

Child Care Volunteers and Background Checks



Connecticut Office of
Early Childhood

Who Needs One and Who May Not?

The CT law changed July 1, 2019 and affected which people need a background check, and which people do not. (Public Act 19-121)

- The number of times (e.g., “more than 12 times” is not the deciding factor.
- The actions of the person and their unsupervised access to children are what drive the decision as to whether a background check is needed, or not.

When a volunteer or staff person provides children with care, comfort, assistance with dressing, or has other direct contact, they DO need a background check.

When a volunteer or staff person has unsupervised access to children, regardless of their role, they DO need a background check.

Here are some examples to guide your decision: These are only examples. You need to determine individually based on your unique circumstances.

Example	Need BC?	Rationale
Storytime Reader	No	Specific reader role that is unlikely to change if a child needs help.
Storytime Helper	Yes	May be holding a child on lap, or helping a child leave the group for toileting
Recess Helper	Yes	Potential for handling safety or behavioral issues and directing children as needed, putting on/taking off coats
Activity Helper - A	No*	Prepares or assembles learning materials for activity, sets up work stations
Activity Helper - B	Yes	Offers hands-on support to children during the activity
Anyone who is ever counted in ratio	Yes	Ratios are established to adequately support children in care; must be ready and able to provide direct care
Office Assistant, kitchen aide, groundskeeper	No*	...unless occasionally called in to meet ratio (<i>see above</i>)
Co-operative Program volunteer teacher	Yes	Provides direct learning activities and care for children; counted in ratio
Visiting Puppeteer or Yoga instructor (<i>for example</i>)	Maybe*	Yes , if she/he/they gives support to children as they manipulate the puppets, or offers physical positioning into a yoga pose. No , if she/he/they demonstrates or performs only, without ever touching a child or being left alone with a child.

Grandparent of a child in class	Maybe*	Having a family relationship with a child does <u>not</u> rule out the need for a background check. If the family member helps the teacher with children then they do need a background check. <i>(see below)</i>
Grandparent or Family Friend visiting for “Family and Friends Day”	Maybe not*	If the grandparent/parent/family friend is not helping to run the event activities and is only focusing on “their child”, they would not need a background check.
Private nurse or therapist hired by the family or school district to support a specific child	No*	When a health or therapeutic support is provided to a single child by a person hired by that child’s family or school district, they are <u>not</u> considered a Child Care volunteer <u>or</u> a Child Care staff person

*** unless they provide care or have unsupervised access to children**

Bottom Line: It’s all about safety.

Please visit the OEC Background Check webpage for updates and information at <https://www.ctoec.org/background-checks/>

Questions? Please email oec.bc@ct.gov or call 860-500-4466.

Thanks for all you do to provide safe, nurturing care for young children!