



Field trips provide a wide variety of learning opportunities for children, and expand the children's experiences and their understanding of the world around them. The success of any field trip depends on caregivers planning activities ahead of time.

Planning not only includes selecting the activity and destination, it also includes determining how the group will get there and how caregivers will keep children safe during the entire trip. This involves being aware of potential risks and taking preventive actions to reduce those risks, and prevent serious incidents from occurring. It is the Licensee's and/or manager's responsibility to ensure the health and safety of the children at all times.

Clear policies need to be established in order to manage risk in an effective way.

Here are a number of issues to be considered in planning a field trip:

1. Obtain a signed consent from parents for all activities away from the facility. The consent should include the date of the field trip, time of departure and return, destination, purpose of the field trip, and any special considerations, such as consideration for a child with a special medical need.
2. Notify the parents at least 24 hours in advance of any planned outing. Advise parents of the appropriate dress of the activity.
3. Update emergency cards, ensuring parents' emergency home and office numbers are correct.
4. Prescreen all unfamiliar areas where you might like to take children, to note any potential hazards and decide how to deal with potential risks. This is especially important when you have new staff that may not be familiar with the places you visit. Check regarding the availability of phones, washrooms, water and shaded rest areas, and other considerations such as wheelchair or stroller accessibility at the place of destination.
5. Consider carrying a cellular phone.
6. Make sure your first aid kit is fully stocked, including emergency cards and/or records. Ensure that emergency and non-emergency medications for children are appropriate stored, readily accessible and all staff are aware of individual care plans for the administration of medication.
7. Establish your route to and from the destination and leave a copy of the instructions behind for staff at the centre. That way, if help is needed, centre staff or the police can locate you. This is especially important when traveling in rural areas.
8. When using the vehicles of parents, volunteers, or staff for transportation of children, make sure there is appropriate insurance coverage on all vehicles, and that all drivers have valid licenses. It is also important to determine if the centre's insurance policy covers such occurrences. Ensure that safety requirements for each vehicle class (bus, van, etc.) are adhered to (such as pre-trip checks of vehicle, vehicle capacity, etc.). Consider developing a policy to ensure staff adheres to safe driving practices while on field trips, including wearing appropriate footwear and no cell phone use while driving the vehicle.
9. Have a highly visible way of identifying children in your care, such as brightly coloured caps or t-shirts for the children to wear when you take them to areas that many other people use (e.g. public swimming pools, water parks, beaches).
10. Continue to use a checklist or attendance record to keep count of the children in each group and ensure that staff know exactly which children they are responsible for.
11. Bring extra clothing, fluids, sunscreen, food, snacks, etc. as required.
12. Discuss rules for appropriate conduct with the children before the trip, and again on the day of the trip.
13. When arriving at your destination choose a well-marked area as a meeting place in case you become separated. Instruct children on what to do if they become separated from the group.
14. Be familiar with the children's abilities and personalities (e.g. how well they swim, do they respond well to directions, how long have you known them). Assign a "buddy" to each child and have them stay together at all times.
15. Weight the risk of the activity with the size of the group and the number of staff present.
16. Always maintain the minimum staff to child ratios.

Victoria
201 – 771 Vernon Avenue
Victoria, BC V8X 5A7
Ph: 250.519.3401
Fax: 250.519.3402
Website: [Community Care Facilities Licensing](#)
December 2011

Nanaimo
29 – 1925 Bowen Road
Nanaimo, BC V9S 1H1
Ph: 250.739.5800
Fax: 250.740.2675

Courtenay
355 – 11th Street
Courtenay, BC V9N 1S4
Ph: 250.331.8620
Fax: 250.331.8596

Campbell River
200 – 1100 Island Highway
Campbell River, BC V9W 8C6
Ph: 250.850.2110
Fax: 250.850.2455