STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Childcare Incident Reporting SOP

Document no.	SOP-CHC-004
Revision	1.0
Owner	Center Director
Effective date	September 15, 2026
Review cycle	Every 12 months

1. Purpose

To respond quickly and consistently to any injury or incident involving a child, document it accurately, and notify parents and licensing authorities as required.

2. Scope

Applies to injuries, illnesses and behavioral incidents involving enrolled children at the center. Staff workplace injuries are covered by a separate procedure.

Definitions

Minor incident	An injury or event that can be handled with basic first aid and does not require emergency medical care.
Serious incident	An injury or event requiring emergency medical care, hospitalization, or that must be reported to licensing authorities.
Incident report form	The standard form used to document what happened, the response taken and who was notified.

3. Responsibilities

Lead Teacher	Provides immediate first aid, supervises the rest of the group and completes the incident report.
Assistant Teacher	Assists with first aid, supervises unaffected children and helps notify the director.
Center Director	Reviews serious incidents, notifies parents and licensing authorities as required, and tracks incident trends.
Parent/Guardian	Receives timely notification and provides any follow-up information needed for the child's care.

RACI matrix

Activity	Lead Teacher	Assistant Teacher	Center Director	Parent/Guardian
Provide immediate first aid	R/A	R	I	-
Complete the incident report	R/A	C	C	-
Notify the parent or guardian	R	-	R/A	I
Report a serious incident to licensing authorities	I	-	R/A	I

R = Responsible, A = Accountable, C = Consulted, I = Informed

4. Materials and PPE

Materials, tools and systems

- First aid kit
- Incident report form
- Emergency contact list per child
- Local licensing agency reporting contact information
- Incident trend tracking log

Personal protective equipment

- Disposable gloves

5. Procedure

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.1	**Ensure immediate safety** Make the area safe for the injured child and other children first, removing any ongoing hazard before providing care.	Lead Teacher	☐
5.2	**Assess the child and provide first aid** Assess the child's condition and provide basic first aid within your training, following the center's first aid procedures and the child's health file for any known conditions. **Checkpoint:** The child's condition is assessed and appropriate first aid started before any paperwork begins.	Lead Teacher	☐
5.3	**Call emergency services for a serious incident** For any injury that appears serious, such as a head injury with loss of consciousness, difficulty breathing or a severe allergic reaction, call emergency services immediately. **Warning:** Never delay calling emergency services to complete paperwork first. Get help, then document.	Lead Teacher	☐
5.4	**Maintain supervision of other children** Make sure another staff member is actively supervising the rest of the group while care is provided to the injured child.	Assistant Teacher	☐
5.5	**Notify the director** Notify the center director as soon as the immediate situation is stable, giving a brief summary of what happened and the response so far.	Assistant Teacher	☐
5.6	**Notify the parent or guardian** Contact the parent or guardian promptly to inform them of the incident and the child's condition, and arrange pick-up or provide an update on care as needed. **Checkpoint:** The parent is notified promptly, and the timing and method of notification are documented.	Center Director	☐
5.7	**Document what happened** Complete the incident report form with the time, location, what happened, who was involved, and the first aid or response provided, while details are still fresh.	Lead Teacher	☐

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.8	**Record witness information** Note which staff members and children witnessed the incident and briefly record what each witness observed.	Lead Teacher	☐
5.9	**Have the parent review and sign** Have the parent review the completed incident report at pick-up or the next contact and sign to acknowledge they were informed.	Center Director	☐
5.10	**Report a serious incident to licensing authorities** For incidents meeting your state's reporting threshold, such as hospitalization or a serious injury, file the required report with the local licensing agency within the required timeframe. **Warning:** Follow your state or local licensing reporting requirements and timeframes exactly for any serious incident.	Center Director	☐
5.11	**File the completed report** File the signed incident report in the child's file and in the center's incident log for trend tracking.	Center Director	☐
5.12	**Review incident trends and adjust** Review incident reports periodically to identify patterns by location, time or activity, and adjust supervision, equipment or procedures as needed.	Center Director	☐

6. Quality checks

- Every incident has a completed report on file within the same day.
- Parents are notified promptly for every incident, with the method and time documented.
- Serious incidents are reported to licensing authorities within the required timeframe.
- Incident trends are reviewed on a regular schedule to identify recurring issues.

7. Records

- Incident report forms
- Parent notification log
- Licensing authority incident reports
- Incident trend review notes

8. KPIs

- Incident reports completed within the same day
- Average time from incident to parent notification
- Serious incidents reported within the required timeframe
- Incident rate by location or activity

9. Common mistakes

- Delaying a call to emergency services to fill out paperwork first.
- Waiting until the end of the day to notify a parent about an incident.
- Leaving the incident report vague instead of noting specific details while they're fresh.
- Missing the reporting deadline for a serious incident to licensing authorities.

10. Revision history

Revision	Date	Description	Reviewed by

Revision	Date	Description	Reviewed by
1.0	September 15, 2026	Initial release	Alexa Uskova

Approval

Prepared by	Approved by	Date

This is a template. Adapt it to your organization, equipment and local regulations before use.

Scan for the latest version

Opens this template online, where you can download it again in Word, PDF, Excel or CSV — free, no sign-up.

Or add it to Perfect Wiki so your team can find it and ask questions about it in Microsoft Teams, Slack, kChat or Mattermost.