

Think Safety!

About Safe Kids New York City

Our activities across the city include:

- **Workshops for pregnant and new parents** help young families learn how to be safe from the start
- **Car safety seat inspection stations** teach parents to correctly install car seats
- **Outreach** at programs and fairs at schools, after-school centers, camps, libraries and museums, children find out how to prevent injuries at home, at play and on the road

What's Inside:

Playground Safety	2
Car Safety	2
Get on a Bike!	3
Childproofing	3
Pool Safety	4
Partners in Safety	4
The Book Corner	4



Safe Kids New York City
NYCDOT Safety Education
59 Maiden Lane, 35 Floor
New York, NY 10038
Tel: 212.839.4752
Fax: 212.839.4783

Marjorie Marciano, MS
Coordinator
Ilona Lubman, Ph.D., Chair

Safe Kids NYC is led by
NYCDOT

Welcome to Safe Kids New York City

Dear NYC Families,

Welcome to the first edition of *Think Safety*, a newsletter created by Safe Kids New York City. Safe Kids NYC is a coalition of educators, health care professionals and child advocates that is devoted to helping you keep the children you care about healthy and free from unintentional injuries. Unintentional injuries – burns and scalds, head injury and brain damage, drowning, sprains, strains, bruises and cuts -- are a leading cause of death and hospitalization of children, but they are preventable if we are aware of the many safety tools available to us and know how to use them correctly. The articles you will read in this newsletter were written by experts in the injury prevention field – trauma coordinators from major hospitals in New York City, and health and safety educators.

We hope that you find this edition of *Think Safety*, with its practical advice for spring and summer safety, an important and effective way to reduce the incidence of unintentional injuries to your whole family as you play outside, bike, swim, do sports and have fun at home and on the road. We will be back in the fall with our Fall/Winter edition, with more handy tips for safety to keep in mind as the weather turns colder.

Enjoy your spring and summer, and think safety!

All the best,
Marjorie Marciano
Coordinator, Safe Kids NYC

Playing It Safe! Sports Injuries for Children and Teens

by Audrey Dupree-Sealey, PhD, FNP-TNCC-I
Trauma Coordinator, Kings County Hospital Center

Physical activity is a key element in keeping our children healthy, and it is especially important in combating today's increased rate of obesity. To best encourage children to be physically active, find an activity that your child enjoys and is able to do. It is also important to teach your children to follow the rules and play safe to reduce the risk of being sidelined with an injury. Young athletes, parents and coaches all need to be aware of the risks associated with a particular sport and how to prevent injury.

The most common sports played by children and teens are basketball, baseball or softball, football, soccer, gymnastics and track and field. Although each sport has its own set of risks, there are injuries common to all sports, including sprains, bruises, fractures, scrapes, dislocations and cuts. Of course, some sports injuries are inevitable, but there are many things we can do to help minimize the risks.

Prevention:

Enroll your child in organized sports through schools, community centers and recreation areas that are properly maintained to decrease injuries. The coach should be trained in first aid and CPR,

and should have a plan for emergencies. He or she should be trained in the proper use of all equipment, and should enforce rules about safe equipment use.

What can your child do to avoid getting injured?

- Encourage children to avoid playing when very tired or in pain.
- Visit the doctor for a pre-season physical exam
- Explain the importance of proper hydration and drinking enough water before, during and after the sporting event

Treatment:

Treatment for sports-related injuries varies by injury. However, if the child suffers a soft tissue injury (such as a sprain or strain) the best treatment is **RICE: Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation**. Always follow up with your doctor. Get medical treatment if the injury involves a dislocated joint, prolonged swelling, or prolonged pain. Get your children involved in sports -- have fun but play it safe!



“Free play provides children with a wonderful opportunity for self-expression and aids them to grow as a person socially, psychologically and physically. Playgrounds are a great resource for free play, fun and physical activity.”

Playground Safety

by Sally Jacko, RN, MPH
Trauma Coordinator, Bellevue Hospital Center

Free play provides children with a wonderful opportunity for self-expression and aids them to grow as a person socially, psychologically and physically. Playgrounds are a great resource for free play, fun and physical activity. But it is very important for adults to SUPERVISE and GUIDE the child's activity. Keep these facts and tips in mind while your child is playing at the playground.

PLAYGROUND INJURY FACTS

- Each year, about 200,000 children are injured on playground equipment.
- Most of the injuries are caused by falls to the ground below the equipment.
- Most injuries among children 5-15 years old are to their arms and hands.

PLAYGROUND SAFETY TIPS SUPERVISION IS IMPORTANT!!

All children need adults to help them stay safe. Children under 5 years should **NEVER** be left to play alone on the playground, and should follow these

playground rules:

- NO running or pushing others.
- Show respect to other children using the playground equipment.
- Hold handrails at all times.
- Do not walk in front of the swings.
- Slide feet first, NOT head first.
- Use equipment one person at a time. Share and take turns.

