

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Vermont Afterschool Child Care Program Regulations

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For additional information please review the Afterschool Child Care Program (ASP) [Regulations](#) and [Guidance Manual](#).

**1. What do I do if I don't have the required amount of cushioning material under equipment that allows children to be 30 inches or higher off the ground? Or if I worry about the depth of my cushioning material?**

If you don't have the required amount of cushioning material, you may leave the equipment in place or remove it. To be in compliance, you will only need to ensure children do not use the equipment until you do have the required amount of cushioning material. Please refer to the Public Playground Safety Handbook for guidance on determining the required amount of cushioning material. How much you need depends on the height of the equipment and the type of cushioning material being used. Most of the time, cushioning material does need to be maintained in some way. It may be moved around and need to be raked back into place. It may decompose and need more added. It may become impacted and need to be fluffed. Having a process for checking for these things helps you maintain compliance with the licensing regulation.

**2. Why are there two ASP Rules (5.3 and 5.4) for Staff?**

ASP rule 5.3 applies to staff within their first year of employment. ASP rule 5.4 applies to staff who has been employed with the program for over one year.

**3. Our program is a seasonal program which only operates in the summer, what do we use for a start date for our staff?**

ASP rule 5.16 requires the start date for staff be documented. This means the date at which time the employee was originally hired. If a staff member is returning for a second, third, etcetera season; their start date remains the same. CDD uses the original start date to determine compliance with qualifications such as ASP rule 5.4, to determine compliance to professional development rules in ASP section 5 under Staff Development, and etcetera.

**4. Is there any specific ratio for kindergarten children?**

No, ASP rule 6.3 sets a 1:13 adult:child ratio for all children regardless of age.

**5. When the buddy system is being used (per ASP rule 7.2), do children have to return to their original group within the 10-minute timeframe or can they join a different group?**

ASP Rule 7.3 states that the staff person who gave the permission for children to use the buddy system is required to ensure these children have returned within the 10-minute timeframe. This may include direct communication (e.g. walkie talkie, phone, radio, etcetera) with a staff member receiving the children to confirm the children have arrived.

**6. What factors should we consider when deciding if it is appropriate or safe to use ASP Rule 7.2?**

There are several key parts to using the buddy system safely.

- First, ASP definition 2.49 states that staff can account for the whereabouts and activity of children. Therefore, the buddy system should only be used for children that have demonstrated to staff an ability to manage their own choices and behaviors safely and appropriately. If a child is known to be unpredictable, to not follow directions, or to not always make safe and/or appropriate choices; then the buddy system should not be used with this child.
- Next, ASP definition 2.49 requires staff to be in proximity to intervene. It is important to be mindful of the amount of distance that separates staff from children using the buddy system. The further children are from staff, the higher the level of risk of harm especially in an emergency (e.g. armed intruder, fire, and etcetera).
- Another key part is that the “buddy system” is when children go with a buddy which means 2 children.
- Also, ASP rule 7.2 limits the use of the buddy system to the licensed space. This includes the outside and inside licensed space. Be mindful when the licensed space is in a building which is also used by others for other purposes and/or activities too. This increases the potential risk for children and the decision to use the buddy system should be carefully considered.
- Finally, the Division receives multiple complaints each year in which child on child sexualized play and/or exploration occurs among children of all ages (especially including school age children). Boys and girls are equally identified in these instances. This may occur because a child is confused due to having experienced sexual abuse, because children are curious, because children haven’t learned about appropriate boundaries or about privacy, and etcetera. A secluded bathroom is a prime location for this type of play and/or exploration to occur. It is not recommended that the buddy system be used for children using the bathroom without direct adult supervision.

#### **7. Is going inside okay for access to drinking water?**

ASP rule 13.4 states that drinking water is required to be readily available. How drinking water is readily available will differ from program to program. One program’s outside space may be far enough removed from an inside water fountain that it is necessary for children to have water bottles (or a pitcher of water with paper cups) outside for compliance to be achieved. Another program’s outside space may be directly beside the entrance of the building and the water fountain is just inside the door of the building making it not necessary for water to be brought outside. Water bottles provided by parents, a pitcher with paper cups, or a stack of cups available at all times for children to use at the water fountain are options to ensure compliance with this rule.

#### **8. Can Infant/Child CPR and Pediatric First Aid be taken online?**

Yes. We are continuing to implement the fully online option to complete infant/child CPR and pediatric first aid. Until further notice, you may choose a fully online infant/child CPR and pediatric first aid training. Please be sure to note the expiration date for certification as some fully online training organizations may issue shorter certification periods when there isn't a hands-on skills component completed in addition to the online portion of the training. Documentation will be verified and entered in your BFIS Quality and Credential Account by Northern Lights at CCV staff. This also applies to new staff that do not have certification in infant/child CPR and pediatric first aid.