

Child Care

NEWS BRIEF



Reminders on Transportation and Supervision

Revised Information - We are resending these important reminders for Transportation and Supervision that includes the correct Swimming Ratio Chart as reflected within the current Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01.

The Tennessee Department of Human Services promotes child care spaces that are safe, healthy, and educationally rich. It is the time of year to enjoy the outdoors with field trips, and other outdoor activities. It is also a time to remain vigilant in ensuring the safety of children when providing transportation, protecting children from the sun and heat, revisiting playground routines and safety measures and bolstering overall supervision. We encourage you to follow transportation protocols at all times, and especially in the warmer summer months when heat can be so harmful to our precious passengers. Below is information, resources and tips so that all have a safe and healthy summer.

Summer Transportation Alert 2023

Each year we learn of the deaths of young children that resulted from being left unattended in a child care vehicle or a parent's car. If your agency provides transportation, help prevent any tragedies this year by ensuring that all staff members understand what is at stake and how their diligence in following transportation rules can help save a life. Often, these tragedies occur when there are one or more changes in typical parent or child care agency staff routines, or when child care agency staff fail to follow established transportation procedures. When followed properly, well-reasoned agency transportation procedures will help child care programs ensure children's safety even when there are changes to routines or staffing.

According to the [U.S. Department of Transportation](#), 33 children died of heatstroke in vehicles nationally in 2022.

- Total number of U.S. pediatric vehicular heatstroke deaths, 1998-present: **943**
- Average number of U.S. child heatstroke fatalities per year 1998-2022: **38**
- **More than half (54%) of deaths are children under 2 years of age.**

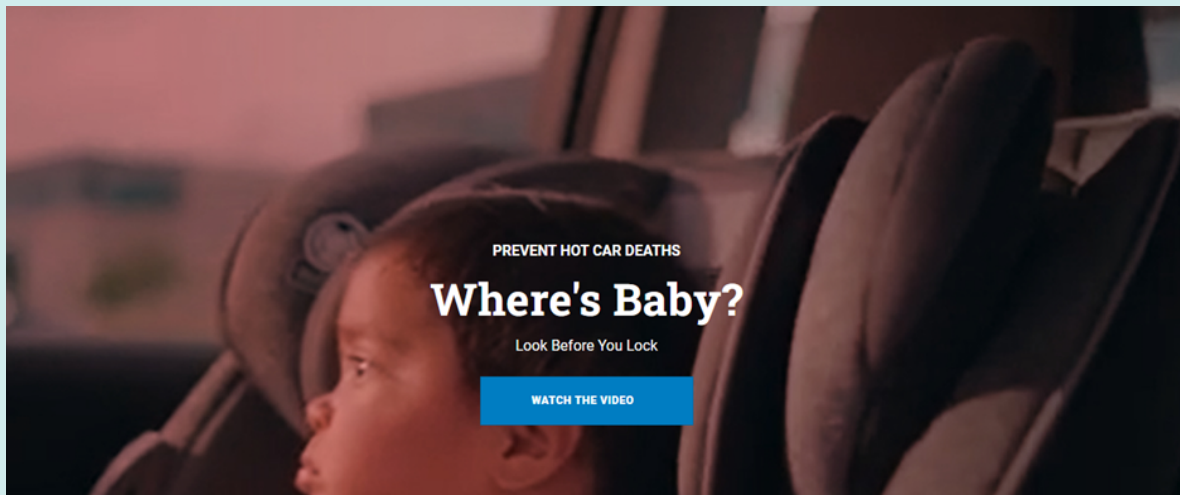
An examination of media reports since 1998 by [NoHeatStroke.org](#) highlights notable

circumstances leading to these preventable deaths:

- 52.6% Forgotten by caregiver (496 children)
- 25.3% Gained access on their own (237 children)
- 20.3% Knowingly left by caregiver (190 children)
- 1.2% Unknown

The Tennessee Department of Health (TDH) notes that the temperature inside an average car or truck can increase 20 degrees in 10 minutes. Read more about preventing a possible heatstroke tragedy at: National Heatstroke Prevention Day 2023 | [National Heatstroke Prevention Day 2023](#) | [NHTSA](#).

There are additional basic tips that may be found on the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration website as shown here: <https://www.nhtsa.gov/child-safety/tips-avoid-child-heatstroke>. There is a drop down option at the top of the webpage to select English or Spanish.



Please review/share this information and the safety tips below with all staff in your program.

Heatstroke Prevention Safety Tips - [English](#) [Spanish](#)

You can also utilize the “ACT” acronym from [Safe Kids Worldwide](#).

- **A:** Avoid heatstroke-related injury and death by never leaving a child alone in a car, not even for a minute. And make sure to keep your car locked when you're not inside so kids don't get in on their own.
- **C:** Create reminders. Keep a stuffed animal or other memento in your child's car seat when it's empty, and move it to the front seat as a visual reminder when your child is in the back seat. Or place and secure your phone, briefcase or purse in the backseat when traveling with your child.
- **T:** Take action. If you see a child alone in a car, call 911. Emergency personnel want you to call. They are trained to respond to these situations. One call could save a life.

Whether you provide transportation or not, please consider sharing this information with all enrolled parents.

As always, you may submit any general questions to ChildCareServices.DHS@tn.gov.



