

PLAYSPACE POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Outdoor Playspace Protocols



Horizons for Homeless Children maintains a list of approved shelters for outdoor shifts. Contact your regional staff for approval status or to inquire about adding a location.



Outdoor Space Requirements

- Must be fully enclosed with secure, childproof gates.
- Area must be clean and free of hazards (trash, glass, food, etc.).
- Playground equipment must be inspected annually; safety issues must be addressed before use.
- Only developmentally appropriate outdoor toys (ages 0-8) are allowed. Bikes, wagons, and pogo sticks are prohibited.

Supervision Ratios

Outdoor shifts require close supervision. A minimum of **two adults** must be present at all times. If children are split between indoor and outdoor spaces, **two adults must remain in each area**, while maintaining safe ratios:

- Infants/Toddlers: 1:1
- Preschoolers & Up: 3:1

Staff & Parent Notification

- Inform shelter staff before going outside.
- Obtain parent approval; children must have appropriate attire (coats, sunscreen, bug spray, etc.). Only parents/guardians may apply lotions or sprays.

Weather Guidelines

- Outdoor shifts are permitted only if the temperature is **between 30° F - 90° F** and **no rain or snow** is falling.
- Playspace staff will adhere to local school district guidelines and may cancel shifts due to inclement weather.