

## .31 Group Size and Staffing.

A. In groups of children of the same age, the following requirements apply:

<i>For children who are:</i>	<i>There must be a staff/child ratio of:</i>	<i>The maximum number of children allowed in a group is:</i>
2 years old	1 to 6	12
3 or 4 years old	1 to 10	20
5 years or older	1 to 15	30

INTENT: Research has repeatedly shown that staff/child ratios and child group sizes are among the most important determinants of child safety and the quality of care. Minimum staff/child ratios and maximum group sizes are established to help ensure:

- Proper child supervision,
- Adequate attention to each child's needs,
- Positive and successful child-child and child-adult interactions,
- Safe and manageable activities, and
- An environment conducive to each child's ability to develop self-esteem and to learn and master new skills.

INSPECTION REPORT ITEMS: "2 year old group size"  
"3 & 4 year old group size"  
"5+ year old group size"  
"Correct staff/child ratio"

COMPLIANCE CRITERIA:

In each same-age group of children:

- The appropriate minimum staff/child ratio is maintained at all times, and
- The number of children remains at all times within the applicable maximum group size.

ASSESSMENT METHOD:

For each same-age group of children:

- Count and document the number of children present,
- Verify the ages of the children by reviewing the children's records,
- Review the daily attendance records to verify compliance with group size and age levels, and
- Review the Personnel List (OCC [1203](#)) and Staffing Pattern forms (OCC [1206](#)) (which are included in this Manual as Appendix C-2 and Appendix C-5, respectively), then observe to determine if the number of staff are adequate and present as assigned.

Notes:

- For a visual guide to staffing and group size requirements, see "[Staff-Child Ratio and Group Size Charts](#)," which is included in this Manual as Appendix A-8.
- During naptime or rest periods, certain staff/child ratio requirements may be modified with regard to children who are at least 2 years old. These modified requirements are set forth in Circular Letter [00-01](#) ("Staff/Child Ratios and Supervision at Naptime"), which is included in this Manual as Appendix B-9.

B. A mixed age group with preschool children may not exceed 20 children.

C. In a mixed age group with preschool children 3 years old or older, the staff to child ratio is one to ten.

D. A maximum of six 2-year-olds may be in a mixed age group of 13 to 20 children.

E. In mixed age groups which include 2-year-old children, the following staff/child ratios apply:

- (1) If the total group is up to six children, one staff member is required;
- (2) If the total group is seven to ten children, and includes one to three 2-year-old children, one staff member is required;
- (3) If the total group is seven to ten children, and includes four or more 2-year-old children, two

staff members are required;

- (4) If the total group is 11 to 12 children, two staff members are required;
- (5) If the total group is 13 to 20 children and includes one to three 2-year-old children, two staff members are required;
- (6) If the total group is 13 to 20 children and includes four to six 2-year-old children, three staff members are required.

INTENT: Refer to the "Intent" statement under Section A above. In addition, staff/child ratio and group size requirements for a mixed-age group are based on the proportions of individual child ages within the group. Because younger children are more vulnerable and require closer attention, a higher proportion of younger children reduces the maximum allowable group size and requires a closer staff/child ratio.

INSPECTION REPORT ITEMS: "Mixed ages, group composition"  
"Correct staff/child ratio"

COMPLIANCE CRITERIA:

In each mixed-age group of children:

- The appropriate minimum staff/child ratio is maintained at all times, and
- The number of children remains at all times within the applicable maximum group size.

ASSESSMENT METHOD:

For each mixed-age group of children:

- Count and document the number of children present,
- Verify the ages of the children by reviewing the children's records,
- Review the daily attendance records to verify compliance with group size and age levels, and
- Review the Personnel List (OCC [1203](#)) and Staffing Pattern forms (OCC [1206](#)), then observe to determine if the number of staff are adequate and present as assigned.