



# Child Care Safety Transportation

## Transportation Safety

### Loading and Unloading Children from Vehicles

- Know and follow all day care transportation regulations.
- Children always enter or exit a vehicle on the curb side.
- Drivers and vehicles must meet all requirements of the New York State Department of Transportation and the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).
- Children must not be transported in vehicles built to hold more than 10 passengers, including the driver. (Consult the licensor/registrar for criteria and exceptions regarding acceptable transportation vehicles that hold more than 10 passengers.)
- Never leave children unattended in a vehicle.
- Staff/Caregiver-to-child ratios and must be maintained always.
- Vehicles should not be running while loading and unloading children.
- All children must have properly installed car or booster seats that are age-appropriate and size-appropriate.
- Verify that seat belts and restraining straps have been properly secured; do not rely on children to properly buckle themselves.
- Follow DMV regulations regarding the placement of children in a vehicle. The recommended best practice is to not allow children to sit in the front seat.
- Consider assisting children in and out of the vehicle.
- Wake any sleeping children and help them unload.
- Check and recheck every seat, including under every seat, for sleeping or hidden children.
- Name-to-face attendance should be taken repeatedly; update attendance if more children are loaded or unloaded.
- All staff and caregivers must know how many children they are caring for and take name-to-face attendance.
- Take name-to-face attendance again when transition is completed.
- Regulations must be followed always.

## **Interacting With Children While on the Vehicle**

- Drivers are not to use cell phones while operating the vehicle; this includes wireless and hands-free devices.
- Positive interactions should take place while riding in the vehicle; ask questions about the trip, sites seen in transit, reflect on the day's activities on the return trip.
- Have age-appropriate conversations.
- Sing age-appropriate songs.

## **Vehicle Emergencies or Breakdowns**

- Children's safety is always the first priority.
- Make sure vehicle is in a safe place.
- If anyone is injured, call 911.
- Contact supervisor immediately if appropriate.
- Contact parents; contact OCFS.
- Do not allow strangers to assist in vehicle maintenance.
- Children should not be on board during maintenance or repairs.

## **Vehicle-Related Heatstroke**

- Heatstroke is a leading killer of children, second only to car crashes. On average, every 10 days, a child dies from heatstroke in a vehicle. These deaths are preventable and everyone in the community, especially child care providers, have a role to play in protecting our children. Here is a checklist of things you can do to prevent a child from suffering from heat stroke.
  - Consider making it part of your daily routine to account for all children in your care. Set up backup systems to check and double check that no child is left in a vehicle. Never leave children unattended in a vehicle, even if the windows are partially open or the air conditioning on, and certainly never when the vehicle's engine is running. Vehicles get hot quickly; even an outside temperature in the mid-60s Fahrenheit can cause the temperature inside a vehicle to rise above 110 degrees.
  - Make a habit of looking in the vehicle—front and back—before locking the door and walking away.
  - Consider getting in touch with designated family members if a child who is regularly in your care does not arrive as expected.
  - Create reminders to ensure that no child is accidentally left behind in the vehicle.
  - Place an item that will be needed at your destination in the back of the vehicle next to the child or place a stuffed animal in the driver's view to indicate that a child is in the car seat.
  - Call 911 or your local emergency number immediately if you see children alone in a hot vehicle. If they are in distress from the heat, get them out as soon as possible and cool them down immediately.