



Steps toward Establishing a Lekotek

Step One: Determine Service Boundary Area for Potential Site

Begin the process of establishing a Lekotek site by first determining if service area of potential site is not within the geographic territory of another established or proposed Lekotek/Compuplay site.

Step Two: Letter to National Lekotek Center

Contact National Lekotek Center (NLC) in writing indicating your agency's interest in establishing a Lekotek site in your community and provide information about location and plans for opening the site. Include general plan for hours of operations and potential services to be provided and demonstrate how the host agency or your organization will sponsor and/or support the Lekotek site.

Step Three: Conduct a Community Needs Survey

It will be important to demonstrate to National Lekotek Center that a need for Lekotek services exists and that the service is one that is not duplicated by other agencies in the community where your Lekotek site will be located. One way to collect data to substantiate the need for Lekotek services is by conducting a community needs survey. A sample survey is included in your packet of start-up materials. You may want to modify the survey for your community. Surveys can be distributed to families by mail or through schools, early intervention programs, therapists, or parent meetings -- however you can reach the largest number of families. This needs analysis will also help with your fundraising efforts. Please provide a summary of your findings in a report to NLC.

Step Four: Determine Name for your Lekotek Site

Create a potential name for your new Lekotek site. Note the name "Lekotek" should be part of your site's formal name and the Lekotek logo should be used on **all** marketing materials.

Step Five: Non-Profit Status

Establish a not-for-profit organization as defined by the Internal Revenue Code or be affiliated with a host agency that is a not-for-profit with a 501(c) 3 status.

Step Six: Application for a Lekotek

Complete the application to develop a Lekotek, a copy of which is enclosed with your materials. There is a **\$250 non-refundable application fee**, which should be enclosed with the application. Upon review of your application, you will be notified promptly regarding whether or not your application has been accepted. Properly completed applications are rarely rejected, particularly if you have been working with the National Lekotek Center staff while in the development phase of your site.

Upon acceptance of your Lekotek application, the National Lekotek Center will send you two copies of our Lekotek Agreement, which specifies and formalizes your status as a member of the National Network of Lekotek Affiliates.

Step Seven: Build a Base of Community Support

Contact parent groups and other local agencies providing services to children with disabilities and discuss the Lekotek concept with them and assess their interest in helping to sponsor the program through providing financial, space, or staff support. You might also want to begin discussing the idea with potential funders for the program, including grants officers at local companies and foundations.

National Lekotek Center

www.lekotek.org • lekotek@lekotek.org • www.ableplay.org

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Steps toward Establishing a Lekotek...*(continued)*

Step Eight: Attend Lekotek Leader Training

In compliance with *Lekotek Minimum Standards of Operation* and *Site Requirements*, ensure that a personnel providing services to families (direct staff person) from the site attends Lekotek Training Seminar at the National Lekotek Center to get the necessary Lekotek certification. The training contains specific information about program organization, play facilitation techniques, etc., which will be essential for your new Lekotek program. Attending the training, however, can be delayed until after applying to develop a Lekotek center. Successfully completing the full Lekotek Training Seminar will result in receiving certification as a Lekotek Leader.

Step Nine: Sign two copies of the Agreement and return them to the National Lekotek Center

NLC will sign the agreements and return an original to you. You will be considered an official member of our network from the date when we sign the agreement. You will be billed at that time on a prorated basis for the affiliate fee (\$1000 annually with our fiscal year running from June 30 - July 1). As a member of the Lekotek network, your new site will receive the same services and privileges as all Lekotek affiliates. For a complete list of all services and privileges, please review the *Lekotek Affiliate Benefits List*.

Step Ten: Get center ready for families

Purchase equip your Lekotek center with essential toy, play computer and storage inventory. Plan an open house to announce the opening of your program to your community. For assistance, please contact NLC.