

GUIDANCE 5

HAZARD ASSESSMENT

When running activities with children, we have a responsibility to do what we can to make sure people do not get hurt. Completing a hazard assessment can help with this.

It is important to consider potential hazards that may lead to risk to children and to the adults who work with them. Consideration of how to control or manage hazard is critical. It is important to identify acceptable levels of hazards, as all risk cannot be removed.

COMPLETING A HAZARD ASSESSMENT

You need to think through each element of your activity, of the equipment, and of the venue. Think about what could go wrong, and what you are going to do to avoid this. Then write down your decisions, and the reasons you have made them. Make sure you include things that you have already planned to do (e.g., if you are already planning to use soft mats in front of the bouncy castle, you should still include this in the risk assessment).

A RISK ASSESSMENT FOR AN EVENT OR ACTIVITY NEEDS TO INCLUDE:

1. Supervision
2. The venue
3. The equipment
4. Any special needs participants may have that may pose a danger to themselves.
5. Are there any problematic participants who may pose a threat to others?

IDENTIFY THE HAZARDS

1. Assess hazards in the nature of the activity, and in the place of the activity.
2. Identify who is at risk – decide who may be harmed and how. Everyone, or certain individuals, may be at risk.

Some groups may need special consideration as they may be more vulnerable to certain hazards.

1. Identify what the likelihood or probability of harm may be.
2. Identify the consequences of injury or harm: the consequences could range from trivial to severe, or even fatal. The most severe hazards need the most urgent attention.
3. Identify the controls that need to be in place to limit the hazard.

REVIEW

Risk should be periodically reviewed, especially in circumstances when a venue changes, a new activity takes place, or the members of the group change.