



## Health Fact Sheet-Transporting Children Safely

Has your program's transportation policy been reviewed and updated recently? CCCC encourages all summer camps and child care centers that transport children to review policies and make sure procedures are in place to safeguard children. In New Jersey, child care programs that transport children follow both regulations from the Manual of Requirements and the Department of Motor Vehicles. All vehicles used to transport children in child care must be yellow school buses or school vehicles with a capacity of nine passengers or less. Private van transportation is illegal.

The Manual of Requirements also requires centers to develop an approved method to keep track of children during the transfer of supervision from and to parents during arrival and departure (10:122-4.3 a). The regulations also include the following:

1. Children riding on the yellow school buses must use seat belts, children 18 months or younger must also be in an approved safety seat manufactured for school buses. Children riding in the school vehicles must use an approved child safety seat up to 8 years or 80 lbs. The requirements are different because child safety seats cannot fit properly on the high back school bus seats, which are manufactured for children's safety.
2. According to the NJ Manual of Requirements, all buses transporting children to child care programs must have one aide in addition to the bus driver if there are less than 13 children and two aides for more than 13 children under age of 2 1/2.
3. Child care centers may only use approved school vehicles for trips; therefore, charter buses are not allowed to transport children under 6 years of age.

In addition to the above regulations, child care centers should also design their transportation policies to include the following:

1. Are children placed on the bus by a parent or responsible adult?
2. When arriving at the center, are children escorted off the bus by staff and brought directly to their classrooms? Are the vehicles thoroughly checked before they are left unattended?
3. How are children returned to a parent or other approved adult? Is there a sign-on and sign-off policy?

4. Are parents/guardians notified if child does not arrive at center or camp and a phone call from the parent/guardian has not been received?
  
5. If the parent or designated adult is not present when the child returns home, who makes the emergency calls? Is the bus route followed and are other children returned home while emergency contacts are made? Does the center remain open and staffed until all children are safely returned home? Does the driver return the child to the center, or are the police notified?

#### Additional Resources

State of NJ Highway Traffic Safety  
<http://www.nj.gov/oag/hts/index.html>