



Food Safety Grab and Go Lesson

Safety Basics for the Child Care Kitchen

Kitchen safety is important to the health and safety of child care employees and to the daily preparation of safe and healthful meals for children. Most kitchen accidents are the result of employees failing to follow safety rules, resulting in burns, cuts, falls, and back strains. Creating a safe environment and implementing safety rules decreases the risk of accidents, contamination of food, or the spread of disease and foodborne illnesses. In this lesson, you will review a safety checklist to minimize accidents in the child care kitchen.

Checklist Tool

Listed below is a sample checklist for preventing injuries in the child care kitchen. It's important to develop a safety checklist to prevent injuries in the child care kitchen that best fits your facility. The checklist should include information on preventing burns, cuts, falls, and back injuries. Complete the checklist and then use it as a guide to create a checklist for your facility.

Preventing Burns:

- ☐ Turn pot and pan handles inward to prevent accidental spills.
- ☐ Turn off stoves or ranges before pots are removed from the stove.
- ☐ Use dry potholders for lifting hot items.
- ☐ Check hot water temperatures.
- ☐ Lift lids away from the body to avoid steam burns.
- ☐ Know the location and how to use your fire extinguisher (contact your local fire department).
- ☐ Do not use water on a grease fire.
- ☐ Keep your oven and range top clean and free of grease.

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Preventing Cuts:

- ☐ Store knives in slotted cases.
- ☐ Do not place knives in the sink while washing dishes.
- ☐ Keep can openers sharp to avoid jagged edges.
- ☐ Use safety devices on slicers and choppers.
- ☐ Handle cutting edges of foil and plastic wrap boxes with care when moving throughout the kitchen.
- ☐ Use protective gloves when handling knives; practice knife safety.
- ☐ Have a first aid kit available for minor injuries.

Preventing Falls:

- ☐ Clean up spills immediately.
- ☐ Keep passageways free of clutter.
- ☐ Secure items on shelves to prevent them from falling.
- ☐ Use stepladders when reaching heights.
- ☐ Replace dim lighting.
- ☐ Wear non-slip, closed toe shoes.

Preventing Back Injury:

- ☐ Determine if you can safely lift a load, prior to lifting a heavy load.
- ☐ Assume the safe lifting position. Stand close to the object and keep a wide stance. Keep feet turned out and heels down. Then squat by bending at the hips and knees.
- ☐ Prepare to lift. Pull the load close to the body (this reduces pressure on the back), and grasp the object firmly. Tighten stomach muscles.
- ☐ Let your legs do the lifting. Maintain the natural curves of the spine and rise up from the squatting position using the legs to power the lift. Don't bend over at the neck, shoulders, or waist while lifting.
- ☐ Set the load down by squatting.

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Chemical Safety:

- ☐ Store chemicals away from food.
- ☐ Store chemicals in original containers.
- ☐ Never use food containers to store chemicals.
- ☐ Mix chemicals properly.
- ☐ Check concentration of sanitizing solution.
- ☐ Use appropriate chemicals for child care facilities.
- ☐ Follow the manufacturer's label for use of chemicals.

Food Safety:

- ☐ Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold.
- ☐ Check the temperatures of food while cooking.
- ☐ Store food at the proper temperature.
- ☐ Cook food at the proper temperature.

It's important for child care employees to know and understand how to create and maintain a safe kitchen. All child care employees should be trained to follow safety rules and to prevent food contamination. Well-trained child care employees will be aware of safety hazards in the kitchen and work consciously to prevent injuries. Implementing a comprehensive training program and emphasizing the four food safety messages, clean, separate, cook, and chill will minimize the risk of accidents in the child care kitchen.

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