



**STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

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**PHIL BREDESEN**  
GOVERNOR

**VIRGINIA T. LODGE**  
COMMISSIONER

August 5, 2010

**RE: Extreme Heat**

Dear Licensed Child Care Provider:

I am writing to remind you about the dangers of extreme heat. In the coming days, Tennessee will be experiencing heat indices in excess of 100 degrees. We hope that this letter will serve as a reminder to remain diligent in ensuring children's safety in these extreme weather conditions.

A few simple precautions can mean a safer season for you and the children in your care:

- Avoid going outdoors during the hottest part of the day;
- Keep outdoor play times short;
- Always provide water and take regular cool down breaks for children and teachers to sit, cool down and slowly drink water (children often don't know when they need rest and hydration);
- Apply sunscreen, even on overcast days;
- Take advantage of safe water play;
- Pay attention to air quality alerts, as children and teachers with asthma or other respiratory conditions may be at risk;
- Know the signs of heat related illness. Unnoticed symptoms can lead to serious, life-threatening emergencies:

**Heat exhaustion:** Cool, moist, pale, or flushed skin; heavy sweating; headache; nausea or vomiting; dizziness; and exhaustion. Body temperature will be near normal.

Take the child and into a cooler place. Remove or loosen tight clothing and apply cool, wet cloths, such as towels or sheets. If conscious, give one-half glass of cool water every 15 minutes – slowly.

**Heat stroke:** Hot, red skin; changes in consciousness; rapid, weak pulse; and rapid, shallow breathing. Body temperature can be very high.

Heat stroke is a life-threatening situation. Call 911 or your local emergency number. Move the child to a cooler place. Quickly cool the body. Immerse in a cool bath, or wrap wet sheets around the body and fan it. Watch for signals of breathing problems. Keep lying down and continue to cool the body any way you can. If child refuses water, is vomiting, or there are changes in the level of consciousness, do not give anything to eat or drink.

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**Heat cramps:** Take the child into a cooler place and have him or her rest in a comfortable position. Lightly stretch the affected muscle and replenish fluids. Give a half glass of cool water every 15 minutes.

**Transporting children** in extremely hot weather is a high risk activity. If your agency is licensed to provide transportation during this season, please remain vigilant about strict compliance with Child Care Licensing Rules. Doing so could save the life of a child.

Additional information about heat related issues can be found at your local American Red Cross or their website at: <http://www.redcross.org/>.

If you require any additional information, please contact your Licensing Program Evaluator.

Sincerely,

Lois Barrett Luke  
Director of Licenising

cc: Child and Adult Care Licensing Staff and Partners

LBL:jv