

## Steps to Ensure Play is Safe

### Start with the Fundamentals

# 1

- **Know each child**

When teachers know their learners, they can anticipate interests and abilities that will affect each child's opportunity to participate safely in a learning experience.

- **Understand child development**

Some general guidelines affect interests and abilities for all children. Are they mouthing a lot? Are they easily distracted? How developed is their motor control, balance and coordination?

- **Use developmentally-appropriate practice**

Instructions should be simple and easy to understand. Adequate space, time and resources should be provided. Teachers plan to be present and support the learning experience.

### Remember the 5 S's

# 2

- **Substance**

What makes up the learning material? Is it toxic to touch? To ingest? To inhale?

- **Size**

Can the children safely handle it? Is it a choking hazard?

- **Surface**

Is the learning material in good repair? Are there hazards such as cracks, rust, sharp edges, harmful germs, etc? Is it too hot or too cold?

- **Supervision**

How much and what kind of presence do the adults need to provide for the children to be safe? Are there additional safety supplies needed to make sure that children are safe during the learning experiences with this material?

- **Solution-oriented thinking**

When safety concerns are identified, how can teachers make modifications to ensure that children still have meaningful play experiences instead of choosing to give up on the new experience and just do the "same old activities" or not do anything at all?

### Consult Trustworthy Resources

# 3

- General safety – [www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org)
- Playground safety – [www.playgroundsafety.org](http://www.playgroundsafety.org)
- Art supply safety – [www.acmiart.org](http://www.acmiart.org)
- Georgia Rules and Regulations – [www.decal.ga.gov/CCS/RulesAndRegulations](http://www.decal.ga.gov/CCS/RulesAndRegulations)
- Poison Control – [www.georgiapoisoncenter.org](http://www.georgiapoisoncenter.org)
- General safety and recall information – [www.cpsc.gov/Safety-Education](http://www.cpsc.gov/Safety-Education)