

Tables and Chairs

Child Care Learning Centers: 591-1-1-.12(5) – Tables. There shall be table space provided for each child who is able to sit at a table unassisted. An appropriately sized chair or bench shall be provided for each child who is not an infant and who is able to use a chair or bench.

Family Child Care Learning Homes: 290-2-3-.12(7) – Tables. There shall be table space provided for each child who is able to sit at a table unassisted. An appropriately sized chair or bench shall be provided for each child who is not an infant and who is able to use a chair or bench.

Rule Type:
Non-Core Rule

Intent of the Rule

To provide adequate table space for children to eat and engage in activities requiring fine motor skills. To ensure children's comfort and safety and to protect them from injury.

Clarification

Table and chair height should be compatible with the size of the child using the equipment. The manufacturer's recommendation for age appropriateness should be followed. Children cannot safely or comfortably use furniture that is not sized for their use.

When children eat at tables that are too high, they must reach up, then bring their food down, instead of reaching down and bringing their food up to their mouth. They may not be able to clearly see the plate or bowl holding their food. This can lead to scooping food into the mouth instead of eating more appropriately. When children work at tables that are too high, they are probably not comfortable, their arms are over-extended, and they may not be able to clearly see the project on which they are working. This position can impede the development of fine-motor skills and hand-eye coordination. When children's feet cannot touch the floor, they cannot reposition themselves easily if they slip down. This can lead to poor posture and increased risk of choking.

Indicators

- ✓ Child care programs must provide table space for each child who is able to sit at a table unassisted.
 - Reminder: Each classroom must contain adequate seating space for the classroom's capacity.
 - Recommendation: Tables should be between waist and mid-chest level of the child and allow the child's feet to rest on a firm surface while seated.
 - Tip: Table tops should be about eight inches from the top of the child's legs to promote good posture and provide appropriate leg room.
 - Note: Though not prohibited by the rules, feeding tables that seat multiple children confine children and limit their autonomy. Also since children must be placed in and lifted out of the seats, teachers are at risk of back strain. Feeding tables do not allow children's feet to reach the floor (preventing appropriate stability), and the close proximity between children enables them to touch one another's food.

- ✓ Child care programs must provide each child who is not an infant an appropriately sized chair or bench if the child is able to use them.
 - Note: When seated at a table, children’s feet should touch the floor and their arms should rest comfortably on top of the table. If benches are used, adequate space should be provided to ensure the comfort of each child.
 - TIP: When children sit on chairs that are too high for them, they are at a greater risk for falling.
 - Recommendation: High chairs should not be used by children who can sit unassisted at a table.

SIZE RECOMMENDATIONS

AGE	SEAT HEIGHTS						TABLE HEIGHTS	
	8"	10"	12"	14"	16"	18"		
Age 2	•	•					Toddler	15"-20"
Age 3		•	•				Toddler	16"-21"
Age 4			•	•			Toddler	18"-23"
Kindergarten			•	•			Standard	19"-23"
Grades 1 & 2			•	•			Standard	19"-25"
Grades 3 & up				•	•	•	Standard	21"-25"

*As a rule, there should be 6" to 10" between the chair seat and underside of table.

Resources:

Caring for Our Children
www.cfoc.nrckids.org