

## Protecting Children and Staff in Daycares and Camps on Hot Weather and Poor Air Quality Days

Summer in Connecticut can mean hot weather and poor air quality. Check the daily temperature and air quality forecasts to make sure your staff and the children in your care stay healthy and safe.

**EXTREME TEMPERATURE HEALTH EFFECTS:** Extreme heat can be serious and even deadly to children, the elderly, and those with breathing problems. On days that are very hot or have poor air quality, people who are affected by these conditions should stay in an air conditioned space. Know what to look for and what to do in case of heat stroke, heat exhaustion and heat cramps:

**Heat Stroke Symptoms:** (Most serious heat-related illness - needs emergency medical treatment) hot, dry skin, shallow breathing, rapid, weak pulse, confusion, and loss of consciousness. Body temperature can be higher than 105 F°. If you see these signs, move person to a cool area and sponge with cool water. **Dial 911 and get emergency medical assistance.**

**Heat Exhaustion Symptoms:** heavy sweating, weakness, and cold, pale clammy skin with possible fainting and vomiting. If you see these signs, move person to a cool area out of sunlight and sponge with cool water and fan. Give sips of water every 15 minutes for an hour.

**Heat Cramp Symptoms:** painful spasms usually in the legs or stomach area and heavy sweating. Press firmly on cramping muscles or gently massage muscles. Give sips of water every 15 minutes for an hour.

**AIR QUALITY HEALTH EFFECTS:** High temperatures during summer months can mean poor air quality. Ground level ozone, a common air pollutant in the summer, can make it hard to breathe, leading to coughing and throat problems. It can affect breathing and be serious for people with asthma. Children and other sensitive groups with health problems may even have health effects when ozone levels are low.

### Tips to help children and staff stay healthy in summertime heat and on poor air quality days:

- Take it easy and plan activities that are relaxing. Try to stay cool inside with air conditioning and out of direct sunlight.
- Limit outdoor activities to the early morning or later evening hours, when it's cooler and the air is better.
- On days when the air quality level is forecasted to be "Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups" or "Unhealthy," take extra care to limit physical activity.
- Think about planning less physical activities when "Moderate" air quality is expected.
- Rest often in shady areas, wear sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher), wide brimmed hats, and sunglasses, dress in light-colored, loose-fitting clothing. Avoid serving hot foods and heavy meals. Drink plenty of fluids, even if not thirsty.
- Stay away from caffeine, sugary or very cold drinks. They can cause stomach cramps. Sports drinks can replace the salt and minerals lost in sweat.
- Never leave anyone in a closed, parked vehicle, even if the windows are cracked open.

### And Most of All . . . **Stay Connected!** Check your Weather and Air Quality Alerts.



Visit DEEP's web page at [ct.gov/deep/aqi](http://ct.gov/deep/aqi) or call DEEP's Air Quality hot-line at 800.249.1234.



Sign-up to get Air Quality email alerts thru [EnviroFlash](#).



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*Remember, the children in your care will experience damaging health effects from poor air quality and heat sooner than healthy adults.*

## Plan Ahead and Have a Safe & Healthy Summer!