

Extreme Heat Health Guidelines for Child Care Providers

Keep Them Hydrated and Cool

1. Establish a policy and plan to deal with extreme heat.
 2. Monitor daily weather reports and adjust outdoor activity schedules accordingly.
 3. Children must drink plenty of fluids. Water is best (or expressed breast milk for children who have access to human milk).
 4. Diluted 100% fruit juice is satisfactory.
 5. Ensure that staff knows the signs and symptoms of heat-related illness and what to do.
 6. Time spent outdoors should be early morning or later afternoon. Stay in the shade of natural or artificial structures.
 7. Keep children cool. If possible, stay in an air-conditioned space. Use fans with caution.
 8. Before allowing children to use playground equipment, ensure that metal and plastic parts are not becoming dangerously hot. Monitor metal and vinyl parts of wheelchairs.
 9. When in the sun, cover up. Children should wear a wide brimmed hat that protects the back of their neck, UV protective sunglasses, sunscreen and light, loose fitting clothing.
 10. Apply sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher) ideally 20 minutes before going outside to ensure absorption. When using DEET insect repellent, apply 20 to 30 minutes after sunscreen has been applied. Staff should be role models for appropriate heat and sun safety behaviours.
 11. Sunscreen and insect repellent are not recommended for infants under 6 months of age. Keep babies under one year of age out of direct sunlight.
 12. Never leave children in a parked vehicle or sleeping in direct sunlight.
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During a Heat Alert follow the above guidelines and;

- Activate your daycare's plan to deal with extreme heat.
- Limit time spent outdoors unless the outdoor shade area is cooler than indoors. Encourage safe water play to stay cool.
- Keep children well hydrated. Offer water (or expressed breast milk) frequently and encourage children to drink.
- Check children for signs of dehydration and other heat-related illnesses. Follow first aid guidelines.

During a Heat Warning follow the above guidelines and;

- Further reduce or suspend time spent outdoors unless the outdoor shaded area is cooler than indoors.
- Suspend outdoor sports or strenuous activities.
- Ensure that children spend some time in an air-conditioned space.
- Check children more frequently especially infants, young children (under 4 years), those who have mobility impairments or have chronic illnesses such as diabetes, asthma or heart conditions for signs of heat related illness. Follow first aid guidelines.
- Listen and watch for Extreme Heat Warning Notices on the radio or on the television.
- Advise parents of your plan should the situation progress to a Heat Health Emergency.

During a Heat Emergency follow the above guidelines and;

- Listen and watch for Extreme Heat Health Emergency notices on the radio or monitor the health unit's media updates:
website: www.healthunit.org
facebook: LGLHealthUnit
twitter: @LGLHealthUnit
- Suspend all outdoor activity and keep children in an air-conditioned environment – participation in strenuous outdoor activities during Extreme Heat Health Emergencies is dangerous.

Additional information:

Health Canada

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ewh-semt/pubs/climat/heat-chaleur/index-eng.php#appd3>

Reference: Adapted with permission from the Middlesex London Health Unit



For more information, please call **1-800-660-5853**
or visit our website at **www.healthunit.org**