

LOST OR MISSING CHILDREN

POLICY: The Child Care Center will have a plan and protocol to strategically search for a missing child.

PURPOSE: To effectively locate a missing child and notify appropriate personnel.

PROCEDURE:

1. When a child is discovered to be missing, notify the director or site supervisor immediately.
2. The director or designee shall deploy all available employees to search the immediate premises for the child.
 - a. Start at the child's last known whereabouts.
 - b. Search all areas which looks appealing to a child of developmental age.
 - c. Call the child's name repeatedly in a friendly (not panicked) voice.
3. Begin by calling the child's home and anywhere else they might have gone.
4. If the child is not found on the premises, **call 911 to alert the police.**
5. One person should interview staff.
 - a. Ask *who* last saw the child, *what* was the child doing and *where*.
 - b. Ask if anyone saw anything suspicious around the area.
 - c. Ask if the child was acting differently today.
 - d. Ask if anyone knows of anything upsetting the child.
6. Taking all available employees and volunteers, start searching the neighborhood and surrounding areas.
7. One person must become the liaison to the police and a spokesperson to the parent.
8. Report the unusual incident to Licensing (required).
9. **After the incident, debrief with staff to discuss what circumstances led to the lapse in supervision, and what policies, staffing, or facility/environment changes need to be made to prevent missing children moving forward.**