COMMUNICATION PLAYBOOK

Who hears what, and when

Most communication failures on site are not emergencies. They are ordinary days when nobody is sure who to tell. This is the answer sheet, in the same order you would use it.

Match the channel to the situation

The mistake is not choosing badly. It is choosing slowly, or putting something that needs a phone call into a group chat.

Life threatening

WHAT TO DO

Call 911 first, then phone your Site Lead

WHO OWNS IT

STAFF MEMBER ON SITE

STANDARD

Now. No permission needed.

Injury or illness

WHAT TO DO

Phone the Site Lead, then file the incident form

WHO OWNS IT

SITE LEAD

STANDARD

Verbal in 2 minutes, written before you leave.

Missing child or wrong pickup

WHAT TO DO

Say it out loud, then phone the Site Lead and the Area Director

WHO OWNS IT

SITE LEAD

STANDARD

Immediately. 911 at 5 minutes.

Something blocking your shift today

WHAT TO DO

Call your Site Lead. Do not text it

WHO OWNS IT

SITE LEAD

STANDARD

Answered or escalated within 2 minutes.

A note for the next person on shift

WHAT TO DO

Shift note, written before you go

WHO OWNS IT

NEXT LEAD

STANDARD

In the log before handoff.

The same problem across sites

WHAT TO DO

Area report, with the dates and the site names

WHO OWNS IT

AREA DIRECTOR

STANDARD

Triaged within 1 business day.

Who needs to hear what

Same information, different audience, different moment. Getting this order wrong is what makes staff feel unheard and families feel surprised.

Staff starting a shift

WHAT THEY NEED

The count, the open flags, who is out today

WHEN

First 15 minutes

Staff ending a shift

WHAT THEY NEED

What changed, what to watch, what is still open

WHEN

Last 15 minutes

Site Lead

WHAT THEY NEED

Anything touching safety, coverage gaps, parent concerns

WHEN

Same day, verbally

Area Director

WHAT THEY NEED

Every SEV 1 and SEV 2, plus repeat issues

WHEN

Within 1 business day

Parent or guardian

WHAT THEY NEED

Anything about their child they should hear from us first

WHEN

Before pickup

Every family

WHAT THEY NEED

A rule or schedule change that affects them

WHEN

Before it takes effect

The twelve second report

WHO · WHAT · WHERE · WHEN · CONDITION

Five lines, in that order, every time. It works spoken on the phone, typed into the incident form, and repeated to a parent.

“Amara. Asthma. Playground. Three ten. Inhaler used, breathing tight but talking.”

Twelve seconds. Enough for the Site Lead to act instead of guess.

The handoff sentence

[Child] was [state] at [time]. Watch for [flag]. Next step is [action].

One sentence per child who needs one. Not a paragraph, and never a verbal shrug at the door.

“Jayden was quiet after snack. Watch for the stomach ache he mentioned. Next step is a call to mom if he skips dinner.”

The rhythm that holds it together

Four short moments, every day and every week. Nothing here needs a meeting room.

	WHEN	WHAT HAPPENS
Opening huddle	15 minutes with the whole team	Count read aloud, allergies, who is out, the one thing to watch today.

Mid-shift check	**WHEN** One minute, lead to staff	**WHAT HAPPENS** Counts still match, any flag since the door, anything the next person needs.
Closing handoff	**WHEN** Before the last person leaves	**WHAT HAPPENS** Count matches sign-out, incident log complete, one sentence for tomorrow.
Weekly review	**WHEN** Site Lead, 20 minutes	**WHAT HAPPENS** Read the log back, find the repeat, send what belongs to the Area Director.

Weekly communication log

Print this page for the site binder. One line per item raised. The closed column is the one that builds trust, so leave it empty until it is actually closed.

DATE	WHAT WAS RAISED	RAISED TO	ACKNOWLEDGED	CLOSED

A closed item means someone told the person who raised it what happened, even when the answer was no.