Protect Children from Sun and Heat

CDC Recommended Ways to Keep Children Safe and Healthy While Playing Outside - [Outdoor Play and Safety for Children in ECE](#) | [CDC](#)

Sunburns can happen even on cloudy or cool days. To protect their skin, keep children in the shade and encourage wearing wide-brimmed hats, sunglasses, and clothes that cover children's arms and legs. With parental permission, for children older than 6 months, use [sunscreen](#) with an SPF of 15 or higher on any exposed skin:

- Apply sunscreen 30 minutes prior to outside play to allow the sunscreen to absorb into the skin.
- Reapply at least every 2 hours or more often if children are sweating or spending time in the water.

Sunscreen is not recommended for babies who are 6 months old or younger. Keep younger babies who cannot use sunscreen out of direct sunlight by finding shade and dressing them in sun-protective clothing.

Children often rely on caregivers to [keep them cool and hydrated](#) when it's hot outside:

- Dress children in lightweight, loose-fitting clothing to help keep them from overheating when it's hot.
- Check to make sure children are drinking plenty of fluids such as water to keep them cool and hydrated. Avoid really cold drinks or [drinks with a lot of sugar](#).

Some of the same strategies that help prevent sunburn can also help keep children cool:

- Keep children in the shade when possible to help prevent overheating.
- [On hot days](#), try to avoid scheduling outdoor activities from late morning to midafternoon, when the sun is the strongest.
- Provide breaks during outdoor activities to reapply sunscreen and get water.

Be aware of the [warning signs of heat-related illness](#). Learn more [hot weather tips to prevent heat-related illness](#).



UPDATED: Supervision Reminders

- Know where children are at all times, be aware of their activities and able to intervene appropriately.
- Conduct visual inspections of all areas of the building and grounds after closing the agency each day to ensure no children have been unintentionally left in any part of the agency.
- Check the playground prior to use each day. Ensure that gates are properly latched.
- Only release children to their parent/guardian or other authorized person designated by the parent.
- Verify the identity of the individual who is picking up the child if unknown or unfamiliar to the agency.
- The person who is picking up the child should sign the child out by the method established by the agency in accordance with licensing rules.
- Maintain direct supervision of children between six (6) weeks and five (5) years of age during meal and snack time. This includes room arrangement that allows staff to directly supervise each child at all times.
- Have a written plan in place for playground supervision that follows licensing rules and includes:
 - Arrival and departure procedures
 - Individual staff duties to ensure age-appropriate supervision to each child at all times
 - Emergency procedures, including communication with other staff
 - Name-to-face roll call before leaving the classroom, upon arrival at the playground, and before leaving the playground
- Supervision during Field Trips should follow licensing rules and includes:

- o Age-appropriate supervision to each child at all times
- o The adult:child ratio will double during field trips.
- o The agency should monitor attendance by utilizing a name-to-face roll call
 - Prior to leaving the agency
 - Upon arrival at each destination
 - At the beginning of each activity (such as lunch, breaks, etc.)
 - Upon departing each destination
 - Upon arrival at the child care agency
- Agencies should follow Supervision in and Near Water licensing rules including:
 - o When children are engaged in activities in or near a body of water, the following adult:child ratios shall be met:

Corrected:	
Age Group	Adult:Child Ratio
Six (6) Weeks – Twelve (12) months	1:1
Thirteen (13) months-Thirty-Five (35) months	1:2
Three (3) years	1:3
Four (4) years	1:4
Five (5) years	1:5
School-age (Kindergarten and above)	1:10

- One (1) adult present shall have a current certificate in advanced aquatic lifesaving skills. This person shall supervise from above the level of the swimmers. This person may be the lifeguard provided by the facility
- The lifeguard, including those provided by a swimming facility, shall not be included in the required adult:child ratio while performing lifeguard duties
- Agencies should follow Safe Sleep Supervision Procedures as defined in licensing rules including:
 - o **Updated:** Infants shall sleep in cribs or play yards with a firm sleep surface with a fitted sheet
 - o No infant shall be allowed to sleep on a sofa, soft mattress, adult bed, in a car seat, in a swing, or in other restraining devices
 - o Infants shall be positioned on their backs for sleeping
 - o Infants shall be touched by an educator every fifteen (15) minutes in order to check breathing, body temperature and position
- All infant educators shall practice safe sleep procedures
- Infants who arrive asleep in car seats or fall asleep in any piece of equipment other than a crib must be immediately removed and placed on their back in a crib



Outdoor Play and Playground Routines

Children of all ages, including infants, who are in care more than three (3) daylight hours, shall have a daily opportunity for outdoor play when the temperature range, after adjustment for wind chill and heat index, is between thirty-two degrees and ninety-five degrees Fahrenheit (32°F and 95°F) and it is not raining.

Exception: Child care agencies where outdoor play is prohibitive or dangerous, as determined in the discretion of the Department, may substitute unoccupied indoor space providing fifty (50) square feet per child, subject to approval by the Department.

Have written policies promoting physical activity and strive to remove any potential barriers for children to participate in physical activity.

Outdoor play and moderate to vigorous indoor or outdoor physical activity shall be available as follows:

- Weather permitting, infants shall be taken outside two to three times per day.

- Toddlers and preschoolers shall have sixty (60) to ninety (90) minutes of outdoor play per day for full-time programs.

Exception: Indoor activity can be increased if adverse weather does not permit outdoor play.

Children shall be properly dressed, and the length of time outside adjusted according to the weather conditions and the age of the children.

Educators shall be alert for any signs of weather-related distress, including dehydration, heat stroke and frostbite.

Each child care agency shall develop simple playground rules that use positive language. Staff shall verbally communicate these rules to children prior to outdoor play.

Staff shall plan and implement activities that engage all children in developmentally appropriate active, physical play such as skipping, running, and jumping.

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505 Deaderick Street

Nashville, TN 37243-1403

ChildCareServices.DHS@tn.gov

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