CHECK WHAT YOUR CHILD IS WEARING.

Certain types of clothing can become caught on playground equipment and cause injury.

- Avoid wearing loose fitting clothing.
- Avoid wearing clothing with drawstrings. If clothing has a drawstring, remove it.
- Tie up long hair so it does not get caught.
- Children should wear shoes at all times- sharp objects and glass can cause injury.
- Playing barefoot on the hot ground during the summer months may burn bare feet – wear shoes and socks!
- Children should remove bicycle helmets when playing on the playground.

- Children should not bring rope or wire to a playground or be allowed to play on the equipment with it.

CHECK PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT.

Be certain that your playground provides a safe play environment for your child.

- Be sure that the equipment is age appropriate for the child.
- Avoid metal slides, steps and platforms. If your child plays on them, check that they are not too hot to touch. This can burn the child.
- Playground area should have a soft deep surface of sand, pea gravel or wood chips that is at least 6 inches deep.
- Swings should not be too close together or too close to the support structure.
- Equipment should be inspected regularly.
- If the equipment or area in your park or public playground needs repair or maintenance, call 311 to report the problems.



Hot Weather and Vehicles Can Be a Deadly Combination for Kids

from *Never Leave Your Child Alone*, Safe Kids USA Buckle Up Program

A few minutes might not seem like a long time, but there are circumstances when it can mean the difference between life and death. As temperatures begin to heat up, children are at serious risk for heat stroke when left alone even for a few minutes in a closed vehicle. Last year, at least 42 children across the United States died from heatstroke caused by being left or trapped in a vehicle.

Heat is much more dangerous to children than it is to adults. When left in a hot vehicle, a young child's core body temperature may increase three to five times faster than that of an adult. This could cause permanent injury or even death.

The inside of a vehicle can rise 19 degrees above the outside temperature in just 10 minutes. After an hour, the temperature inside and outside of a vehicle can differ by 45 degrees or more — even if the window is left open a crack. According to research conducted by San Francisco State University, even with relatively cool temperatures outside — 70 degrees — the inside of a car can reach a dangerous temperature in just minutes.

Here are some tips for parents and caregivers:

- Teach children not to play in, on or around vehicles.

- Never leave a child unattended in a vehicle, even with the window slightly open.
- Always lock a vehicle's doors and trunk — especially at home. Keep keys and remote entry devices out of children's reach.
- Place something that you'll need at your next stop --- such as a purse, a lunch, gym bag or briefcase — on the floor of the backseat where the child is sitting. This simple act could help prevent you from accidentally forgetting a child.

Get on a Bike!

by Michelle Kaucic, MPA
Community Coordinator, NYCDOT Safety Education Division

Biking is fun not just for children but for the whole family. It's also great for your health and better for the environment than motor vehicles. Biking also comes with big responsibilities. Consider these important tips for staying safe on wheels:

Protect your head!

Always wear a properly fitted helmet when you're on a bike. Helmets should be CPSC certified. By law, cyclists age 13 and younger must wear an approved helmet. Parents can encourage this good

habit by wearing helmets themselves and allowing children to pick out their own helmet. Helmets are proven to be 85% effective in preventing brain injury, the leading cause of death and disabling injury from cycling crashes.

See and be seen!

Wear white or bright colors, and retro-reflective materials. Be sure your bike has reflectors and a white front light for driving at dusk or dark. A flashing red light on the rear of the bike or on a backpack or helmet will increase your visibility to others.

Drive with care!

When you're on a bike, consider yourself the driver of a vehicle. Your responsibilities are the same as all vehicle operators. Bike drivers age 12 and younger may drive on the sidewalk, while older children and adults must use streets. Always cycle with the flow of traffic, in a bike lane when available. All bicyclists must be aware of motorists and pedestrians.



Ready to go!

Childproofing 101: How to Create a Baby-Safe Home Environment

by Kimberlee Mitchell, CPST (Child Passenger Safety Technician)
Child Safety Expert & Professional Child Proofer, Safety 1st Squad

Parents-to-be often find it difficult to strike a balance between overwhelming joy and a panic of confusion and self-doubt. There are a million and one things to prepare for and think about and our children's safety should be one of them. According to Safe Kids Worldwide, preventable injury is the number one killer of America's children. However, by taking simple baby proofing precautions, it is estimated that 90 percent of accidental injuries can be avoided.

As you prepare for your little bundle of joy, keep these tips in mind to ensure you are doing all you can to keep your child safe.

