# Releasing Children to Authorized and Unauthorized/Unknown Adults

Policy: Children will only be released to persons authorized by the parent. Children will be released to either parent unless a court order prohibits release to a particular parent. Children may only be released to adults authorized by parents or legal guardians whose identity has been verified by photo identification. Names and telephone numbers of persons authorized to pick up children should be obtained during the enrollment process and regularly reviewed, along with clarification/documentation of any custody issues/court orders. The legal guardian(s) of all children must be established and documented at this time.

Procedure:

In order to ensure the safety of all children, staff must adhere to the following:

* A child may only be released to a parent/guardian, or a designated person indicated on the Child Information Record.
* Staff must check and copy identification when releasing a child to someone whom they do not know, even if the child recognizes the individual. Staff must check to ensure this person’s name is on the Child Information Record. Staff must then attach a copy of the identification to the Child Information Record.
* Staff should collect child custody paperwork from parents to place in children’s files. If a custody issue arises, staff should refer parents to the child custody documentation.
* If a child alternates weeks between parents, each parent will complete a Child Information Record that will be used for his or her specific week.
* Staff will not become involved in family disagreements, such as custodial issues. Staff can be supportive and respond to a parent by saying “I can’t be involved in your family situation, but I may be able to provide you with resources that could help.”
* Unless a court order prohibits release to a particular parent, a child may be released to either parent even if he or she is not listed on the Child Information Record. Refer to the child’s birth certificate for proof of the other parent’s name. If there is no documented proof of the other parent in the child’s file, the unidentified parent must provide the needed documents. If parentage is established, staff must make a copy of the parent’s identification. Additionally, if a parent who is not listed on the Child Information Record shows up at the center, staff must call the other parent as soon as possible to notify him or her of the situation.
* If a person is demanding to take a child, and the safety of the other children and/or adults is in jeopardy, staff should release the child and call 911 with the child’s name, a description of the person taking the child, and a car license plate number if possible. Immediately after calling 911, staff must contact the parent.
* Up-to-date class lists must be maintained at all times to ensure that no child is left behind, either in the classroom or on the vehicle at the end of the route.

References: HSPPS 1302.47 (5)(iv), (7)(v), Licensing R400.8110 (7)(8)

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