



Sunburst Community Service Foundation ~ Sunburst Mental Health  
CHILD DROP-OFF AND RELEASE PROCEDURE

**If an unauthorized person shows up and demands release of a child please do as follows:**

- Take steps to avoid criminal/civil liability by resisting demands.
- Providers should stay calm.
  - Ask for the person's name and ID
  - Explain to the person the law and facility rules prevent release to unauthorized persons
  - Explain that the only exception would be if the parent has signed a written authorization and it has been verified with the provider.
- Immediately call the custodial parent/guardian and inform him/her about the situation. If the parent denies authorization for the child to be released to this person or if you are unable to contact the parent, refuse to release the child. If the individual still demands to take the child, contact the authorities.
- If the person abducts the child by force, obtain a detailed description of the person and the vehicle, take note of the direction in which they went, and immediately call the police.
- If an unauthorized person claims to be a parent but the provider has never seen him/her before: SAME PROCEDURE AS ABOVE
  - Look through records to see if this person is named, if it is a legal parent with proper ID, provider can NOT refuse release unless there is a court order limiting that parents rights to custody.
  - Obtain additional information: where the child is being taken, phone number, vehicle type and license plate number.

**If a parent/guardian is not at home to receive a child please do as follows:**

- Provider should wait a reasonable amount of time with the child since the parent may just be running late.
- The provider should stay calm and first attempt to reach the parent/guardian.
- If unable to reach the parent/guardian, the provider should return to the Sunburst facility and try to contact other individuals "authorized" to pick up the child.
- If "authorized individual" is unavailable, and the provider cannot wait any longer, he/she can contact law enforcement or Child Protective Services to take the child into protective custody.