

5 STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTING A NEW ECO-HEALTHY POLICY

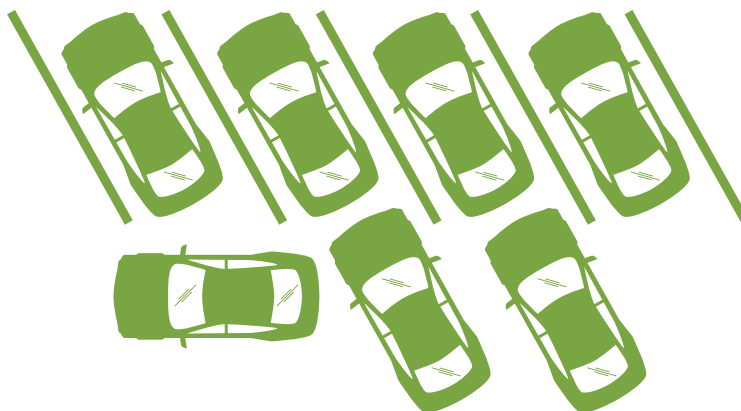
ECO-HEALTHY CHILD CARE® HELPS EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS TO BE AS HEALTHY, SAFE AND GREEN AS POSSIBLE BY REDUCING CHILDREN'S EXPOSURE TO TOXIC CHEMICALS.



1. **Consider whether you need to share the new eco-healthy best practice(s) with your board or upper management for approval.**
2. **Adopt a written eco-healthy policy and include it in your child care facility's handbook.**
3. **Hold a staff discussion about the new eco-healthy policy and relay steps to ensure that the best practice is implemented and maintained.**
4. **Share the new eco-healthy policy with the families you serve (i.e., include it in your newsletter).**
5. **Inform the public: share your new eco-healthy policy and related best practices through social media or on your website (get the credit you deserve!).**

ANTI-IDLING SAMPLE POLICY

ECO-HEALTHY CHILD CARE® HELPS EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS TO BE AS HEALTHY, SAFE AND GREEN AS POSSIBLE BY REDUCING CHILDREN'S EXPOSURE TO TOXIC CHEMICALS.



Why do we have an Anti-Idling policy?

Why do we have an anti-idling policy? Car exhaust releases pollutants that harm children's health and the environment. Pollution from idling vehicles can also enter a facility. Monitoring at schools has shown elevated levels of air pollution during the afternoon hours, coinciding with parents picking up their children. Limiting a vehicle's idling time can dramatically reduce these pollutants and exposure. Developing fetuses, infants, and children are particularly vulnerable to air pollution because their lungs are still developing. Poor air quality is correlated with: decreased lung function, asthma, bronchitis, emphysema, and even some types of cancer.

The purpose of our Anti-Idling Policy:

The purpose of our Anti-idling Policy is to reduce staff and children's exposure to outdoor air pollutants by eliminating all unnecessary or avoidable idling by passenger vehicles and delivery trucks. Doing so will protect the health of children and staff, especially those with asthma and other environmentally-related illnesses.

Anti-Idling policy guidance:

- When waiting for children to be picked up, all engines should be shut off.
- All drivers should turn off their engines when they arrive at our facility and when they expect to be parked for more than 10 seconds.
- Parents and families are notified and reminded of our anti-idling policy via email, newsletter, and other communication every quarter.
- Anti-idling signs are posted on our facility's front door (and other entrance doors) to serve as a regular reminder for parents, staff, and delivery personnel.

Optional:

- Due to our child care facility being within 500 feet of a freeway or busy street, our windows and doors are closed during high-traffic hours (ex., 7-9 am and 3-6 pm).

For more information, visit Eco-Healthy Child Care®'s [Air Quality Fact Sheet](#).

3RD PARTY CERTIFIED CLEANING PRODUCTS SAMPLE POLICY

ECO-HEALTHY CHILD CARE® HELPS EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS TO BE AS HEALTHY, SAFE AND GREEN AS POSSIBLE BY REDUCING CHILDREN'S EXPOSURE TO TOXIC CHEMICALS.



