

Child Care Cold Weather Guide

All children benefit from the fresh air and sunshine they get during daily outdoor play. During cold weather months, a child care provider should monitor weather conditions and outdoor temperatures to determine:

- The kind of clothing children need to wear
- The length of outdoor time that is appropriate for conditions and the child's age
- If stormy weather will pose a safety threat during the day

Cold Weather Wind Chill

WIND SPEED in MPH

		Calm	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40
AIR TEMPERATURE (°F)	50	50	48	40	36	32	30	28	27	26
	40	40	37	28	22	18	16	13	11	10
	30	30	27	16	9	4	0	-2	-4	-6
	20	20	16	4	-5	-10	-15	-18	-20	-21
	10	10	6	-9	-13	-25	-29	-33	-35	-37
	0	0	-5	-21	-36	-39	-44	-43	-49	-53
	-10	-10	-15	-33	-45	-53	-59	-63	-67	-60
	-20	-20	-20	-46	-58	-67	-74	-79	-82	-85

- Outdoor play is recommended when temperature/wind chill is 15 degrees F or above.
- Use caution when temperature/wind chill is between 0 to 15 degrees F.
- Outdoor play is not recommended when temperature/wind chill is 0 degrees F. or below

Cold Weather Tips

- A short walk can be beneficial even on days when it is too cold for extended outdoor play.
- Mildly ill children, who are active, may also play outdoors. If children are too sick to play outdoors, they are probably too sick to remain in child care.
- Choose play areas that are protected from the wind or have a warm shelter nearby
- Children should dress in layers for warmth and wear boots, hats and mittens.
- Scarves and hoods with strings are not recommended due to risk of strangulation
- Infants and toddlers are unable to tell the care provider when they are too cold, so it's best to schedule shorter periods of outdoor play for this age group. Be sure to monitor their skin temperature to make sure they feel warm.
- Older children can tolerate longer periods outdoors, but should be monitored to ensure that they do not remove their hat, mittens or coat while engaged in outdoor winter activities.
- Watch for areas of bare skin on areas such as wrists, ankles, ears, fingers etc., that may become exposed during activities.

Source used: "Child Care Weather Watch" produced by the Iowa Department of Public Health, Healthy Child Care Iowa. Wind-Chill and Heat Index information is from the National Weather Service. Revised 1/2014

Cold Weather Forecasting Terms

Blizzard Warning - Snow and strong winds will produce blinding snow, deep drifts and life threatening wind chills.

Temperature - The temperature of the air in degrees Fahrenheit.

Wind - The speed of the wind in miles per hour.

Wind Chill Warning - Sub-zero temperatures with moderate to strong winds expected which may cause hypothermia and danger to people, pets & livestock.

Winter Weather Advisory - Winter weather conditions are expected to cause significant inconveniences and may be hazardous. If caution is exercised, these situations should not become life threatening.

Winter Storm Warning - Severe winter conditions have begun in your area.

Winter Storm Watch - Severe winter conditions, like heavy snow and ice are possible within the next day or two.



Child Care Warm Weather Guide

All children benefit from the fresh air and sunshine they get during daily outdoor play. During warm weather months, a child care provider should monitor weather conditions and outdoor temperatures to determine:

- The kind of clothing children need to wear and if sunscreen is needed.
- The length of outdoor time that is appropriate for conditions and the child's age
- If stormy weather will pose a safety threat during the day

Warm Weather Heat Index

RELATIVE HUMIDITY by PERCENT

		15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	
AIR TEMPERATURE (°F)	105	102	109	109	113	118	123	129	135	142	149							
	100	97	99	101	104	107	110	115	120	126	132	138	144					
	95	91	93	94	96	98	101	104	107	110	114	119	124	130	136			
	90	86	87	88	90	91	93	95	96	98	100	102	108	109	113	117	122	
	85	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	93	95	97	99	102	
	80	76	77	77	78	79	79	80	81	81	82	83	85	86	86	87	88	
	75	71	72	72	73	73	74	74	75	75	76	76	77	77	78	78	79	

- Outdoor play is recommended when temperature/heat index is between 71 and 90 degrees F.
- Outdoor play is not recommended when temperature/heat index is 90 degrees F or above

Warm Weather Tips

- Offer water often during time outdoors. Avoid high sugar content beverages and soda pop.
- Choose shaded play areas when possible
- Children should dress in lightweight, cotton fabrics and wear a hat to protect them from the sun
- Apply sunscreen generously and frequently. Look for sunscreen with UVB and UVA ray protection.
- Mildly ill children, who are active, may also play outdoors. If children are too sick to play outdoors, they are probably too sick to remain in child care.
- Infants and toddlers are unable to tell the care provider when they are too hot, so it's best to schedule shorter periods of outdoor play for this age group and monitor them closely
- Older children can tolerate longer periods outdoors, but should be monitored to ensure that they do not go without sun protection

Source used: "Child Care Weather Watch" produced by the Iowa Department of Public Health, Healthy Child Care Iowa. Wind-Chill and Heat Index information is from the National Weather Service.

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Warm Weather Forecasting Terms

Heat Index Warning - How hot it feels to the body when the air temperature and relative humidity are combined.

Relative Humidity - The percent of moisture in the air.

Temperature - The temperature of the air in degrees Fahrenheit.

Wind - The speed of the wind in miles per hour.

Severe Thunderstorm or Tornado Watch - Conditions are favorable for the development of these storms

Severe Thunderstorm Warning - When a thunderstorm produces hail 3/4 of an inch or larger in diameter and/or winds equal or exceed 58 mph.

Tornado Warning - Tornado is indicated by radar or sighted by storm spotters.

Flash Flood Watch/ Warning - Very heavy rain that falls in a short time period can lead to flash flooding. A watch means there is possibility. A warning means that a flash flood is imminent or occurring.

