

Facilities

- Local and state regulations call for specific requirements for children's bathrooms. There is a ratio for the number of children per toilet. The toilets are usually child-size. Child-size sinks adjacent to bathroom areas are also highly desirable because it allows for appropriate supervision and activities.
- Children's bathrooms should be inside or beside each classroom.
- The water temperature for children's bathrooms is regulated by each state. The local fire department should be able to give you the requirements. An adult-height sink with both hot and cold water is highly recommended for each classroom.

Building Design

- Consider the traffic patterns between classrooms and outdoor areas. Children should be able to move directly from the classroom to the outdoors. It is preferable that each room have windows.
- Children's areas should be designed for ready supervision by adults.
- Classrooms which provide meals during the day should have tables and chairs for all children and adults.

Building Materials

- Fire-resistant building materials are required for walls, counters, and doors in your center.
- Selected building materials should be highly durable and easy to maintain.
- Dual flooring is recommended for classrooms. Carpeting will absorb sound and is ideal for many activities. A hard or tile floor is appropriate for eating areas, art areas, and areas near sinks or other water sources.

Building Size

- Your center enrollment determines your income, so plan adequately for your classrooms. The number of square feet per child is regulated by each state. NAEYC recommends a minimum of 35 sq. ft. of footage per child to provide adequate space for each child's activities.
- Support areas such as hallways, kitchens, storage, and bathrooms are not included in the square footage required for children.
- Most regulations do not allow for two-story buildings due to the need for quick evacuation in case of fire.

ADA Accessibility

- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) has established guidelines that impact facilities and businesses. These guidelines will apply to your child care center, its entrances, parking area, and playground. Be sure to use these guidelines in the planning phase of your facility. Your child care center should be accessible to all individuals of all ability levels. www.ada.gov

Support Areas

Sick Child Area:

- Many states require a designated area for a sick child in order to isolate the child from other children until a parent can come get the child.
- The sick child area is usually located near the administrative office so the child can be supervised.
- The sick child area should be near a bathroom and should be furnished with a cot and chair so the child can rest comfortably.

Kitchen/Food Preparation Area:

- Your choice of on-site food preparation or catering will determine what equipment your center will require.
- Meal service should be located near the classrooms.
- Check with your local health department for what is required for on-site food preparation because there are additional requirements for centers offering this service.
- The kitchen/food preparation area will also require additional storage areas for food.

Staff Lounge and Work Areas:

- Your staff need a place to relax, plan, and work alone or together. Consider a room large enough to serve those purposes.
- The location of the staff lounge/work area should be between the administrative areas and classrooms. Comfortable chairs, work tables, book shelves, and cabinets are recommended furniture for the area.

Parent Library/Resource Center:

- This area is an added value to your center and will be an excellent service to parents.
- The parent library or resource center can also be a great place to hold parent-teacher conferences.
- The parent library should be located near the entrance of your building for easy access to families.
- The library should be comfortable and have tables and chairs for both adults and children. You will also need child-size book shelves for the library books.