Why do we have a 3rd Party Certified Cleaning Products Policy?

Household chemicals can harm children's and staff's health. A wide variety of toxic chemicals are routinely used as ingredients in cleaning products. These chemicals can make indoor air unhealthy to breathe, irritate the skin and eyes, harm the respiratory tract and endocrine system. Developing fetuses, infants, and children are particularly vulnerable because of their developing bodies. Children and staff are exposed to toxic household chemicals through inhalation, skin and eye contact, and ingestion.

The purpose of our 3rd Party Certified Cleaning Products Policy:

To avoid the purchase and use of cleaning products that contain harmful chemicals to protect the health and safety of children and staff.

**This policy does not pertain to products used for our sanitizing and disinfecting policies and procedures.*

Our 3rd Party Certified Cleaning Products Policy ensures that we:

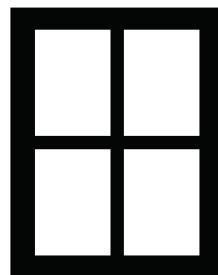
- Always purchase and use 3rd party certified green cleaning products by Green Seal, EcoLogo, or EPA's Safer Choice Fragrance-Free.
- Only choose fragrance-free cleaning products.
- Use cleaning products with pump, pour, or spray bottles and avoid aerosols.
- Use all cleaning products according to the directions on the label.
- Keep cleaning products within their original containers, secure, and out of reach of children.
- Never use cleaning products near children.
- Increase ventilation while cleaning by opening screened windows and doors when outdoor air quality allows; turning on fans that vent to the outside in the bathroom and kitchen; and ensuring our heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system is working correctly.
- Always clean first with a 3rd party certified cleaner before sanitizing and disinfecting.

For a list of 3rd party certified green cleaning products, we visit: www.ecologo.org, www.epa.gov/saferchoice, www.greenseal.org

For more information, visit Eco-Healthy Child Care®'s [Household Chemicals Fact Sheet](#).

FRAGRANCES SAMPLE POLICY

ECO-HEALTHY CHILD CARE® HELPS EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS TO BE AS HEALTHY, SAFE AND GREEN AS POSSIBLE BY REDUCING CHILDREN'S EXPOSURE TO TOXIC CHEMICALS.



Why do we have a Fragrances Policy?

The word “fragrance” covers dozens, sometimes even hundreds, of chemicals on product labels. Many common household products and personal care items contain fragrances. Fragrance chemicals can harm the endocrine, respiratory, and nervous systems, and some are known carcinogens. Developing fetuses, infants, and children are particularly vulnerable because of their developing bodies. Many children and adults also experience unpleasant physical effects, including allergic reactions to fragrance chemicals. Children and staff are exposed to fragrance chemicals primarily through inhaling volatile organic compounds (VOCs) that readily evaporate from the scented product into the air or direct skin contact.

The purpose of our Fragrances Policy:

To avoid the purchase and use of products that contain fragrance chemicals to protect the health and safety of children and staff from the harmful effects of these items.

Our Fragrances Policy ensures that we:

- Avoid the purchase and use of household cleaning products, personal care products (shampoo or lotion), air fresheners, detergents, hand lotions, markers, and other items that contain fragrance chemicals in staff or child-occupied spaces (bathrooms, break rooms, and play and sleeping areas).
- Select products labeled as “fragrance-free,” noting that “unscented” products may still contain fragrance chemicals.
- Deodorize rooms without using fragrances by keeping an open box of baking soda in the fridge; sprinkling baking soda in the diaper pail; keeping trash sealed and throwing it out often; and keeping the diaper pail sealed and emptying it frequently.
- Increase ventilation by opening screened windows and doors when outdoor air quality allows; turning on fans that vent to the outside in the bathroom and kitchen; and ensuring our heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system is working correctly.

For more information on fragrance chemicals, see Eco-Healthy Child Care®’s [Fragrances FAQ](#) and [Air Quality Fact Sheet](#).