Get Ahead of the Curve: Childproof Early

It is best to cross childproofing off the list while still pregnant, because before you know it, your child will be mobile! The average baby begins to crawl at about six months, at which point the job of parenting becomes more exciting, as well as terrifying, because your child no longer stays where you put him or her. Your little one's curiosity can propel him or her into harm's way time and time again and it is your job to be one step ahead -- paving the way for safety.

Lengthen the Life of Your Childproofing

Given enough time alone with child safety devices, little ones can learn to figure out how to use them.

Babies who aren't even walking yet can turn levered door handles --- after all, they're been watching you for months. So after childproofing your home, it's a good idea to operate all child safety devices *with your back to your child* to lengthen the life of your childproofing.

Get Gate-Savvy

Babies aren't just mobile when they begin to walk; they also crawl their way into areas they should stay away from. Secure your house with gates for stairs, doorways, irregular/custom areas, fireplaces and windows. Also consider having some "Off Limits" rooms. Keep the doors to certain parts of the home, like the garage, laundry room or older sibling's room secured with door locks.

Bathroom Basics

The most crucial piece of advice is: Don't leave your child alone in here, even for a second. Bathrooms are chock-full of harmful substances and babies can drown in just a few inches of water. Important baby-proofing products for the bathroom include latches for the medicine cabinet, a toilet lock and a thermometer to ensure baby's bath water is a safe temperature.

A few simple steps can keep your baby safe. Be sure you know what and where the risks are in your home. Take the necessary steps to stay ahead of your baby as he or she begins to explore the world.

Safety In and Around the Pool

by Christopher Sorrentino, RN, BSN, MS
Trauma Coordinator, Richmond University Medical Center

“When children under age 5 are in the swimming pool, an adult should ALWAYS be within arm’s length.”

The Book Corner

by Louise Lareau
Supervising Librarian,
Chatham Square Library

As the days get longer, make sure to get outdoors and enjoy the warm weather, but take time for reading, too.

Here are a few titles for families and friends to share. Have fun and stay safe.

Carlson, Nancy L. *Get Up and Go!* Viking, 2006.

Cooper, Elisha. *A Good Night Walk.* Orchard Books, 2005.

Johnson, D.B. *Henry Hikes To Fitchburg.* Houghton Mifflin, 2000.

London, Jonathan. *Let’s Go, Froggy!* Viking, 1994.

Merz, Jennifer J. *Playground Day!* Clarion Books, 2007.



It has been a long, hard winter, and if you’re like me, you can’t wait for the temperature to get hot enough for a swim! Let’s take the opportunity now to get ready for a safe summer around the pool – whether we swim in a pool at home, a friend’s home, at camp or at a club or resort.

According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, about 260 children under the age of 5 drown each year in swimming pools. Despite the fun we have at pools, they can be very dangerous for children. There are many helpful tips that you can take to protect children from this very preventable occurrence. These tips include:

- NEVER leave a child unattended near a swimming pool.
- NEVER assume that a child that can swim or is “drown-proof.”
- NEVER substitute a floating device for adult

supervision.

- When children under age 5 are in the swimming pool, an adult should ALWAYS be within arm’s length.
- If a child is missing, ALWAYS check the pool first. Every second counts!

Most children who drown in backyard pools wander out of the house and fall into the pool. Install a fence that is at least four feet high around the pool on all sides. Self latching gates should be installed at entrances of the pool, out of reach for children.

Check with your local buildings department for specific codes on decks and fences surrounding your pool. Keep rescue equipment, such as a shepherd’s hook, life vest

and telephone, close by and easily accessible.

Remove all toys from the swimming pool after use so that children will not be tempted to reach for them. After children are finished swimming, secure the area around the pool so that children cannot get back in. For above-ground pools, remove or secure steps and ladders to the pool when not in use.

Some other pool safety reminders: Never use a pool with a missing or broken drain cover, have a professional regularly inspect the pool for hazards or entrapments, and clearly mark the cutoff switch for the pool (or spa) pump.

Let’s spring into summer and into the pool feeling confident that our kids — our greatest treasures — are protected and safe.

Partners for Better Health and Safety

by Claribel Blake, MPH
Director of Health Education & Community Outreach, Health Plus

Since 2007, Health Plus, a government-sponsored health insurance plan covering over 300,000 New Yorkers, has forged a successful partnership with the Safe Kids Coalition. Health Plus, the NYCDOT and Safe Kids have provided over 1,000 free bike helmets to children and adults in underserved communities.

Health Plus has also

partnered with Safe Kids, NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene & NYCDOT to present “Safety from the Start” Safety Showers citywide at Health Plus offices and health centers. The presentations are conducted in English, Spanish and Chinese. Safety Shower events have reached over 300 participants, who received free car seats, and information on poison prevention, traffic safety and home safety.



New moms receive car seats at a safety shower in Sunset Park, Brooklyn.