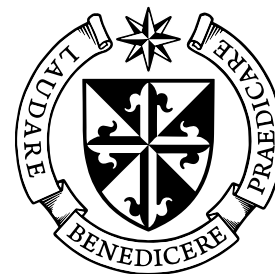


Guidance 4

Risk 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 risk 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 risks is critical. It is important to identify acceptable levels of hazards, as all risk cannot be removed.

Completing a Risk 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

- The venue where it will be held
 - The equipment that will be used
 - The people who will be attending. Do they have any particular needs that might make them more likely to hurt themselves?
 - Do you need to make sure children are supervised?
 - Is there anyone attending who could hurt anyone else?
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Assessing Risks

1. Identify the risks: look for hazards in the nature of the activity, and in the place where you are holding the activity.
 2. Identify who is at risk: decide who may be harmed and how. Everyone, or perhaps only certain people, may be at risk. Some groups may need special consideration as they may be more vulnerable to certain hazards.
 3. Identify what the likelihood of harm may be.
 4. 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.
 5. Identify the controls that need to be put in place to limit the hazard.
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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.
