



Chapter 3: Health Promotion and Protection

3.1 Health Promotion in Child Care

3.1.3 Physical Activity and Limiting Screen Time

Standard 3.1.3.2: Playing Outdoors

Children should play outdoors when the conditions do not pose a safety risk, individual child health risk, or significant health risk of frostbite or of heat related illness. Caregivers/teachers must protect children from harm caused by adverse weather, ensuring that children wear appropriate clothing and/or appropriate shelter is provided for the weather conditions. Outdoor play for infants may include riding in a carriage or stroller; however, infants should be offered opportunities for gross motor play outdoors, as well.

Weather that poses a significant health risk should include wind chill factor at or below minus 15°F and heat index at or above 90°F, as identified by the National Weather Service (NWS).

Sunny weather:

- a. Children should be protected from the sun by using shade, sun-protective clothing, and sunscreen with UVB-ray and UVA-ray protection of SPF 15 or higher, with permission from parents/guardians;
- b. Children should wear sun-protective clothing, such as hats, when playing outdoors between the hours of 10 AM and 4 PM.

Warm weather:

- a. Children should be well hydrated before engaging in prolonged periods of physical activity and encouraged to drink water during periods of prolonged physical activity;
- b. Caregivers/teachers should encourage parents/guardians to have children dress in clothing that is light-colored, lightweight, and limited to one layer of absorbent material that will maximize the evaporation of sweat;
- c. On hot days, infants receiving human milk in a bottle can be given additional human milk in a bottle but should not be given water, especially in the first six months of life. Infants receiving formula and water can be given additional formula in a bottle.

Cold weather:

- a.
 1. Children should wear layers of loose-fitting, lightweight clothing. Outer garments such as coats should be tightly woven, and be at least water repellent when precipitation is present, such as rain or snow;
 2. Children should wear a hat, coat, and gloves/mittens kept snug at the wrist;
 3. Caregivers/teachers should check children's extremities for maintenance of normal color and warmth at least every fifteen minutes.

Caregivers/teachers should also be aware of environmental hazards such as contaminated water, loud noises, and lead in soil when selecting an area to play outdoors. Children should be observed closely when playing in dirt/soil, so that no soil is ingested. Play areas should be secure and away from heavy traffic areas.

RATIONALE:

Outdoor play is not only an opportunity for learning in a different environment; it also provides many health