ART SUPPLIES SAMPLE POLICY

ECO-HEALTHY CHILD CARE® HELPS EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS TO BE AS HEALTHY, SAFE AND GREEN AS POSSIBLE BY REDUCING CHILDREN'S EXPOSURE TO TOXIC CHEMICALS.



Why do we have an art supplies policy?

Art and craft supplies can contain toxic chemicals that, when used or stored in a play area, create a risk to the health of children. Children are particularly vulnerable to these chemicals since their body systems are still developing and they are more likely to have contact with products on skin, hair, mouth and eyes due to hand-to-mouth and crawling behaviors. Purchasing safer art supplies benefits children, teachers and custodial staff and helps create healthier learning environments.

The purpose of our Art Supplies Policy:

is to avoid the purchase and use of products containing lead and other harmful chemicals, so as to protect children and staff from the hazards commonly found in these art supplies.

For more information visit [Eco-Healthy Child Care®'s Art Supplies Fact Sheet](#).

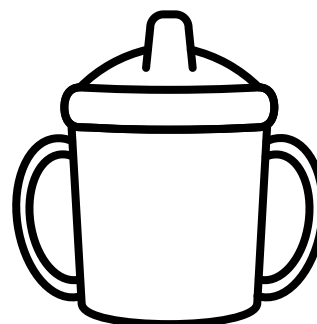
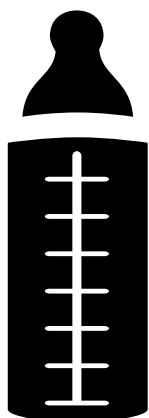
Our art supplies policy ensures that we:

- Purchase and use only non-toxic art supplies approved by the Art & Creative Materials Institute (ACMI). We look for the ACMI non-toxic "AP" (Approved Product) seal.
- Maintain ventilation during art projects.
- Fully supervise children while they are working with art and craft materials, and while they are cleaning up, to be sure they wash their hands and do not ingest any art supplies.
- Keep eating and art/crafting separate.
- Avoid solvent-based products.
- Only use products that are kept within their original container.
- Use flour- or earth-based clays instead of polymer-based clay.
- Avoid all types of aerosols, powder-based paints and Instant Papier-mâché.

For a list of products approved by the Art & Creative Materials Institute, we visit: www.acmiart.org/productlist



BPA EXAMPLE POLICY



Why do we have a BPA policy?

Research shows that Bisphenol A (BPA) interferes with the body's endocrine system by mimicking or suppressing hormones (e.g., estrogen and testosterone) therefore disrupting normal development and growth. Its sister compounds, BPF and BPS, that have often been used as replacements for BPA are also considered hormone disruptors. BPA can leach from polycarbonate plastic (hard clear plastic) that is found in baby bottles, water bottles, sippy cups, regular drinking cups, water pitchers, the clear lining within canned food containers and some cash register receipts. Children are particularly vulnerable to these harmful chemicals, as their body systems are still developing rapidly and because of their behaviors, such as inserting plastic objects into their mouths. Reducing the toxic chemicals found within child care facilities benefits not only the children, but also the teachers and custodial staff. Purchasing safer products that have a reduced negative impact on human health can also help create healthier learning environments.

The purpose of our BPA Policy:

is to avoid the purchase and use of products containing Bisphenol-A (and other sister compounds such as: BPF and BPS) to protect the health and safety of children and staff.

Our BPA policy ensures that we:

- Purchase and use glass bottles and sippy cups covered with a silicone sleeve. We ask parents to purchase these preferable products when funds do not allow our school to provide them.
- Only use plastic bottles, sippy cups and drinking cups labeled "BPA free" and made with safer plastics such as polypropylene or polyethylene. We confirm what types of plastics were used to make the bottle (or other) prior to purchase and use. The "BPA free" label itself is not enough to ensure safer plastics, since some plastics with this label will be made of BPS or BPF—BPA alternatives that have been found to have adverse health effects associated with exposure.
- Warm milk or formula by heating and stirring over the stove, or running it under hot water (if frozen). Then, we move the liquid to a glass (covered with a silicone sleeve), or polypropylene or polyethylene (safer) plastic bottle.
- Never heat plastics (including plastic wrap) of any kind in the microwave. Instead, we place a paper towel over foods and liquids while warming.

