



Choose Safe Places for Early Care and Education

Planning. Guidance. Protection.

Frequently Asked Questions for Child Care Center Owners

Why should I take the Choose Safe Places for Early Care and Education (CSPECE) survey?

- If you are considering opening a new child care center, identifying potential environmental problems now could prevent your business from undergoing costly and time-consuming remediation down the road.
- If you're an owner of an existing child care center and potentially harmful contaminants are identified, we will suggest ways you can reduce and prevent staff and childhood exposures.

Is my participation voluntary?

- **Yes**, CSPECE is a voluntary program in Pennsylvania. Your participation is not required but strongly encouraged.

What should I consider before completing the survey?

- There are two important questions to consider: **What was on this site in the past? What is currently near the site?**
- In addition it's important to determine whether any **environmental assessments** have been previously conducted, whether the center has been tested for **radon**, and the center's **drinking water source**.
- Please complete the [survey](#) to the best of your ability. If you do not know the answer to any of the questions, we recommend you talk to:
 - The owner of the property;
 - Your [local health department](#); and
 - Town planner or zoning office.



How will my survey be used?

- The PA Department of Health (PA DOH) will evaluate your site against a database of known sources of environmental contamination in Pennsylvania.

A Safe Place puts Parents and Staff at Ease and Allows Children to Thrive

How will my survey be used? (Continued)

- PA DOH will send you a letter listing potential environmental concerns at your site (if any) and opportunities to prevent or minimize exposure.

What are the benefits of completing the survey?

- Minimize potential risk to your business by carefully considering your location.
- Your site may be safe from environmental contamination, which can put you, your staff, and parents at ease and ensure a safe environment for your center's children.
- If there are no known environmental concerns about your site, you will receive a certificate that you may display at your center to promote your business.
- Initiating safe siting activities early will ensure environmental health hazards are identified before child care providers are granted a certificate of occupancy or license to operate, making it easier for providers to pursue environmental remediation or choose another location for their child care center if needed.

Are there any risks to completing the survey? Will there be any delays in licensing if environmental contamination is identified?

- Because the program is voluntary, there are no risks to completing the survey. The survey is not expected to delay licensing.

What is the timeline between my completing the survey and hearing a response from PA DOH?

- We will try to respond as soon as we can. However, PA DOH's response to your survey will vary depending on the number of inquiries from child care site owners.

Disclaimer

PA DOH will evaluate your site and provide general guidance to increase safety awareness. The information of our evaluation and this brochure are not intended to constitute legal or medical advice. PA DOH accepts no responsibility or liability for damages arising from the accuracy, completeness, usefulness or use of this information. If a thorough investigation of the property is warranted, we recommend contacting an environmental consultant to perform an assessment or possible remediation.

Who can I contact to find more information?

Any questions about the survey or CSPECE program can be sent by email to ChooseSafePlaces@pa.gov or by phone at **717.787.3350**.