Nursery Safety Checklist

Childcare provided during church services, parish events and school events is not considered a licensed child care operation and therefore is not governed by such regulations. The following guidelines and recommendation are not legal requirements, but are suggested best practices to ensure adequate supervision and safe conditions are provided. Ensure that staff and volunteers are regularly inspecting the nursery to make sure it remains a safe place for the children.

The following list of items should assist with that inspection.

# Staffing

All volunteers providing child must complete all child protection requirements for volunteers with substantial contact with children.

Youth who are assisting with childcare should be a minimum of 14 years old and must complete all archdiocesan child protection requirements for minor volunteers who have substantial contact with children.

Youth volunteers must be supervised by adults who have also completed all archdiocesan child protection requirements.

# Staffing Ratio

Childcare provided during church services, parish events and school events is are not considered licensed child facilities and therefore are not governed by such regulations governing licensed childcare facilities, the guidelines below are not legal requirements, but suggested ratios to make sure that adequate supervision is being provided. The location must provide adequate supervision, not only of the children left for child care, but of youth who are assisting with child care.

**Children Ages Staff to Child Ratio Requirement**Infants 1 Staff Member for Every 3 Children  
Toddlers 1 Staff Member for Every 3 Children  
2 Years Old 1 Staff Member for Every 6 Children  
3 or 4 Years Old 1 Staff Member for Every 10 Children  
5 Years Old and Older 1 Staff Member for Every 15 Children

*There must be at least one adult, 18 years of age or older, present at all times.*

# Child/Adult Interaction

■ Adults should avoid being alone with a child/minor

■ Parents should be required to assist in the child with toileting needs. Babysitters will not accompany children to the bathroom.

# Emergency Safety

■ Parents must provide for a child left in your care emergency contact numbers as well as any issues related to medical conditions, allergies and the like.

■ Make sure the room contains a stocked first aid kit.

■ Post important phone numbers, such as those for the local poison control center and nearest hospital emergency room, near the phone.

■ If there is no phone in the room, provide the location of the nearest telephone.

■ Install a smoke detector and a carbon monoxide detector.

■ Hang a fire extinguisher out of children’s reach.

■ Post disaster response instructions and a map to the nearest exit.

# Furnishings

■ Do not stack furniture or toys so that a child would find them inviting to climb.

■ Install gates on stairwells accessible to children.

■ Make sure all electrical cords are out of reach, especially those attached to hot objects.

■ Do not use hot appliances, such as space heaters or coffee makers.

■ Secure shelves and furniture, so kids cannot pull them over.

■ Pad any sharp corners or edges.

■ Remove any poisonous plants.

■ Place non-toxic plants out of arm’s reach.

# Cribs

■ Look for loose or missing slats.

■ Make sure slats are no more than 2 3/8 inches apart to prevent head entrapment.

■ Remove decorative knobs on corner posts that could entangle clothing.

■ Use a tight-fitting mattress.

■ You should be able to fit only two fingers between the mattress and the crib side.

■ Tighten loose nuts, screws, and bolts. Make sure mattress supports are secure.

# Playpens

■ Make sure the mesh netting has a fine weave, so it will not catch the buttons on children’s

clothing.

■ Inspect the mesh to make sure there are no tears, holes, or loose threads.

■ Place a warning label on drop-side mesh playpens reminding workers never to leave children in the pen with the side down.

■ Make sure slat spaces on a wooden playpen are no more than 2 3/8 inches apart.

# High chairs

■ Check to see that the high chair has a wide, stable base that will not collapse easily.

■ Make sure it has functional waist and crotch restraining straps.

■ Ensure that the high chair tray locks securely.

■ Firmly attach tubing caps or plugs that a child could pull off and swallow.

# Toys

■ Make sure none of the toys in the room can cause children under age three to choke or suffocate.

These include:

* Toys with small parts
* Fuzzy stuffed animals or dolls
* Balloons (Uninflated, they pose a choking hazard)
* Foam toys

# Floors

■ Get on your hands and knees to survey the nursery areas from a child’s perspective.

■ Make sure the floor stays free of small objects a child could swallow, such as coins, paper clips, or buttons.

■ Eliminate any falling or tripping hazards.

# Doors

■ Place locks or latches on doors that children could open.

■ Consider using half doors to prevent children from wandering off while providing visibility.

# Walls

■ Remove tacks and pins from areas of bulletin boards children can reach.

■ Cover electrical outlets.

■ Repair peeling wallpaper or chipped paint.

■ Secure drapery or window-treatment cords.

# Ceiling

■ Make sure ceiling tiles are firmly in place.

■ Remove any loose plaster from textured ceilings.

# Supplies

■ Store cleaning and diaper-changing supplies out of children’s reach or in latched cabinets.

■ Use only non-toxic paint, crayons, and other art supplies.

■ Do not allow children to play on or around carts holding TVs or audiovisual equipment.