

Child Protection Strategy Baseline Audit

The left column lists conditions, policies, procedures, and practices considered best practice for protecting children in your setting. Use this baseline audit to help you capture a picture of your setting’s starting point as you take steps to create or improve your child protection strategy. This will help you prioritize what needs to be addressed, what needs to align better with your policies/procedures, and what to focus on when communicating with and training your staff.

Safe Environment		Yes	Some	No	Unknown	Notes
VISIBILITY	There are clear lines of sight throughout the building					
	There is bright lighting in all areas					
	Doors have windows, including closet doors					
	Doors to rooms are kept open					
	Door windows are free of any coverings					
	Rooms with locking doors are accessible only to authorized personnel					
	Landscaping ensures open, visible spaces with no possibility of concealment					

Child Protection Strategy Baseline Audit, continued

Safe Environment		Yes	Some	No	Unknown	Notes
SUPERVISION	There is adequate outdoor playground supervision					
	There are daily, periodic walk-throughs of the building and its grounds					
	There is adequate supervision in halls, stairwells, and other areas that can be secluded at certain times of day					
	Monitoring devices, such as security cameras, are installed in key zones					
ACCESS	All visitors are required to sign in at the main office and wear a visitor badge at all times					
	Ways of entering and exiting the building during regular hours are limited to one door that's monitored continually					
	All staff are aware of restrictions to noncustodial parents' access to a child					
	Children entering or leaving building at non-typical times need parental permission, except in case of emergency					
	Fences, gates, and so on surrounding grounds function well and are in good repair					

Child Protection Strategy Baseline Audit, continued

Staff and Volunteer Conduct		Yes	Some	No	Unknown	Notes
GENERAL CONDUCT	Staff interact with children in open, public spaces where they can be observed or in a room with the door open					
	Staff treat all children with respect and interact with them in safe and supportive ways that foster their social, emotional, and academic development					
	Staff do not bully children (as defined in your anti-bullying policy)					
	Staff refrain from using or being under the influence of alcohol/tobacco/drugs while working					
	Staff do not give children gifts without the knowledge of their parents/caregivers					
	Staff do not give children rides home, unless with parental permission and under extenuating circumstances					
	Staff comply with all state- and school- or program-level mandatory reporting procedures					
	Staff cooperate fully with any investigation of misconduct or abuse of children					

Child Protection Strategy Baseline Audit, continued

Staff and Volunteer Conduct		Yes	Some	No	Unknown	Notes
PHYSICAL BEHAVIOR	Staff contact with children maintains physical boundaries at all times and only includes public and nonsexual touches, such as pats on the back or shoulder and child-initiated hugs					
	Staff do not engage in inappropriate physical behavior that abuses, exploits, or harasses children, such as using physical violence, touching private body parts, engaging in intimate/sexual contact, or showing/involving them in pornography					
	When staff need to support children with using the toilet or changing clothes, another staff member is notified first					
COMMUNICATION	Staff communicate verbally in appropriate ways, such as praising all children equally; refraining from using profanity or telling sexual jokes; not yelling, threatening, ridiculing, or making degrading comments					
	Staff use digital communication appropriately, such as only using email/text messages for pedagogical purposes, not engaging children via social media or online gaming, and not allowing children to access inappropriate online content					

Child Protection Strategy Baseline Audit, continued

Screening and Hiring	Yes	Some	No	Unknown	Notes
A written application is in place that includes permission to contact past supervisors/references and conduct background checks, as well as a space to declare past criminal activity					
All applicants and volunteers are required to fill out an application					
Personal interviews are conducted with all applicants					
All applicants are given a copy of policies and must sign a statement of receipt and agreement					
Reference checks are conducted on all applicants					
Criminal background checks are conducted on all applicants					
Criminal background checks are conducted on all applicants					
Sex offender registry checks are conducted on all applicants					
Internal records are checked for all applicants					

Child Protection Strategy Baseline Audit, continued

Reporting	Yes	Some	No	Unknown	Notes
Appropriate staff have been informed that they are mandated reporters and must report suspected child abuse and/or neglect (according to state laws)					
Staff have been informed/trained on how to report abuse and/or neglect happening outside your setting (by parent, caregiver, neighbor, etc.)					
Staff have been informed/trained on how to report abuse and/or neglect happening inside your setting (by staff or volunteers)					
Staff have been informed/trained on how to report violations of child protection policies					
A system is in place to document and store suspicions, allegations, and reports of abuse and neglect					

Child Protection Strategy Baseline Audit, continued

Child Protection Strategy		Yes	Some	No	Unknown	Notes
POLICIES	A safe environment policy is in place					
	A code of conduct policy is in place					
PROCEDURES	Screening and hiring procedures are in place					
	Procedures are in place for staff to report violations of policies and procedures					
	Procedures are in place for staff to report abuse and/or neglect happening inside your setting (by staff or volunteers)					
	Procedures are in place for staff to report abuse and/or neglect happening outside your setting (by parent, caregiver, neighbor, etc.)					
	Policies and procedures have been communicated to all staff and all staff have signed statements of receipt and agreement forms					
	Staff understand their responsibility to cooperate fully with any investigation of misconduct or abuse (inside or outside your setting)					

Child Protection Strategy Baseline Audit, continued

Child Protection Strategy		Yes	Some	No	Unknown	Notes
PRACTICES	Staff have received training on recognizing, responding to, and reporting child abuse and neglect					
	Families are aware of the child protection strategy					
	Families are aware of materials and resources that can educate them about child abuse and neglect and give them additional skills they need to protect their child					
	Children are learning specific skills and rules for staying safe in potentially dangerous and abusive situations					
	Families are aware of resources to help them reinforce the personal safety skills their child is learning					

This resource is one of many available to you through the *Second Step* Child Protection Unit, a comprehensive school-based child protection program, which includes staff training, student lessons, and family resources. Access additional free resources on child sexual abuse prevention for parents at earlyopenoften.org.