

## Safety Tips for School Faculty and Office

Employee safety should be just as important to the organization as child safety. To help maintain a safe working environment, safety and health awareness is essential for maintaining a safe working environment for all.

This document provides basic awareness information on potential hazards and controls to help prevent incidents and illnesses related to school/child care environments. This document is not all inclusive and should be used in conjunction with the organization's safety procedures and policies.

### General Safety

- Report all employee incidents and injuries immediately.
- First Aid Kits are available. Know the locations of these kits.
- Report unsafe conditions or behaviors.
- Report any suspicious activities to your supervisor immediately.
- No horse play. Horse play may escalate to other unwanted behaviors and/or injuries. It can also lead to bad examples for the children.
- Personal hygiene is important. Wash hands before eating. Avoid touching mucous membranes (i.e. mouth, eyes, etc.) with unclean hands.
- Become familiar with the organization's Emergency Response Plan.
- If you plan to visit another department (e.g. kitchen or maintenance shop), review the safety requirements for that particular area (e.g. slip resistant shoes).

### Strains and Sprains

- Use the "three-point contact" rule when entering and exiting vehicles. For example, if exiting a car, place both feet on the floor and lift up with your hand and arm.

- Be sure your office workstation desk is set up properly. More information related to ergonomics may be found at [www.thezenith.com](http://www.thezenith.com).
- Do not sit at a desk for long periods of time. Take short breaks and stretch frequently.
- Use proper lifting techniques when lifting items. If items are too large or heavy, ask for assistance.

### Know Your Physical Abilities

- Everybody has different physical capabilities. Certain activities may be physically demanding. Know your limits. Abrupt movements could result in an injury.
- Productive interaction with the children is encouraged; however, do not engage in any activity that may exceed your physical capabilities.

### Chemical Safety

- The custodial staff is mainly responsible for using chemicals on site. Please be familiar with the company's stance on personal use of cleaning by other employees.
- Unattended or abandoned chemical containers or bottles should be reported to your supervisor.
- Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) should be available upon request.
- All containers should be properly labeled.

### Slips Trips and Falls

#### Slips

- Slip hazards may include food or beverage spills, wet weather conditions, unsecured floor mats, trash, and food.
- Wear slip resistant footwear (e.g. tennis shoes, hiking shoes, boots, etc.).
- Clean spills or wet surfaces immediately.

- Hold on to handrails when ascending or descending stairways.
- Avoid carrying wet umbrellas throughout the interior of the building. Use an “umbrella bag” or dry off the umbrella.

### **Trips**

- Trip hazards may include curbs, uneven pavement or terrain, carpet, floor mats/rugs, tree roots, and recreational equipment.
- Make sure rugs and carpets remain in good condition.
- Stay on designated walking paths while outdoors.
- Keep walking paths clear. This includes closing file drawers when not in use.
- While walking, do not carry items that will obstruct your line of sight.
- Cords and cables should be secured or removed from the walking paths.
- Hold on to handrails when ascending or descending stairways.
- Children’s movements are unpredictable. In addition, their immediate whereabouts change frequently. As a result, a child may pose a trip hazard. To help prevent tripping and falling over a child:
  - Always assume children are in the proximity.
  - Always look before walking. Pivot your feet towards the direction of travel before moving in that direction.

### **Falls**

- Fall hazards may include missteps, holes, fall from elevations, and loss of balance.
- Use caution when traveling from different elevations.
- Use the “three-point contact” rule when changing levels of elevation, such as when using a ladder or stairs.
- Use caution when running. Unless required by the recreational activities, you should avoid running-especially indoors.

- Keep good leverage/balance when stooping down.
- Do not use chairs, furniture, or other unsuitable objects for climbing. Use a step ladder or stool.

### **Distractive Walking**

Distractive walking may be defined as engaging in an activity or task which may decrease an individual’s ability to observe the surrounding environment while walking. Activities and tasks may include the following:

- Talking/texting on a cell phone.
- Talking with another person.
- Carrying an item that obstructs your view.
- Reading a document, newspaper, etc.

As mentioned above, the children’s movements are unpredictable. Minimize distractive walking activities while at work.

For additional information or assistance, contact your Zenith Safety & Health Consultant.