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**State of Wisconsin  
Department of Children and Families  
Division of Early Care and Education  
Bureau of Early Care Regulation**

August 2010

To: Certified Child Care Providers  
Certified School-age Programs  
Licensed Family Child Care Centers  
Licensed Group Child Care Centers  
Licensed Day Camps

From: Jill D. Chase, Director  
Bureau of Early Care Regulation

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jill D. Chase".

**BECR MEMO 2010-03**

Re: Keeping Children Safe during the Summer Months  
Vehicle Insurance Requirement

**Keeping Children Safe during the Summer Months**

Summer has come to Wisconsin and we would like to take this opportunity to remind child care providers about summer safety practices.

- **Transportation Safety.** During the summer months, the interior of a vehicle can heat up rapidly, even on mild days when temperatures reach the 70s. 33 children in the United States died from being in a hot vehicle according to a study published in the journal *Pediatrics*. So far in 2010, there have been 17 deaths of children in the United States due to hyperthermia from being in a hot vehicle. Overall, the study looked at deaths of children in a hot vehicle that have occurred over the past 12 years. The study found that in 51% of the cases (228 children) were the result of children “forgotten” by caregivers; 30% (131 children) died when a child was playing in an unattended vehicle; 18% (80 children) died when a child was intentionally left in a vehicle by an adult and 4% (4 children) died in unknown circumstances. The administrative rules for all regulated programs (licensed and certified) prohibit a child from being left unattended in a vehicle. Programs should also take care to make sure that the doors to a vehicle are locked when not in use and that children do not have access to keys or remote entry devices. If a child is missing, adults should check any vehicles first, including the trunk. Teach children that vehicles are not to be used as a play area.
- **Sun Safety.** During these nice summer days, children (and the adults who care for them) are excited to be able to enjoy the outdoors. Here are some simple suggestions from the American Academy of Pediatrics to help protect everyone from the heat and prevent sunburn.
  - Keep babies younger than 6 months out of direct sunlight. Find shade under a tree, umbrella or the stroller. Remember that all children should have outdoor play time daily except when there is a health reason or inclement weather.
  - When possible, children and adults should be dressed in cool, comfortable clothing that covers the body, like lightweight cotton pants, long-sleeved shirts and hats. If possible clothing should have a tight weave. This type of clothing will provide better

protection from the sun than clothing with a loose weave. Tightly woven clothes will not allow light to penetrate the clothing when held up to the light.

- Wear a hat or cap with a brim that faces forward to shield the face.
- Wear sunglasses with at least 99% UV protection. Having a supply of child-sized sunglasses available for children to use when they go outside is recommended.
- Use an effective sunscreen product that is applied at least 30 minutes prior to going outside. The label should indicate that the sunscreen is “broad-spectrum” which means that it will screen out both UVB and UVA rays. A SPF of at least 15 is recommended. The higher the SPF the more UVB protection the sunscreen has.
- Look for the UVA “star” rating system on the sunscreen label. One star is low UVA protection, two stars indicate medium protection, three stars means the sunscreen provides high protection and four stars affords the highest protection available in an over-the-counter sunscreen product.
- Provide opportunities for play in the shade on playgrounds. When natural shade is not available, tarps can provide shady areas. When the heat index is above 90°F, providers should use caution when children are outside. Choose activities that reduce the amount of very active play children engage in and make sure that water and shade are available. Scheduling play time for the early morning or late afternoon when the sun is not at its highest point is recommended.
- Make sure to remind children to drink water during the hot summer days. Children can easily become dehydrated when playing outside during the hot summer months. They often don’t like to take the time to stop for a drink so we recommend that you schedule regular water breaks when children are outside and provide an opportunity for everyone to have a glass of water.
- Provide opportunities for water play to help children cool off. The use of a wading pool is not recommended, but sprinklers, hoses, water squirting or spraying devices and water tables are good ways to allow children to have fun with water. If you use a wading pool, remember to empty the pool of water each day and sanitize the pool between uses. It is recommended that children in diapers not use wading pools.

**Vehicle Insurance Requirement affects certified child care provider and licensed family child care centers.**

On June 1, 2010, a new law was enacted that will affect certified child care providers and licensed family child care centers. The new law applies to any person or agency using a private vehicle. This law, called the Truth in Automobile Insurance law, requires that all drivers and vehicle owners carry liability insurance on the vehicle. The law requires drivers and owners of vehicles to provide proof of insurance at a traffic stop or accident, if requested by law enforcement.

Administrative Rules for certified child care providers (DCF 202) and the Licensing Rules for Family Child Care Centers (DCF 250) require programs to comply with all applicable laws. This includes the new requirement for vehicle liability insurance. Certifiers and licensing specialists may request that a center provide proof of vehicle liability insurance during a monitoring visit. Programs providing transportation for children that are not able to provide such proof are subject to a citation for a rule violation for failing to follow applicable laws. In addition, licensed family child care centers are required to notify parents whether the program carries vehicle liability insurance if the

program transports children. Programs are advised to update materials provided to parents, if necessary.

**Note:** Certified School-age child care programs, licensed group child care centers and licensed day camps are already required to carry vehicle liability insurance on all vehicles used to transport children. Those requirements have not changed.