BPA Example Policy Continued

- Dispose of hard (they cannot be flexed by the hand) and clear (are generally see-through even when colored and/or tinted) plastic pitchers, cups and dishes. Items are not taken to donation centers as other children may then end up using them.
- Discard all worn or scratched plastic food containers, especially baby bottles, sippy cups and infant feeding plates and cups.
- Avoid using plastics labeled with Recycling Code: #7, unless they are derived from plant-based and bio-based plastics made from corn, potato or sugar derivatives. If so, they are labeled “BPA-free” or something similar. However, make sure they are not made with BPS or BPF.
- Eat fresh or frozen produce, whenever possible, to minimize the use of canned foods and canned drinks as many are lined with BPA, BPF, or BPS.
- Avoid allowing children to handle receipts printed on thermal paper made of BPA. A quick test can relay if the receipt is the thermal type. Scratch the printed side of the paper. If a dark mark appears, the paper is thermal.

For more information visit Eco-Healthy Child Care®'s Plastics Fact Sheet: <https://cehn.org/our-work/eco-healthy-child-care/ehcc-factsheets/>

INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT SAMPLE POLICY

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What is Integrated Pest Management (IPM):

It is an effective and environmentally sensitive way to control pests and weeds. IPM works to identify and correct pest-friendly conditions, eliminating access to food, water and shelter by improving sanitation, maintenance and landscape management practices. By correcting the conditions that lead to pest problems and using approved pesticides only when necessary, IPM provides more effective pest control while reducing pesticide use.

Why do we have an IPM Policy?

Children are more vulnerable to the negative effects of pesticides and they may be exposed to these toxic chemicals by playing on floors, lawns, playground equipment, and/or within gardens; and eating pesticide-treated foods. Even low levels of pesticide exposure are a threat to young developing bodies. Reducing the use of pesticides in our child care facility benefits children, teachers and custodial staff, especially those with asthma and other environmentally-related illnesses and sensitivities. Using safer pest management practices will also help create healthier learning environments.

The Purpose of our IPM Policy:

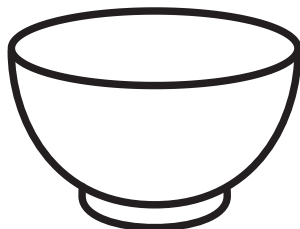
is to reduce the presence of harmful pests and to minimize exposure to toxic pesticides within and around our child care facility, so as to protect the health and safety of children and staff.

Our IPM policy ensures that we:

- Regularly monitor in and around our facility to identify pest problems.
- Prevent pest problems by removing pest's food, water, and shelter.
- Use non-chemical/mechanical management practices (i.e., caulking pest entry points) to address pest problems when necessary.
- Hire a certified pest management professional that uses Integrated Pest Management practices as a first resort.
- Train staff and parents on Integrated Pest Management practices.
- Use least-hazardous pesticides as a last resort, after non-chemical management practices have been tried and found to be unsuccessful.
- If using pesticides:
 - Do not use flea bombs or other "bug bombs" or "foggers."
 - "Notify families and staff in advance about the timing and location of pesticide applications and what product(s) will be used.
 - Ensure that pesticides are not applied when children are present; confirm that children will not have exposure to the application area for at least 12 hours.
 - Do not apply pesticides in places where children sleep and play.



PLASTICS EXAMPLE POLICY



Why do we have a Plastics Policy?

Certain plastics are known to contain toxic chemicals which have negative impacts on human health. Children are particularly vulnerable to these harmful chemicals since their body systems are still developing. Children are particularly vulnerable to these toxic chemicals since their body systems and organs are still developing. Young children are also at greater risk since they often insert plastic objects into their mouths. Reducing toxic chemicals in products used in child care facilities benefits children, teachers and custodial staff. Purchasing safer products that have a reduced impact on human health can also help create healthier learning environments.

