



Supervisory Structures for Promoting Social Emotional Development

To comply with Pennsylvania regulations, child care facilities are required to maintain specific staff-child ratios—that is, they need to have a specified number of adults for every few children (e.g., one adult for every four infants). The reasons are obvious—it’s difficult to provide individual care and attention and protect the safety of children when there are too few adults. Maintaining required staff-child ratios also makes it possible to provide good supervision for young children in your care, and in so doing, help promote their healthy social and emotional development.



Environmental strategies

- Create child-friendly space and room arrangements that allow children to move and play without bumping into things or each other.
- Make sure you can easily see children around the furniture; e.g., avoid furniture items that are taller than the children.
- Use stable furnishings that are not easily tipped over.

- Keep items that are fragile or unsafe for children out of reach to avoid constantly nagging them, “Don’t touch that. Don’t go there!” Keep doors and cabinets locked if you don’t want children to get into them.

Paying attention

- Know where every child is all the time; make sure each child is always within sight of an adult, even during nap time.

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- Make frequent head counts of children, before and after every activity or move from one place to another. Ask children to count with you—make it fun!
- Move around the room or change your position frequently.
- Don't hold long conversations with other adults, even parents, that distract your attention from children.
- Scan the room frequently so you can notice a problem before it happens.
- Make frequent eye contact with children to let them know you are watching and caring about them and what they do; redirect children to other activities when necessary.
- Always be aware of each child's skills, interests and developmental stage.

For more information, contact your local Early Learning Resource Center (ELRC). Find the ELRC in your county at www.raiseyourstar.org.

R E S O U R C E S

PA Child Care Regulations for child care centers, group child care homes, and family child care homes. <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/providers/Child-Care/Pages/Child-Care-Regulations.aspx>

Keep Children Safe Using Active Supervision. Head Start | Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center. <http://bit.ly/2mBjbQY>

Caring for Our Children, 4th Edition, National Health and Safety Performance Standards Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs. <http://bit.ly/2mC2auK>

Programs and families can contact the program leadership directly at PAIECMH@pakeys.org with questions or concerns.

