and staff from environmental hazards.
- In our Family Childcare Homes, carbon monoxide detectors will be installed in spaces occupied by children and if a basement area is devoted to children, radon detectors will be installed as well.
- Infants and toddlers and preschoolers will be assured physical safety. In order to ensure physical safety for infants, they will be separated to the extent possible from walkways and areas used by toddlers and preschoolers. Where possible, structures or boundaries will be used to separate groups of very young children from older children. When children are in mixed-aged groups, the staff will maintain the expected ratios for group care.
- Recommended (EPA) indoor building temperatures should range between 68 degrees – 78.8 degrees (in summer 72 – 76 and in winter 68 – 75). Oregon child care regulations require temperatures not to drop below 68 degrees. Any circumstances where the temperature drops below 68 degrees in licensed facilities should be reported to the Child Care Director immediately.

- When buildings are unoccupied (winter, spring, and summer breaks) thermostats should be set at 55 degrees in winter months and 85 degrees in summer months)
- No tape of any kind will be used on carpets or rugs in any of our facilities.
- Thumbtacks will not be used in any area occupied by children
- Only approved adhesives that can be cleanly and easily removed will be used on facility walls (tape, sticky tack, or 3M command strips). Staples are not permitted, unless used on a bulletin board.

- Outdoor environment

- All classrooms will have at least 75 sq feet of usable outdoor play space per child. In order to ensure that the outdoors have adequate space for children, the designated Operations Directors will physically measure the usable outdoor space for proposed sites (the total square feet = the number of children using the space x 75 feet). The total outdoor space must be equal to or greater than (length of the space x the width of the space) the requirement.
- To the extent possible, UMCHS will ensure that facilities accessible to the public are Handicap Accessible in accordance with the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act).
- Outdoor play areas will be maintained by maintenance staff, at the direction of the designated Operations Directors, to ensure safe and attractive environments for children.
- Spraying of pesticides and/or herbicides will not be used when children are present. These procedures will take place after the children are inside for the day, in the evenings or weekends, to ensure the affected area is safe when the children return.
- The outdoor area will be policed daily by the education staff to ensure that the grounds are free from harmful substances, hazards or materials and requests for maintenance will be submitted to the Team Leader or Education Manager. When facilities have un-safe outdoor environments that require maintenance or repair, a plan for abatement must occur within 30 days. Using the Work Order form, the Education Manager or Team Leader will complete a request, sending the completed form with level of urgency to the appropriate Operations Director. The Operations Director will designate the appropriate personnel to complete the repairs or maintenance as quickly as possible.
- Outdoor areas will be fenced and gates will be secured with chains or locking clips to prevent children from leaving the premises and getting into unsafe and unsupervised areas. Children will not be exposed to vehicular traffic in route to UMCHS, Inc outdoor play areas.
- Operations Directors and maintenance personnel will ensure all playground equipment is approved by the U.S. Consumer Products Safety Commission and it is installed according to manufacturer's instruction. Operations Directors will inspect outdoor play areas on a monthly basis and staff will monitor equipment on a daily basis (see Facility Monitors).
- Operations Directors and maintenance personnel will ensure playground surfacing meets U.S. Consumer Products Safety Commission and it is installed and maintained according to their guidelines.

- Classroom staff may choose to implement alternative gross motor play opportunities in the following situations:
  1. If the temperature falls below 20 degrees
  2. If the temperature rises above 100 degrees
  3. In cases where the weather conditions may pose a safety risk to children and staff such as high winds, ice, hail, or thunder and lightning.  
See E12 Curriculum and Classroom Daily Plans for recommended alternate gross motor activities in inclement weather.

\* Observations (see Observation Schedule) and Health and Safety monitors will be completed monthly and facilities inspections twice annually (see persons responsible in the Facilities Health and Safety Inspection Responsibility Matrix ). Maintenance Personnel will also use the Preventative Maintenance Schedule for each site.