

TIP SHEET

INCIDENTS IN THE PLAYSPACE



Preventing Incidents

Falling, bumping a head, or skinning a knee are part of growing up for all children. We know that they will happen no matter how much we try to plan. There are some basic steps that we can take in the Playspace to help minimize the number of incidents that occur.

- Check the Playspace for choke-able items or other unsafe items such as trash and broken toys or equipment at the beginning of each shift.
 - Use the choke tube provided in your cleaning kits to test any potential choking hazards. See page 3 for instructions.
 - If you find any of these, throw them away.
- Report any hazards to the shelter and Horizons staff so that changes can be made.

When an Incident Happens

Here are some basic steps to consider for the child:

- Have one PAL **attend to the child who has been hurt**. Talk to the child and let them know that things will be ok. For example, "You bumped your head on the table. That was scary. It is okay to be scared. I am going to stay with you until you feel better."
- Check to see if medical care is needed. If you find it is needed, call the front desk to ask for staff support.
- **Please note you are not responsible for medical/first aid care in the Playspace.**
- If the child does not need immediate medical care, you can continue with the rest of the shift. However, please be sure to alert shelter staff about the incident before you leave so that they may make the parents aware. Please ask shelter staff to assist you with translating, if needed.

Supporting the other children

- Be aware of the other children in the Playspace. They may also feel scared or worried about the child who was hurt.
- Ensure that the other children are not crowding around the child who is hurt. Other PALs may use redirection so that the child who is hurt is receiving one on one support.

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Reporting

- Any event that causes broken skin, biting, bruising or lumps should be reported on an incident report.
- If the incident requires you to get the shelter staff, you should fill out an Incident Report. Incident report forms will be in a designated area of the Playspace. Fill out the form to the best of your ability and place it back in the folder for reporting.

Incident Reporting

- PALs must alert both shelter staff and Horizons staff of any incidents that occur in the Playspace.
 - Please alert on-site shelter staff **immediately** following the incident.
 - Please alert your Horizons' Playspace Specialist and your Shelter Liaison via email **within 24 hours** of the incident.
- Incidents may include, but are not limited to, the following events:
 - Any injury that occurs in the Playspace (PAL or child-related);
 - Any fighting or aggressive behavior(s) that result in a child being removed from a Playspace shift;
 - Any inappropriate or concerning interaction(s) between PALs and children, staff, parents, or other PALs; and
 - Any inappropriate or concerning behavior(s) between children in the Playspace.
- **When in doubt, give us a shout!**

When reporting an incident, please include the following information:

- Your name and the names of all PALs who were on the shift with you when the incident occurred.
- The first name(s) of any child(ren), parent(s), or staff who were involved in the incident.
- The nature of the incident: what immediately led up to the event, what happened, who was involved, and what was the aftermath?
- The name of the staff member on-site who was alerted to the incident on the night in question.
- Any other details that you feel are important to understanding the event.

HOW TO USE A CHOKER TESTER

If the object fits entirely in the cylinder, it is a
CHOKING HAZARD.



Please dispose of any potential choking hazards immediately.