

KIDS' korner

GOOD STUFF for the kids & grandkids

Fun & Safe in the Sun—*Summer Safety Tips*

You want the kids to be active and have fun, but there are potential hazards, so keep them safe to enjoy these days of freedom and outdoor activities.

Sun safety

The sun can quickly burn tender skin. Most children get 20-80 percent of lifetime exposure to the sun before they turn 18! Always make sure your kids are wearing sunscreen before they head outdoors, and reapply every two hours. Sweat and water will wash the protection away! Infants should be kept out of direct sunlight and wear sun-protective clothing. Teach toddlers and older kids to grab a hat with a brim for additional protection.

Hydration

Make sure kids drink plenty of water on hot summer days. Dizziness and nausea are just two of the signs of overheating, which can lead to heat exhaustion. Sugary drinks and carbonated beverages containing caffeine can actually accelerate dehydration.

Never leave an infant or child unattended in a car. This rule is more critical than ever in hot months when the temperature inside a vehicle can soar to above 100 degrees in a matter of minutes. That heat is deadly.

Bike safety

Kids have bike-related injuries every year, but these accidents can be avoided or minimized with some precautions. Your child should always wear a helmet when riding. This protective gear reduces the risk of head injury by as much as 85 percent.

Explain rules for safe play — riding only on the sidewalk or designated bike path, no riding near cars and no side-trips that put them in danger from traffic or natural hazards.



Water safety

Enroll kids in swim lessons taught by a certified instructor. Always have children wear proper-fitting life vests in a boat or near deep water. Take precautions if you have a home pool. Children need constant supervision around water.

Boundaries

Children relish the freedom of summer, but set some boundaries. Have them play within sight and sound of home, or by arrangement at a friend's where there will be adult supervision. Until they reach a certain age and maturity, kids should not go to the park or other places alone. Parents must always know exactly where their children are and whom they are with.

Untouchables

Kids are naturally curious so keep household, yard and garage dangers stored away. Weed killers and yard chemicals, radiator coolant and other solvents are poisonous to children and pets. Keep them out of sight and out of reach.

Fenced in

If possible, provide a safe play area for your children that's fenced in and in sight from the house. Ideally this space will have room for them to run and play, be cleared of items that are hazards (lawnmowers, sharp gardening implements, etc.) and have a shaded area so kids can get out of the hot sun.



Quick tip

Even a small wading pool can pose a danger to toddlers. Never allow small children in the water without an adult to supervise! Since water reflects sunlight, be sure the kids are protected with sunscreen and not exposed to direct sun for too long before it is reapplied. ■