

Toys Accessible

Child Care Learning Centers: 591-1-1-.12(3) – Toys. A variety of age-appropriate toys and play materials shall be available. They shall be stored on low, open shelves accessible to children in each room or assigned area. Toys that launch projectiles, such as dart guns, pop guns, slingshots, etc., shall not be allowed in the Center, and balloons shall not be accessible to preschool children.

Family Child Care Learning Homes: 290-2-3-.12(1) – The Home shall provide a variety of age-appropriate toys, books, and play equipment and materials to insure that each child shall have opportunity to experience and participate in a variety of activities. **290-2-3-.12(9)** – Toys shall be stored on low, open shelves accessible to children in each room or assigned area. **290-2-3-.12(10)** – Toys that launch projectiles, such as dart guns, pop guns, slingshots, etc. shall not be allowed in the Home, and balloons shall not be accessible to preschool children.

Rule Type: Non-Core Rule

Intent of the Rule

To promote children’s development by ensuring that they have access to a variety of appropriate toys and play materials. To protect children from injury resulting from potentially hazardous toys.

Clarification

Play is the way children learn about themselves, their environment, and the people around them. As they play, children learn to solve problems, to get along with other people, and to control their bodies as they enrich their creativity and develop leadership skills. Toys and play materials stimulate and prolong play. When children play with a variety of toys and play materials, the experiences help them develop to their fullest potential. The selection of toys and materials should support learning about math and science concepts, encourage language and communication, and enable exploration of art and dramatic ideas while stimulating fine and gross motor development.

For optimal hands-on learning to take place, toys and play materials must be arranged so children have direct access to them (not situated primarily for display, demonstration, or decoration). Visibility and accessibility support the development of children’s decision-making abilities by creating an environment where they are encouraged and allowed to make choices. Children can see their choices and easily reach them.

Some common toys or objects are dangerous for children. For example, latex balloons pose a choking hazard and a suffocation hazard for children. Uninflated and pieces of broken latex balloons pose a particular hazard because of their ability to conform to a child’s airway and form an airtight seal. It is also possible for a child to accidentally ingest a balloon (or a piece of it) while attempting to blow up a balloon. When a child bites an inflated balloon, the balloon may suddenly break and blow an obstructing piece of latex into the child’s airway.

Projectile toys (i.e., toys that shoot objects into the air) pose many injury risks to children, especially to the eyes and face, when children fire the toys at or near other children. Some of these toys also pose a choking and suffocation hazard for children. For example, a small suction-tipped dart can lodge in a child’s throat and block the child’s airway, causing a loss of consciousness or death.

Indicators

- ✓ Child care program staff must provide a variety of age-appropriate toys and play materials.
 - Note: The amount of materials must be sufficient to ensure that all enrolled children can actively participate in play at the same time.
 - TIP: Establish a toy rotation system to ensure a variety of toys and play materials are offered to children at all times.
 - Reminder: Follow the manufacturer's guidelines to ensure that toys and play materials are used by the appropriate age group.

- ✓ Toys and play materials must be accessible to children on low, open shelves.
 - TIP: Crates or toy boxes (without lids or with lids that are easily removable) are acceptable storage containers for a few toys as long as children can easily remove the contents from the containers.
 - Note: Toys and play materials that do not require adult assistance must be stored on open shelves within easy reach of the children, preferably near the area where they would use them.
 - Reminder: A variety of appropriate toys and materials must be maintained in each classroom or play area.

- ✓ Child care program staff must ensure toys that launch projectiles are not allowed in the program. Balloons must not be accessible to preschool children.
 - Note: Balloons and some projectile toys pose a choking and suffocation hazard for children and therefore must not be included in the facility's toys and play materials.
 - Reminder: According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, balloons cause more choking deaths in children than any other toy or children's product.
 - Recommendation: Create a system for checking children's bags to ensure that no balloons or projectile toys are brought from home.

Resources:

Caring for Our Children, 3rd Edition

<http://cfoc.nrckids.org>

American Academy of Pediatrics

www.aap.org