



Office of Children and Family Services

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

SUZANNE MILES-GUSTAVE, ESQ.
Acting Commissioner

July 20, 2023

Dear Provider:

The school year has ended and programs and families are experiencing a summer full of fun! We hope you are enjoying the warm sun, cool water and refreshing outdoors. Now is a great time to review the impact the warm weather can have on the health and safety of children.



- **Did you know children are more at risk than adults for dehydration and other heat-related illnesses?** Here are a few tips to prevent heat-related illnesses:
 - Keep plenty of fluids on hand and encourage children to drink water even if they don't feel thirsty.
 - Make sure children are dressed appropriately for the weather in light-colored, loose clothing.
 - Ensure children have a place to rest in the shade.

It is critical to keep a close eye on any changes to the child that could be symptoms of dehydration or heat-related illness. Go to the CDC website for more information. [Warning Signs and Symptoms of Heat-Related Illness](#), and see also [this sample weather watch chart](#).

[We encourage programs to print the chart and remind all staff about the signs of heat-related illness.](#)

- Encourage parents to provide sunscreen for their child and fill out a [Non-Medication Consent Form](#) so you can **apply sunscreen to children prior to going outside**.
- When items are exposed to the sun and heat, they can get very hot to the touch. **Remember to test the temperature of playground equipment, strollers, buggies, slides, swings, etc. prior to children encountering them.**
- **Remember to conduct name-to-face attendance during all transitions.** The nicer weather brings a lot more movement in, out, and around the programs. This could create instances of children being left without competent supervision. It is important all staff understand the movement policy and practices to avoid leaving a child unsupervised.
- **Water safety is imperative with any type of water play.** Inspect all fences for holes and double-check gate locks are in working order. As always, ensure attentive supervision is being provided at all times.
- Remind parents and staff to check vehicles prior to exiting to ensure that no child is left unattended. Children should never be left inside a car. Even with a window partially or fully open, a car can become dangerously hot in a short amount of time. **If a child you were expecting does not arrive to your program at their regular time, call the parent or transportation department to check on the status of the child. This action alone could save a child's life.**

Additionally, these life-saving tips from the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#), the [National Safety Council](#), and [Motherly.com](#) can prevent a tragic accident from occurring. Please remind your staff as well as your families to:

- Put something you'll need at your destination in your backseat, such as your handbag or cell phone.
- To remind yourself that a child is in the car, keep a stuffed animal in the car seat. When the child is buckled in, place the stuffed animal in the front with the driver.
- Set an alarm on your cell phone as a reminder to drop your child off at their child care program.
- Download an app such as Waze or Kars 4 Kids that will alert you to check your backseat when you reach your destination.

Please visit the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration website for more facts and tips about preventing hot car deaths. [Child Heatstroke Prevention: Prevent Hot Car Deaths | NHTSA](#)

Thank you for taking the necessary precautions for the children in your care and working with parents and families to ensure that everyone has a safe and happy summer.

Sincerely,

Nora Yates
Deputy Commissioner
Division of Child Care Services