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June 26, 2015

Marcia Moermond
Legislative Hearing Officer
Office of City Council
15 W. Kellogg Blvd.
Suite 310 City Hall
St. Paul, Mn. 55102

Dear Marcia Moermond:

I have enclosed a copy of the Department of Human Services required Risk Reduction Plan for Families Together Preschool at Lifetrack Resources at 709 University Ave. W., St. Paul.

Thank you for your time in examining our variance request. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Barbara Otto
Families Together Program Manager
Lifetrack
709 University Ave W
St Paul, Mn 55104
651-265-2409

Families Together Preschool
Child Care Center Risk Reduction Plan

1. Physical Plant

Condition and design of facility: The program consists of two self-contained classrooms within a larger nonprofit community agency that serves a variety of community needs. The facility is located on University Avenue in St. Paul

Identified risks: The program is located in a multi-use building on a very busy street.

Policies and procedures that minimize risk: Classrooms have keyed exits so that children may not independently leave the classroom. When children leave the classroom for therapy or other services they are always accompanied by an adult.

Condition and design of outdoor space: Outdoor playground area is fenced and is immediately adjacent to each classroom. It contains a climbing unit and a sand area and concrete area for riding trikes.

Identified risks: Fence could be climbed. Sand sometimes gets on concrete area and makes it slippery. Proximity to University Avenue and street traffic is a potential hazard.

Policies and procedures that minimize risks: Gate for the playground fence is keyed so that children are unable to exit independently. A tarp is placed over the top of the fence so that children cannot climb to the top. Staff sweeps concrete regularly during the day.

Bathrooms: The bathrooms are located within the classrooms.

Identified risks: children might need help with toileting. Several children together in the bathroom might hurt each other.

Policies and procedures to minimize risks: In Blue classroom door remains open, no doors in Yellow classroom. Teachers supervise children in close proximity to the bathrooms to ensure safety or any need children may have while toileting. Diapers, wipes, and change of clothes are kept in the bathroom to help with children's toileting emergencies.

Storage areas: Each classroom has a storage closet for equipment and supplies, not in use during class time.

Identified risks: Children could get into closets and pull materials down on themselves.

Policies and procedures to minimize risks: The classroom closet doors are kept locked during class time so that children do not have access to them.

Accessibility of medications and cleaning products: Medication stored in a locked box labeled as medication. Medication that needs to be refrigerated is kept in a container in the refrigerator in the kitchen area. All cleaning supplies and any chemicals are stored in cabinets or shelves above children's reach.

Identified risks: Curious children gaining access to these materials.

Policies and procedures to minimize risks: Staff follows above procedure for storing medication. Medication is stored on a shelf above child reach level in the kitchen area which also remains locked while children are in class. Appropriate permission slips are gotten from parents, and medication dispensation directions are noted on the authorization slip. Because of the length of day of the program medication is rarely given. Staff has been trained on medication dispensation including asthma, seizure, and EPI pin medication. Staff ensure that any chemical cleaning materials are stored out of children's reach.

Areas that are difficult to supervise: In the yellow classroom there are two areas that have the potential to be a blind spot if only one teacher is supervising. In the Blue classroom there is one such area.

Identified risks: Safety of children who sometimes struggle with self regulation.

Policies and procedures to minimize risks: All staff will work as a team to maintain appropriate overview of children in class. In addition each class has an observation mirror posted at an elevated level to assist teachers in supervision of hard to see areas. Reference to appropriate policies and procedures in Families Together Program Plan-Program Overview, part C-Behavior Guidance.

2. Environment

Type of ground and terrain surrounding the building: The preschool is located in a highly urban area with no obvious geographic risks.

Identified risks: Automobile and light rail traffic on University Avenue, immediately adjacent to building and playground.

Policies and procedures to minimize risks: Please note response in area listed below.

Proximity to hazards, busy roads, and publicly accessed businesses: The program is located on University Avenue in St Paul. This is a busy street with car, bus, and light rail traffic. The bus that brings children in to the program unloads the children in the playground area of the program which is adjacent to Lifetrack's parking lot. The preschool is located within a community agency that serves a variety of other clients.

Identified risks: Children could run out onto the parking lot. Children could run out into the Lifetrack building.

Policies and procedures to minimize risks: Classrooms have keyed exit doors so that children are unable to leave the classroom independently. Therapists work with children one on one. This ensures safety in out of classroom environment. Children's hands are always held as they get on and off the bus. The playground also has a keyed gate and a tarp over the top of the fence to prevent children from climbing the fence.

Reference to existing policies and procedures that minimize the identified risks: Families Together Program Plan-Health, Safety, and Emergency Procedures.

