

Choose Safe Places: A Resource for Early Childhood Educators

DPH helps childcare programs choose safe places.

Moving or opening a new location? Fill out a property questionnaire at https://bit.ly/MA_ChooseSafePlaces to get DPH's help choosing a safe place.

Picking the right location for your child care program protects children's health and helps your business succeed. The voluntary Choose Safe Places program helps early education and care programs choose locations that are safe from environmental hazards.

Harmful chemicals can pose a hidden danger.

You might not think of chemical exposure as a problem at an early education and care program, but sometimes, harmful chemicals can come from nearby businesses or activities, or they could have been left behind by activities that took place in the past.

Be sure to check these 4 things before choosing a new location:

- How was the building used in the past?
- Are there nearby contaminated properties?
- Are there naturally occurring chemicals?
- Is the drinking water safe?



Choose Safe Places
for Early Care and Education
Planning. Guidance. Protection.

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) offers free resources and assistance to help you keep children safe from toxic chemicals. Call us at 617-624-5757 or visit us online at www.mass.gov/choose-safe-places-for-early-care-and-education to learn more.



Children are more vulnerable to harmful chemicals than adults.

- Their brains are still developing.
- They drink more water and breathe more air for their size.
- They play on the ground and put their hands in their mouth.

Exposure to toxic chemicals can disrupt development, learning, and behavior. It can also contribute to diseases later in life. That's why DPH is working with the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) and early childhood educators to give every child a safe place to learn, play, and grow.

You can take steps to check for hazards.

DPH's voluntary program can help you look for possible exposures to environmental contamination, such as:

Former uses of the site



Past businesses may have left behind harmful chemicals.

What you can do:

- Find out how your building and nearby properties were used in the past.
- Find out if it has been inspected for lead paint.
- Contact DPH for help finding property history information and to learn how to get a lead inspection.

Nearby sites and activities



Certain activities could pollute the air, leave chemicals on the ground, or pollute groundwater.

What you can do:

- Learn if nearby businesses use chemicals.
- Look for nearby contaminated properties.
- Contact DPH for help with your search.

Access to safe drinking water



Clean water is important, especially for infants who drink formula made with tap water.

What you can do:

- Test for lead in your water.
- Check your water supplier's yearly water quality report.
- Test your well if you have one.
- DPH can help you learn about your water quality and testing your water.

Naturally occurring contamination



Radon gas is a common natural contaminant that can cause cancer.

What you can do:

- Test your building for radon.
- Contact DPH to learn how.

DPH can help.

Fill out a property questionnaire. We'll look up information about your property, tell you what we find, and offer recommendations to help.



**Complete
the property
questionnaire**

https://bit.ly/MA_ChooseSafePlaces



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