

Sample Impaired Adult Role-Play

No children are involved in this drill. Including children in an impaired adult drill may cause confusion or fear.

Conduct this role-play exercise as part of a staff meeting.

Assign someone to play the impaired adult, two people to play staff members and one person to play the director.

- Role-play a situation involving an adult who has come to the child care facility to pick up a child. The adult is stumbling, slurring their speech, and smells strongly of alcohol.
- The staff person identifies the adult as intoxicated, and immediately looks for a space away from the children to have a conversation with her/him.
- At the same time, the staff member uses a code word to signal another staff member to assist.

Example of script:

"Hello, (name of family member). How are you doing this afternoon?"

"Fine"

"I know you are here to pick up (name of child). Unfortunately, we are going to have to find someone else to take (name of child) home today."

"What? Why? We have to be somewhere at 6 o'clock!"

"I am concerned because I smell alcohol on you and we cannot let (name of child) go home with you alone."

"I'm fine; it was just a few beers, what's your problem?"

"It's our policy that if someone seems impaired, that we can't send the child home alone with him or her."

"I don't have my phone."

"We have an emergency contact list and we'll call for you. Let's go to the office and make that call."

- Alternatively, if the impaired adult becomes combative, then one staff member goes to get the director. The director continues the conversation with the impaired adult and determines if a call to the police or social services (Child Protective Services) is needed.

Other situations you might role-play: Adults who are emotionally impaired (for example, severely depressed or manic); using drugs; overly tired; or violent. You might also practice how to respond to a disgruntled staff member or former employee.

Debrief with staff.