

# Licensing Scavenger Hunt

by Cathy Abraham

**Overview of mission of scavenger hunt:** The goal of the “Scavenger Hunt” is to convey important fact-based, (often dry) information in a fun, creative way – which fosters retention and speaks to all of the knowledge and experience levels of participants.

As director of early childhood programs, we’re always looking for training ideas and creative ways to communicate important information to our staff. Although important, the topic of child care licensing regulations can be particularly dry — and repetitive for those who have covered it every year. Here’s one way to add a little fun to the topic and to get your staff interacting and thinking about health and safety issues in their classrooms — while reviewing important expectations. We know that children learn best when concepts are incorporated in fun, creative, interactive experiences . . . as do adults!

### Your mission . . . should you decide to accept it

To be the first team to assemble the following information . . . and in the

process, familiarize yourself and your co-workers with the childcare licensing regulations in your state! Hey, it’s better than having us read them to you, right?

#### Training Goals:

- To familiarize staff with the location of important procedural and safety items.

- To increase staff’s knowledge of their state’s child care licensing regulations.
- To increase staff’s awareness of potential health and safety hazards in their classrooms.

**Task #1:** Physically locate the following items within the building . . . no guessing!

Item	Location
Thermometer	
Fire extinguisher	
Parent handbook	
Licensing regulations	
Tissues	
Fax number to program’s supervising office	
Extra children’s clothing	
Children’s emergency cards	
Child abuse hotline number	
Choking/CPR chart	
Employment posters	
The lost and found	

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**Task #2:** Give each staff member (or team) a copy of the state licensing regulations. Inform the staff members that all of the things listed are somewhere within the regs — and it is good practice to become familiar with the standards in case you ever need to check on something or look things up. Participants, using a copy of licensing regulations for your state, find the following information:

For this next task, here are a sample of licensing violations that can be used for this exercise:

- bleach or cleaning products within reach of children
- dangling electrical cord for cassette/CD player
- uncovered electrical outlets
- no emergency exit plan posted
- something blocking the door (fire exit)
- no allergy list
- universal precautions kit does not include gloves
- cleaning products are not labeled
- small object in toddler room that presents a choking hazard
- a broken toy with sharp edges

Information	Section #	Page #
Teacher qualifications		
Adult/Child ratio for two-year-old classroom		
Number of puzzles needed in four-year-old classroom		
Square footage requirements for infants		
Definitions of terminology		
Discipline guidelines		
Supervision standards		

**Setting up violations:** Choose and make a list of several fairly obvious “infractions” that staff members *should* be aware of. Also choose things that, despite discussion, seem to continue to be problem areas. To increase awareness, include violations that the center has been cited for. Incorporate simple day-to-day habits and/or things that are easy to overlook. Arrange the classrooms and center to reflect these listed items as infractions — a “What’s wrong with this picture?” scenario.

### Additional ideas to create a fun tone for the Scavenger Hunt:

- Roll up the Scavenger Hunt directions and tie with a ribbon or raffia — like treasure maps.
- Divide your staff into groups by having people draw from a “treasure chest.” Group the teams by things typically found in a scavenger hunt (i.e., diamonds, pearls, gold). Determine in advance how many staff will be participating and how many you want on each team.
- For the “winning team” make up clues to where the prizes are hidden, and have them find them. If you want to maintain the scavenger hunt theme, the prizes could be magnifying glasses for the teachers’ classrooms or some science “discovery” related materials.
- Come to the meeting dressed in an overcoat like a detective, or dressed as a pirate.
- Put out Hershey’s Treasures® (assorted chocolates as treats).

To build on the theme: Have teachers think of a way to incorporate a Treasure Hunt into their classrooms with the children!

- no paper towels
- a hairbrush in the housekeeping area
- adult scissors left out

Classroom #1
Licensing Concern
Classroom #2
Licensing Concern
Classroom #3
Licensing Concern
Classroom #4
Licensing Concern
Classroom #5
Licensing Concern
Classroom #6
Licensing Concern
Classroom #7
Licensing Concern