

\* This handout reviews different ways to safely and effectively lift and carry children \*

#### **WHAT IS A TRANSFER?**

A transfer is the movement of a child from one location to another. Examples of transfers are moving children:

- Onto/off the floor
- In/out of a bed or crib
- In/out of a wheelchair, chair
- In/out of a bathtub
- Onto/off a toilet

#### **WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO LEARN THE CORRECT WAY TO TRANSFER A CHILD?**

Most adults between the ages of 35-55 have periods of low back injury that causes them pain and limits their function at work and at home. In most cases, the cause of this back pain is lifting or transferring a heavy object. The impact of adult low back pain is even worse when a child is totally dependent on that person's well-being.

Safe transfers protect the child from skin breakdown and falls.

#### **WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER?**

1. Keep limber and strong- try to stretch your back and hamstrings each day and exercise to keep your back, buttock, stomach and arm muscles strong.
2. Plan Ahead- Know where you're moving the child to and make sure that that area, and the path leading to it, is clear.
3. Ask for help
  - From the child (if appropriate)
  - From another caregiver
4. Lock all moving equipment (ex/ wheelchair, bed)
5. Move other objects (like wheelchair footrests) out of the way when possible

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6. Establish a Firm, Wide-Based Footing
7. Tighten Your Stomach Muscles
8. Don't Bend Over /Keep you back straight
9. Keep the child close to your body
10. Lift up with your legs while keeping your back comfortably straight
11. Don't twist your back while you lift – Pick up the child, then turn.

### **OTHER TRANSFER TIPS**

- If lifting with assistance from another adult, count to three to enable you to both lift at the same time
- When possible, use a sliding board instead of lifting the child up (Pivot and sliding board transfers can be taught to children ages 5 and up)
- When using a *sling*-(found in Hoyer and other Assistive lift devices) avoid creases or wrinkles that might cause skin irritation or breakdown
- When working in a group home or hospital setting, try not to share slings, transfer boards or cushions to decrease risk of spreading infection.

AUTHOR/CONTACT INFORMATION: Joshua Alexander, MD  
[pdrehab@med.unc.edu](mailto:pdrehab@med.unc.edu)

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