

## SECTION VI: TRANSPORTING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

### F. LIFTING PASSENGERS

1. The purpose of proper lifting is to move the passenger without injury to the passenger or to the person who is performing the lift; therefore, these basic rules should be followed:
  - a. Tell the passenger what you are going to do.
  - b. Estimate the weight of the passenger. Never attempt to carry a passenger alone who weighs more than half your own weight unless the passenger is in immediate danger and no assistance is available.
  - c. Always attempt to get help if you have any doubts about your ability to lift the passenger. If there is only a driver in the bus and the necessity for an emergency evacuation arises, activate the alternately flashing red lights (because this is an unloading procedure). Such action may draw attention from someone who can provide assistance.
  - d. Be sure the pathway off the bus is clear.
  - e. Stand with both feet firmly planted about shoulder-width apart for good balance.
  - f. Always bend from the knees, not from the back, so that you use thigh muscles and buttock muscles rather than back muscles to do the lifting.
  - g. When lifting and carrying, keep the person as close to your own body as possible.
  - h. Shift the position of your feet to move. Do not twist your body. Take small steps to turn.
2. Driver and attendants should practice the following lifting techniques:
  - a. **Single-person Lift**
    - 1) Follow the basic lifting rules noted above. Most strains, fatigue and back injuries caused by lifting are due to using the wrong muscles. Use your strong leg and buttock muscles (by bending at the knees and hips). Do not rely on your back muscles. Maintain the normal curves of the spine when lifting, and avoid rounding the upper back.
    - 2) Keep equal weight on both feet, and lower yourself to the level of the child by bending your knees and hips before lifting.
    - 3) Once in position, put one arm around the child's upper back and the other arm under both knees.

**b. Two-person Lift**

1) Follow the basic lifting rules noted above. Care should be taken by both parties to communicate continuously during the lifting procedure.

2) To lift from a wheelchair, these procedures are recommended:

a) Position the wheelchair as close to your destination as possible.

\*\* If a rapid evacuation of the bus is required (emergency evacuation), save time and congestion by leaving the chair where it is strapped and blanket-pull or carry the child to the appropriate exit location. See Section VI.F.4 for additional instructions on Blanket Lift.

b) One person stands to the side in front; the other stands to the rear.

c) The person in front removes the armrest (if detachable) and folds up the footrest.

d) The person in back removes or cuts the seat belt and any other positioning device(s).

e) Bending from the knees and hips, the person in front lowers himself/herself to place one arm under the child's knees and the other arm under the child's thighs.

f) The person in the rear places his/her arms under the child's armpits, reaching forward to grasp both wrists of the child firmly (right hand grasps right wrist; left hand grasps left wrist).

g) Lift together on the count of three. (Remember to use legs and buttock muscles to lift!)

h) Walk to the area where the child is to be placed, and lower on the count of three, bending from the knees and hips.

**c. Bus Seat Lift**

To lift from a bus seat, use the same procedure for lifting from a wheelchair, but first slide the child to the edge of the bus seat near the aisle.

**d. Blanket lift**

Using a blanket to perform an evacuation reduces stress on the student's body and the chance of injury. The blanket drag is also a way to move heavier students and may be an option for fragile students who might be hurt by lifting. However, the blanket drag is not always a good choice for the medically fragile; when you are in doubt, consult with the school nurse or physical therapist for guidance.

1) Use a blanket that has been approved for this purpose by the manufacturer.

- 2) Fold the blanket in half and place it on the floor as close to the child as possible.
- 3) Follow basic lifting rules noted above, and lower the child onto the blanket.
- 4) Place the child's head toward the direction of the exit.
- 5) Lift the blanket (under the child's head) and pull the child to safety.

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<sup>i</sup> Revised Date July 1, 2008.