

safety matters

Education

From your safety partners at Peabody Insurance Agency

Teach Safety to Avoid Accidents

Working with students all day makes your job unpredictable, to say the least. Accidents are not only likely, but are often inevitable within a classroom setting. However, many accidents can be avoided by focusing on safe practices, taking necessary precautions and educating your students about safety.

Classroom Hazards 101

Accidents can be caused any number of ways, by either you or your students. Some of the many potential hazards include:

- Horseplay
- Spilled liquids or debris on the floor
- Objects or materials that are ingested, thrown or improperly used
- Damaged chairs, desks, facilities or equipment that result in injury

Your first responsibility should be to try and foresee any possible sources of accidents in your room. Take into consideration equipment, toys or materials the students may handle, activities that you plan and any food or other items that students will bring with them. Inspect your room (and nearby hallways, bathrooms or other areas) routinely to look for broken or damaged areas that could cause an injury. If you find a hazardous situation, address it yourself or report it to a maintenance worker who can fix the problem.

Practice Prevention

The next step is to address safety with your students. Teach them about unsafe acts or conditions, such as horseplay or spills that

are not cleaned up. If they are handling any type of food, chemical or other material, be sure to discuss safety procedures and precautions. Make classroom safety rules and insist that they are followed. Consider hanging posters or distributing reminders of the safety rules in your room.

If there is an accident in your classroom, try to discover the source of the accident. Do not make your student feel guilty, but instead use it as a learning experience for your entire class. Explain the hazardous situation and that it caused an accident. Then teach them how the situation could have been avoided, and instruct them to watch for situations like this in the future so that everyone can avoid accidents.

Make Safety a Habit

Promote a culture of safety in your classroom, and be sure to follow safety rules yourself, even when they seem tedious or unnecessary. Your students will tend to follow your example. If you are in the habit of always following safety procedures and staying alert for safety hazards, your students will be more likely to develop those same habits. Consider rewarding students for practicing safety precautions or noticing unsafe situations in your room.

Realize that accidents are bound to happen, regardless of your precautions. When they do, use them as a learning experience for yourself as well, so you can recognize the potential hazard in the future before it causes an accident.

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