The Purpose of our Plastics Policy:

is to avoid the purchase and use of products containing Bisphenol-A (and other sister compounds such as: BPF and BPS), Phthalates and PVC so as to protect the health and safety of children and staff.

Our Plastics Policy ensures that we:

- Purchase and use only glass bottles covered with a silicone sleeve.
- If plastic baby bottles and sippy cups are preferable, only those labeled “BPA free” and made with safer plastics such as polypropylene or polyethylene.
- Buy plastic wrap and bags made with polyethylene.
- Eat fresh or frozen produce to minimize the use of canned foods and canned drinks as many are lined with BPA.
- Buy NEW medical grade silicone chew toys for infants and toddlers that are labeled “phthalate-free” or “PVC-free”.
- Plastic pitchers, cups and dishes that are very hard and rigid (they cannot be flexed by the hand) and are generally see-through (even when colored and/or tinted) are avoided.
- Avoid using plastics with Recycling Codes: #3, #6, and #7.
- Never heat or microwave food or drink in any plastic containers, or plastic wrap.
- Discard all worn or scratched plastic food containers, especially baby bottles, sippy cups and infant feeding plates and cups.



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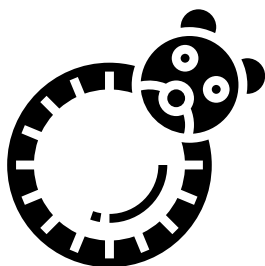
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- Plastic pitchers, cups and dishes that are very hard and rigid (they cannot be flexed by the hand) and are generally see-through (even when colored and/or tinted) are avoided.
- Avoid using plastics with Recycling Codes: #3, #6, and #7.
- Never heat or microwave food or drink in any plastic containers, or plastic wrap.
- Discard all worn or scratched plastic food containers, especially baby bottles, sippy cups and infant feeding plates and cups.



PVC/PHTHALATES EXAMPLE POLICY



Why do we have a PVC/Phthalates Policy?

During the manufacturing and disposal processes of soft flexible vinyl plastics, or polyvinyl chloride (PVC), humans are exposed to chemicals such as lead, mercury, dioxins, and phthalates. Phthalates are a class of chemicals that are added to plastic products to make them more bendable, and durable. They are primarily used to soften polyvinyl chloride (PVC) or vinyl. Phthalates are also commonly found in cosmetics and air fresheners and fragrances. These harmful chemicals can contribute to irreversible life-long illness or disability including: asthma, preterm birth, low sperm count, premature puberty, and development of some cancers. The health concerns related to PVC/phthalates are especially worrisome for children due to their increased exposure to the vinyl in teething toys, beach balls, dolls, rain coats, rain boots, inflatable swimming pools, and more. Reducing the toxic chemicals found within child care facilities benefits not only the children, but also the teachers and custodial staff. Purchasing safer products that have a reduced negative impact on human health can also help create healthier learning environments.

The purpose of our PVC/Phthalate Policy:

is to avoid the purchase and use of products containing PVC and/or phthalates so as to protect the health and safety of children and staff.

Our PVC/Phthalates Policy ensures that we:

- Purchase and use teething toys that are 100% PVC and phthalate-free and made of natural materials (cotton, wool, hemp, wood) or medical grade silicone.
- Use PVC-free plastic wrap (buy plastic wrap and bags made with polyethylene) AND never use plastic wrap (or any other type of plastic, even those labeled "microwave safe") in the microwave.
- Avoid toys and garments made out of soft, flexible plastic vinyl including: inflatable beach balls, dolls, rubber ducky chew toys, rain coats, and rain boots. It is especially crucial that these products are not in infant/toddler rooms, as this age group is particularly susceptible due to their mouthing behaviors.
- Dispose of PVC-containing items, especially those found in infant/toddler rooms. Do not drop them off at donation centers, as they may then be purchased for use by other children.
- Dispose of PVC shower curtains and use cotton or nylon options.