



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

May 23, 2025

CONTACT:

MediaInquiry@acs.nyc.gov

AHEAD OF MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND, THE ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES OFFERS 'PLAY IT SAFE' TIPS FOR FAMILIES

ACS Tips Help Families Protect Against All-Too-Common Injuries to Children at the Playground, at the Beach, Barbeques and More

NEW YORK, NY –The NYC Administration for Children's Services (ACS) today released tips to help parents and caregivers keep children safe through the warmer months. Summer months are filled with fun, festive activities like trips to the beach, the playground, pool parties, barbeques and more. The safety tips listed below are focused on five important topics: bicycle and scooter safety, water and pool safety, window guard safety and the dangers of leaving children unattended in hot cars. The tips will be posted throughout the summer on social media and the public webpage: www.nyc.gov/summersafetykids

"We want our littlest New Yorkers to have fun this summer but, most importantly, we want them to be safe and that's why we're reminding families how to 'play it safe,'" **said ACS Commissioner Jess Dannhauser**. "By visiting our website or by following ACS on social media, families have easy access to tips to protect against all-too-common injuries to children. Families can keep their children safe by ensuring they are supervised at all times at the playground and near water – whether at the pool, the beach, or in a bath. Caregivers can also protect children by ensuring that they wear safety equipment on bikes and scooters, that window guards are installed properly in their homes to prevent falls, and by never leaving a child unattended in a car – especially a hot car. By following these important tips, New Yorkers can facilitate their children's play and development while keeping them safe this summer!"

In 2021, ACS created the Office of Child Safety and Injury Prevention (OCSIP) to expand the agency's existing efforts to reduce the risk of unintentional child injuries and fatalities. ACS has ongoing child safety campaigns, including those related to infant safe sleep practices and safe storage of prescription medications and more.

Below are ACS's summer safety tips:

Bicycle and Scooter Safety

Walking and bicycling are great ways for children and parents to get exercise and see the sights. Help set kids up for safe walking and riding. Make sure they have all the right equipment in place and follow these tips:

- Be role models for safe walking. Teach children to cross the street at crosswalks or at the corner, follow pedestrian and traffic signals, look both ways and keep scanning for potential hazards, and listen for car and truck engines.
- When cycling, you and your child should always wear a properly fitted helmet. Make sure the helmet is snug fitting, not tipped backward or forward and adjust the straps so they form a “V” shape under and slightly in front of the ears.
- Make sure the bicycle is adjusted to fit the child’s size. Ensure that the seat height is adjusted to allow for a slight bend at the knee when the leg is fully extended, the handlebar height is at the same level as the seat, and the tires have enough air and the right amount of pressure.

Water and Pool Safety

Use these tips for water safety whether your kids are in bathtubs, pools, or around buckets:

- Watch kids when they are in or around water without being distracted. Young children can drown in as little as an inch of water, so it's important to keep them within an arm's reach of an adult.
- Empty tubs, buckets, containers, and kids' pools immediately after use. Store them upside down and out of children's reach.
- Close lids and doors. Keep toilet lids and doors to bathrooms and laundry rooms closed when not in use.
- Install fences around home pools. A pool fence should surround all sides of the pool and be at least four feet tall with self-closing and self-latching gates.
- Stay close and be alert!
- Learn CPR and basic water rescue skills. It is important to know how to respond in an emergency without putting yourself at risk.
- NYC Parks offers Learn to Swim classes. Additional Water safety tips can be found here.

Playground Safety

Playing in playgrounds is great for your child's physical, social, and thinking development. By staying close to your child, especially when they're trying something new or complicated, you can help keep playground visits safe and give your child the confidence to develop movement skills. Playground safety is about supervising children and checking whether the equipment is safe for them. Tips include:

- Look for a playground with a fence around it. This will help to stop young children from running onto nearby streets. It also makes it much easier if you're looking after several children at once.

- Look for a safe ground surface in your playground. The equipment should be set in a thick layer of material like organic mulch or soft rubber flooring, which will cushion falls. Check that equipment is well maintained, look for safe ground surfaces, and make sure that metal equipment isn't too hot to play on.
- Check that the equipment is in good condition and the general environment has no obvious safety hazards, like sharp sticks.
- Buckle your child into swings if buckles are available. Your child will be less likely to fall out.
- Check the temperature of playground equipment like metal slides, poles, barriers, and surfaces. Materials like metal, rubber, and artificial turf can heat up in the sun and become hot enough to burn.
- Gradually introduce children to activities on monkey bars, climbing frames, swings, and slides so they can build skills and confidence.

Window Guards

Many families may want to open their windows to let the fresh air in as the weather gets warmer, but open windows can pose a serious risk to curious children. Toddlers and preschool-aged children have the highest likelihood of falling from a window and getting seriously hurt, with many suffering serious and sometimes fatal head injuries.

Securely installed window guards save lives. In New York City, owners of buildings with three or more residential units are required to install approved window guards or limiting devices — which prevent windows from opening more than four-and-a-half inches — in any apartment where a child 10-years-old or younger lives. Approved window guards must be properly installed in all windows that are not emergency exits. In windows with air conditions, building owners should permanently install window AC units using one-way tamper-resistant screws in apartments where a child aged 10 or younger lives. Call 311 – if your building owner has not done this.

Other prevention tips:

- Window screens are meant to keep bugs out, not children in. A window screen is not considered a sufficient safety device because it is not designed to prevent a fall and will break easily under the weight of a child.
- Properly install window guards to prevent window falls.
- Keep chairs, cribs, and other furniture away from windows to avoid a potentially dangerous climb for small children.

Hot Cars

Many of these incidents involve a parent or caregiver forgetting a child was in the vehicle or a child playing unattended in a vehicle. Parents and caregivers can act immediately to prevent child deaths in hot cars by never leaving a child unattended in a vehicle, not even for a minute! Even with the windows rolled down or the air conditioning on, a child's body temperature can rise three to five times faster than an adult's. If you see a child unattended in a vehicle, call 911.

Park-Look-Lock Tips:

- Make sure all occupants leave the vehicle when unloading. Don't overlook sleeping babies!
- Always lock your car and keep car keys and fobs out of reach of children at all times. Teach children that cars are never to be used as a play area.
- Keep a stuffed animal in the car seat and when the child is put in the seat, place the animal in the front with the driver. Or place your purse, briefcase, or cell phone in the back seat as a reminder that you have your child in the car.
- Make Look Before You Lock a routine whenever you get out of the car.
- Have a plan that your childcare provider will call you if your child does not show up for school.

###