

**Youth Development, Inc.  
Early/Head Start  
Child Health and Safety**

**Policy Number:**

**Effective Date:** 10/13/01

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**Agency Approval Date:**

Oct. 13, 2001

Reviewed: Mar. 6, 2007,  
10/2008, 9/2010, 11/2011,  
01/2012, 5/24/13

**Policy Council Approval**

**Date:** 10/13/01

Revised: 03/10/07  
Revised: 11/12/2011,  
04/14/12, 07/21/12

**Governing Board Approval**

**Date:**

**COMPONENT:** Child Health and Safety 1304.22 (a) (3)

**SUBJECT:** Fire Drill and Emergency Evacuation Policy

**PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE:** To prepare staff, volunteers, and children for emergency situations.

**OPERATIONAL PROCEDURE:**

1. Fire and disaster evacuation plans are posted in each classroom where they can easily be seen to ensure that they can be put into practice immediately.
2. Plans are designed according to the set-up of each classroom/center and are reviewed with the children during the first week of school and on a regular basis. Plans should be updated each time the classroom environment is changed. All adults in the classroom(s) must be familiar with classroom evacuation plan.
3. A staff person will be assigned for each child with a special need/disability to ensure his/her safety during an emergency or an evacuation of the center. (The classroom teacher would be the first person assigned to a special needs child. The T.A. would be the second person in line to assist and the specialist or designated staff would be held responsible if additional support is needed). Information relating to the names of each identified child and the staff person assigned to assist that child can be found on the **Emergency/Evacuation Form for a Special Needs Child**. Emergency/Evacuation Forms can be located in the child's file and the Emergency/Evacuation Binder.
5. All exit ways will be clearly marked and free of any debris.
6. There must be at least two (2) exits remote from each other in every classroom. Windows used as emergency exits must be able to be opened from the inside for emergency outlet.

7. All exits must be marked, including fire exits, by having letters at least six inches (6") high whose principal strokes are at least three-fourths (3/4) of an inch wide. Illuminated exit signs must be maintained in operable condition.
8. In the event of an emergency requiring that children be taken off site, each center director will establish an emergency pick-up site for their center(s) and notify parents. Parents must be informed in writing of this alternative site during parent orientation and reminded at Parent/Teacher conferences and/or Home Visits.
8. Classrooms located in community centers or public school buildings, will follow their evacuation procedures. Copies of these procedures will be obtained and posted in each classroom(s) and in the emergency backpacks.
9. Fire and disaster drills are conducted twice (2) during the first month of school and once (1) per month thereafter. Center staff is to contact their local Fire Stations to assist them in how to conduct fire/evacuation drills, the use of fire extinguishers, and assist them in designating a spot for staff and children to go to.
9. Teaching staff will inventory all first aid and emergency evacuation kits immediately after fire and disaster drills, as well as date and initial each checklist. All kits should be well stocked and possess no expired items. Staff is responsible for stocking all kits with fresh and appropriate first aid items.
11. Each Head Start center will keep a record of the fire drills with the date, time, number of adults and children participating, and any problems encountered during the drill for all months. Reports must be posted for State Licensing and Fire Marshall review.
12. Staff, parents, and children should clear the building as quickly and as orderly as possible. Emphasis will be placed on orderly evacuation and proper discipline rather than speed. Teachers must turn off the lights and close the doors behind them as they exit the classrooms.
13. Kitchen staff must ensure that ovens and stove tops are turned off.
14. Parents, staff, and volunteers who are outside the building when the alarm sounds should not enter the building but will move away to a safe distance. Doorways must be kept clear for those leaving the building.
15. Evacuation drills are held at different times during the day using the fire alarm or detector system. Infants and toddlers should be placed in the evacuation crib and rolled to a designated place. All staff must assist in evacuation of children. (See individual Center plans).
16. Upon arrival at the designated area, staff will immediately take roll call to make sure everyone is accounted for. Staff must take with them copies of the attendance and child sign in/out form and Emergency Contact Forms for each child. These forms are to be kept in the teacher binder and easily accessible in the event of a fire or disaster. Staff cannot re-enter the building until cleared to do so.

17. The Director or a designated person will sound the alarm to return. Adults and children should return to the center by the same route by which they left.

18. If the building needs to be evacuated for any reason (**internal disaster**), the fire drill plan will be followed. Since the alarm could indicate a fire drill, an actual fire, or a bomb threat; NO EXCEPTIONS will be made to this procedure. The danger is in the building and evacuation is the best practice.

19. In the event of an **external disaster** such as a severe weather alert (tornado, hurricane), chemical spill outside of the building, civil unrest, earthquake, etc., staff and children will exit the classroom and sit in the hallway. DO NOT SIT NEAR A WINDOW. Children outside the building will come inside and sit in the hallway. The danger is outside the building and protecting children inside the building is the first defense. Evacuation outside or to another location may be required. (See #6 & #7 above).

*I have reviewed, been trained, and fully understand the procedures for the fire drill and evacuation of children and staff in the centers. In the event that these policies are not adhered to, I understand that disciplinary action up to, and including termination, may occur.*

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Staff signature

Date

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Supervisor signature

Date

**THIS POLICY MUST BE POSTED IN EVERY CLASSROOM!**