

Occupational Health & Safety System	
OHS Standards	Number: ADM- 08
Children in the Workplace	

Purpose

The purpose of this standard is to provide a health and safety guideline to the College community regarding children in the workplace.

Definitions

“Child” or **“children”** means a person or persons less than 14 years of age, and not enrolled or admitted for enrollment in classes at the College.

“High risk area” includes any area that, due to the nature of operations in the area, is determined to present greater risks to health and safety, without the appropriate training and other measures taken for the safety of individuals and any other area determined to be high risk through a risk assessment. The following list includes, but is not limited to, typical high-risk areas:

- Areas which house lasers or X-ray machines;
- Areas where hazardous chemicals or substances are stored or used;
- Areas where hazardous biological agents are stored or used;
- Areas where hazardous equipment or processes operate. Some examples of areas with these characteristics are:
 - Laboratories;
 - Rooftops
 - Machine shops, woodworking shops, or similar workshop areas;
 - Mechanical rooms;
 - Steam plants;
 - Restricted or Confined spaces
 - Construction areas;
 - Maintenance garages;
 - Animal care or animal research facilities;
 - Food preparation areas;
 - High security areas; and
 - Areas that are excluded for general employee or student access.

“Management” includes Supervisors, Managers, Chairs, Deans, Vice Presidents, and President.

“Guardian” For the purpose of these guidelines, guardian includes any adult who has direct and current charge over a child, per above, irrespective of relationship or legal status.

Overview

Children in the workplace, who are not properly supervised may present;

- the potential for interruption of the learning / working environment,
- health and safety concerns for themselves or others and;
- potential liability risks for the College.

Guidelines

These guidelines should be viewed as a best practice except under the following circumstances where children are:

- Participating in College sanctioned events that have been planned and that are intended to welcome children into the College with appropriate measures and supervision in place. E.g. tours, open houses, camps, child care program, youth enrichment program, Algonquin Connections, etc;
- enrolled or admitted as a college student
- employed by the college
- attending the Early Learning Centre

These guidelines apply equally to students and contractors in accordance with College Policy HS01 Occupational Health & Safety. Students and contractors are required to follow the measures and procedures outlined for workers. Where reporting requirements exist for supervisors, students will meet this requirement by reporting to their professor or academic administrator. Contractors will meet this requirement by reporting to the responsible College management staff that oversees their contractual agreement.

Responsibilities

Employees are responsible for verifying with their supervisor the circumstances under which children are allowed in their specific work area. In circumstances where children have been permitted in a work area, both the employee is responsible for the child and the supervisor must accept certain responsibilities (listed below) to protect the welfare of the child and the integrity of the workplace.

An employee who brings a child to the workplace must:

- be the individual who primarily supervises and cares for the child while in the workplace;
- prevent any breach of privacy or confidential information;
- accept full responsibility for all aspects of the child's behavior, including: safety of the child, disruption to co-workers, unauthorized or inappropriate use of college resources and any damage to property or injury to persons.

A supervisor must:

- conduct a risk assessment to determine that either hazards are not likely to exist, or that hazards can be fully controlled or eliminated under the circumstances in which the child will be present;
- address potential issues of possible disruption to the learning and working environment

- consider the extent to which the child's presence in the workplace poses a risk of breaching confidentiality of information in the workplace;
- consider the extent to which the child's presence is appropriate to the specific work being accomplished.

Notwithstanding the exceptions identified above, management has the authority to decline a request to have children present in the workplace, as management is ultimately responsible for maintaining a safe and health learning and working environment.

At no time are employees allowed to bring children into high-risk areas unless specific measures have been taken to alter normal operations to the extent necessary that the area would no longer be considered high-risk.