3. Additional risk of harm factors to children

Identified risks	Policies and procedures developed and implemented to minimize the risk	Existing policies and procedures that minimize the risks
Closing children's fingers in doors, including cabinet doors	Finger guards are maintained on all interior program doors. Cabinet doors are locked. Children are coached to stay back from exterior doors when staff are opening them. All cabinet doors have a child proof lock system.	Teaching staff and program manager monitor environment and practices for safety and ensure that safety for children is maintained in this area.
Leaving children in the community without supervision	All staff are trained on child supervision. Before program takes children on field trip or outing in the community, staff	Listed in part 1 of Program Plan—Health, safety, and emergency procedures

	<p>determines which child(ren) each staff person is responsible for. Staff maintain that responsibility throughout the field trip. If a child were to be missing on a field trip:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Teachers will remain with children and auxiliary staff will search surrounding area *Staff will call 911 and follow and police recommendations *the parent will be contacted *At the incident's conclusion a critical incident report will be filed with the agency documenting the incidents and making recommendations. 	
Children leaving facility without supervision	Children are supervised at all times. A 1:4 adult/child ratio is maintained to help ensure safety. Both classroom and playground are locked so children are unable to exit by themselves.	Listed in Part C of Program Plan—Behavior Guidance
Caregiver dislocation of children's elbows	If children are lifted, they are lifted up under their arms. Children are not pulled or dragged.	Policy listed in part D of Program Plan-Program Overview
Burns from hot foods or beverages, whether served to children or being consumed by caregivers, and the devices used to warm food and beverages	The kitchen area where all hot food is located and heated is locked so that children do not have access to it. Staff does not have liquid refreshments in the presence of children during class time.	Ongoing program procedures
Injuries from equipment such as glue guns and scissors	Scissors, knives, glue guns and any other potentially harmful tools will be kept in a locked cabinet. Children's scissors are safety scissors with a blunt end.	Ongoing program procedures
Sunburn	With a signed permission from parent or legal guardian the preschool will apply sunscreen to a child. Sunscreen will be applied before a child goes	Health Safety Procedures followed by the center.

	outside.	
Feeding children food to which they are allergic	At time of enrollment parents must fill out forms if their child has special dietary needs including food allergies. Parents will keep program updated as special dietary needs change. Special dietary needs will be determined by doctor's statement unless dietary restrictions are for religious reasons. Staff is informed of special dietary needs and the special restrictions are posted in the kitchen. Staff has been trained on how to use Epi pins.	Because the program is a Head Start partner it uses forms and follows procedures in this area established by Head Start.
Children falling from changing tables.	The program does not use changing tables	
Children accessing dangerous items or chemicals, or coming into contact with residue from harmful cleaning products	Dangerous chemicals and cleaning products are kept out of reach of children. All table, etc. sanitation is done using 4 part sanitation process.	Health and Safety Policies and Procedures followed by the Center.

4. **Accessibility of hazardous items:** All hazardous materials are kept either in locked areas or on shelves way above children's reach potential.

5. **Policies and procedures to ensure adequate supervision of children:**

Required areas to be addressed regarding supervision of children	Policies and procedures developed and implemented to ensure adequate supervision of children
Times when children are transitioned from one area within the facility to another	*Teacher initiates and leads transition from classroom to immediately adjacent playground. *Children transition individually from classroom to therapy with the therapist. Children sign out with therapist. If child is self regulated s(he) may walk with therapist to session. Hand will be held if child is struggling with this. *If class moves as a group such as during fire drills, each child's hand is held during the entire procedure.
Nap time supervision	NA
Child drop off and pick up times	*Children come to and leave school via the program's 14 passenger bus. Children's hands are always held as they get off or on the bus. The exit/ entrance to the program usually used

	<p>is through the playground, which is a secured location.</p> <p>*If a child is dropped off or picked up by a parent, the parent will sign in at Lifetrack's front desk. The receptionist will contact a preschool staff person to take the parent to the classroom.</p>
Supervision during outdoor play and on community activities, including but not limited to field trips and neighborhood walks.	<p>*Outdoor play is always staff supervised on the program's playground which has a gate with a keyed entry.</p> <p>* On field trips or outings there is always clearly defined the staff person responsible for supervision/hand holding of individual child.</p>
Supervision of children in hallways	<p>Children are always accompanied by an adult if they are in one of the building's hallways. Their hand is held if they have difficulty staying with/next to the adult.</p>

Risk reduction plan originally completed in 2012, revised 2014

6. **Orientation to risk reduction plan:** Each new staff person is oriented to Risk Reduction Plan as part of initial orientation.