

Supervision Supports Safety!

A child runs in the dressing room and slams into a table. A mother breaks her ankle rushing to her seat during a recital. These are just a few of the accidents reported to Markel, many of which could have been avoided by maintaining proper supervision.

Maintaining appropriate student-to-instructor ratios is critical for adequate supervision. *Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards* suggests the following:

Child's Age	Student-to-Instructor Ratio
3	7:1 or better
4 and 5	8:1 or better
6 to 8	10:1 or better
9 to 12	12:1 or better
12 and older	12:1 or better

Specific circumstances and training scenarios will call for closer supervision. Maneuvers that have a high risk for injury or high level of difficulty require a student-to-instructor ratio of 1:1.

It's important to choose instructors who have the proper experience, education, and physical abilities (for spotting during difficult moves) to supervise students. If an instructor closely supervises children, it's a good idea to conduct a thorough background check before hiring. Markel has teamed with IntelliCorp Records, Inc., a leading nationwide provider of pre-employment screening services, to bring you background checks at a greatly discounted rate.

Communicate your supervision policy to students, parents, spectators, and instructors. Let parents know what you expect from them as spectators, and require them to closely supervise any other children they may bring to class. Let them know which areas of your building and equipment are off limits. Require parents to come inside when they bring their children to class and when they pick them up. Never allow parents to leave children unsupervised before or after class, and don't let students who are under 18 years old wait outside.

Discuss your supervision policy and studio rules with your adult students, too. Have them sign a copy of that policy and keep it in your records until the student leaves your program. Also keep a copy of any signed waivers.

Discuss your supervisory expectations with your staff at monthly meetings and annually during performance reviews. Keep a signed acknowledgement of that discussion in each staffer's personnel file.

If you have a safety or risk management question or a suggestion for a topic, please contact Markel's Risk Management Department at safety1st@markelcorp.com.