



TUTORIAL

Be able to recognise and manage risks to children and young people's health, safety and security.

If you spend an hour or so in a hospital accident and emergency room, you will soon come to the conclusion that most accidents are avoidable if only people take care and have more awareness of the risks that are around them.

A key factor to protecting children from accidents and injury is that you understand what the risks might be. Think particularly about the age of the child when considering risks. For example, for a two year old, small beads would be a hazard but for a three year old they probably would not.

As practitioners and parents we may be tempted to wrap children in cotton wool and make them afraid to take risks. We do this for our own benefit, so that we avoid potential accidents, and for the child's benefit, because we want to keep them safe. However such actions are misguided, and can prevent children from developing the ability to make judgements for themselves about the level of risk they can handle, and what is safe and what is not. It is important for their future well-being to encourage children to manage risk for themselves.

Assessing risks within a setting should be the responsibility of each and every practitioner. Working as a team, practitioners should be looking out for any potential hazards. Examples of this may be: broken toys, animal droppings outside, uncovered sockets, rough edged wooden chairs, trip hazards, furniture with sharp corners, access to cleaning fluids and medicines, unsecured doors and so on.

In being able to effectively recognise and manage risks, practitioners need to be able to identify potential hazards such as those posed by:

- Fire
- Physical environment
- Food safety
- Personal safety
- Security

Having identified the potential hazards, they then need to be able to deal with them in such a way as to minimise the risks while supporting children and young people to take responsibility for their own health, safety and security.