

OUTDOOR SAFETY & CHAPERONING FIELD TRIP

Summer is a great time for kids to get outside and enjoy the weather – but it's important for parents and guardians to remember safety tips throughout the season. As the temperature increase, so does the need for safety precautions. Here are some reminders to prepare for safe summer days.



Stay cool in the heat

Keep cool and hydrated and minimize your time in the sun between 11:00 am and 4:00 pm. Drink plenty of water, find shade, visit cool buildings, slow down, bathe in cool water and wear light-coloured clothing.

Never leave children or pets inside a parked vehicle.

When thunder roars, go indoors.



Stay inside for at least 30 minutes after the last rumble of thunder. If you can hear thunder, you can get hit by lightning.

Use sunscreen, wear sunglasses & hats for sun protection



Expert recommends that all kids – no matter their skin tone – wear sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher. Whatever sunscreen you choose, make sure it's broad spectrum (protects against both UVA and UVB rays) and, if kids are or near water, is labelled water-resistant.

Sun exposure damages the eyes as well as the skin. Sun exposure over time can cause cataracts later in life. The best way to protect eyes is to wear sunglasses that provide 100% UV protection. Use wide-brimmed hats and clothing that covers,



Pack an emergency kit



You may have some kit items already, such as a flashlight, a wind-up radio, food, water and a manual can opener. Make sure they are organized and easy to find in case you need to evacuate your home. Make a kit to go in a backpack. Whatever you do, don't wait until a disaster is happening to make a kit.

Avoid the bugs and their bite



Avoid being outdoors at dawn or dusk, when mosquitoes are most active. Keep in mind that ticks are often found along trail edges, mostly in wooded areas or tall grass. Light colored clothing as less attractive to mosquitoes and allows you to see ticks more easily.

Keep food fresh

Chilling food properly is one of the most effective ways to reduce the risk of food-borne illness. Left overs should be chilled promptly, but remember to throw them away if they have been out of room temperature for more than two (2) hours.



Make a (safe) splash

Never leave a child unattended in water, not even for a second. Pick the best time of the day to swim and avoid swimming at night and in stormy weather.



Connect with care

Don't mention going away on vacation in your social networking status updates. You may also want to delete messages from friends who mention these things to avoid the possibility of someone robbing your home while you're away.

Double-check medicines

Some medicines make skin more sensitive to UV rays. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if any prescription (especially antibiotics and acne medicines) and over-the-counter (OTC) medicines your kids take can increase sun sensitivity. If so, take extra sun precautions. The best protection is simply covering up or staying indoors because even sunscreen can't always protect skin from sun sensitivity.

Heat-Related Illness



HEAT STROKE

Heat stroke occurs when the ability to sweat fails and body temperature rises to a dangerous level quickly. It's often fatal or results in organ damage. Someone experiencing heatstroke will have very hot skin and an altered mental state. Seizures can result. Ridding the body of excess heat is crucial.

HEAT EXHAUSTION

When body loses an excessive amount of salt and water, heat exhaustion sets in. People who work outdoors and athletes are very susceptible. Symptoms are similar to the flu, and include serve thirst, fatigue, headache, nausea, vomiting and, sometimes, diarrhea. They may also have clammy or pale skin, dizziness, or rapid pulse.



HEAT CRAMPS

Heat cramps are muscle spasms usually affecting the legs or abdominals, often after, physical activity. Excessive sweating reduces salt levels in the body, resulting in heat cramps.

Persons with pain or spasms in the abdomen, arms or legs should not return to work for a few hours.



JUNE IS NATIONAL INDIGENOUS HISTORY MONTH IN CANADA, A TIME TO RECOGNIZE THE RICH HISTORY, HERITAGE, RESILIENCE AND DIVERSITY OF FIRST NATIONS, INUIT AND MÉTIS.



RESOURCES: GET PREPARED - CANADA.CA

SCHOLASTIC PARENTS: HELPFUL TIPS FOR CHAPERONING SCHOOL FIELD TRIPS
KIDSHALTH.ORG - SUN SAFETY
CLEVELAND CLINIC HEALTH ESSENTIALS - HOW TO KEEP YOUR KIDS SAFE THIS SUMMER
COMMUNITY HEALTH OF CENTAL WASHINGTON - KEEPING SUMMER BREEZY AND FUN



HELPFUL TIPS FOR CHAPERONING SCHOOL FIELD TRIP

KNOW THE PLAN

Before you leave, discuss the itinerary, logistics, and any chaperone guidelines with the teacher in charge. If you can, get this information ahead of time and familiarize yourself with it before the trip. Ask how many kids you will be responsible for (usually 5-10, depending on their ages and your destination) and learn their names as soon as you can. You should also find out if any of the children have a medical or behavioral problem you should be aware of. Be clear on the school's disciplinary policy and what to do in case a child gets lost.

COME PREPARED

Throw a few band-aids and some bottled water in your bag. Dress appropriately for the destination and wear comfortable shoes. A cell phone can be an excellent helper if you have one, but keep it turned off.

SHOW UP

Believe it or not, one of the biggest problems teachers face is parents who cancel the morning of the trip or simply don't show up. If you have to cancel, try to give the teacher as much notice as possible and help her find a replacement. Many teachers will book more chaperones than needed for this very reason.

BE FOCUSED

Remember your primary concern is to make sure kids are safe and help them enjoy themselves. Model good behavior and professionalism — after all, your group is an ambassador for your school. Avoid discussing your child's progress or other irrelevant topics with the teacher during the trip. By riding the bus, following the tour, and eating with your charges, you not only help maintain their safety but keep them involved in the trip. If you have other children, leave them at home. Avoid smoking in front of the students. Pay attention, be on time, and follow directions. Keep your voice at a moderate level and be courteous.

ESTABLISH A RAPPORT

While you need to keep your group under control, remember this is not a military exercise. Be firm about important issues — running off from the group, horseplay, behavior that bothers others — but let minor infractions slide. After all, learning is supposed to be fun!

STAYING SAFE

If you stick with the group and keep kids away from potential hazards, you should be in good shape. Take frequent head counts, particularly when moving to a new location. Learn the names and faces of each child in your care, and be sure they know you too. When your group travels, space adults out so that there's always a grownup in front, behind, and in the middle of the group. When you reach your destination, find out where you can go for first aid and the location of the bathrooms, but be sure to let the teacher know before you take any child away from the group. Be clear on what to do in the event of an emergency.

HELP TECH

Engage your charges in the trip by asking thought-provoking questions that help them discuss what they see, rather than test what they know. If you can, involve all the students in your group — the shyer ones may take a bit longer to participate in discussions. Be careful not to interrupt the guide or teacher and try not to contradict any information they convey.

STAY POSITIVE

Your enthusiasm and interest may be infectious. Keep the kids as engaged as you can, participate in the activities, and support the teacher and/or guides' decisions. If you do disagree with something they say, speak to them about it privately. Compliment kids on good behavior and thank guides for their help.

KEEP IN GOOD COMMUNICATION

If there's a serious problem, let the teacher know as soon as you can. While you should discipline where you can, let the teacher be the ultimate boss.