

Summer Safety Tips for Parents and Kids

When the summer months arrive, it is important for parents to be aware of outdoor safety issues with kids. There are several tips pediatricians nationwide recommend parents take to keep younger family members safe.

Insect Safety

- Avoid using perfumes, hair spray or soaps with scent on children.
- Do not dress children in flowery or bright prints and colors.
- Avoid stagnant water or areas where insects congregate.
- When removing stingers, back them out carefully by scraping backward.
- Use insect repellent with DEET in areas where there are ticks.
- Avoid using products that combine insect repellent and sunscreen.
- Do not use insect repellent with DEET on babies under the age of two months.
- Make sure children wash off insect repellent upon returning indoors.
- Read the labels carefully of any insect repellent purchased.
- Parents who do not want to use DEET products can look for repellent with picardin.

Fireworks Safety

- Sparklers and fireworks commonly considered safe can reach high temperatures.
- Fireworks can cause burns that disfigure children for the rest of their lives.
- Families should attend public fireworks displays instead of using home products.

Playground Safety

- There should be sand, wood chips or other soft material nine inches deep around equipment.
- All swing seats should be made of soft material.
- S-shaped hooks and other protruding pieces should be covered.
- Equipment should be well maintained.
- Do not allow children to attach ropes to play equipment.
- Ensure kids cannot reach any parts that will trap or pinch body parts.
- Children should not wear jewelry or anything around their necks.
- Do not let children play barefoot on the playground.
- Make sure slides are cool to prevent leg burns.
- Parents should not purchase trampolines due to the injury risks.
- Keep in mind that rubber, metal and dark objects become very hot in the sun.
- Parent should always supervise kids on playground equipment.

Bicycle Safety

- Do not encourage kids to ride two-wheeled bicycles until they are ready.
- Until the child's coordination is good, stick with foot brakes for bicycles.
- Since over-sized bicycles are dangerous, pick one that is exactly the right size.
- When shopping for a bike, take the child along so he or she can try it out.
- Helmets should always be worn no matter where a child is riding on a bike.
- Helmets should cover the forehead and sit level on the child's head.
- Look for a CPSC safety sticker when choosing a quality helmet.
- Fasten the helmet tight enough that two fingers fit between the chin and strap.

Rollerblade And Skateboard Safety

- Helmets, knee pads and elbow pads are important safety gear to wear.
- Any helmets chosen should meet ASTM standards.
- Tell kids to only ride too fast and only at speeds they are comfortable riding at.
- Make sure kids know how to avoid potholes and uneven sidewalk.
- Tell children to try to fall on grass or other soft surfaces if they must.
- Allow children to only skate on designated rinks or paths and never in the street.
- Encourage the community to develop skateboard parks if there are not any.
- Do not let children skate alone.
- Do not allow children to ride skateboards or rollerblades near moving traffic.

ATV Safety

- If children are too young for a driving license, they should not operate an ATV.
- Avoid double riding on an ATV with children.
- Any children riding an ATV should wear eye protection, a helmet and sturdy shoes.
- ATV riders should take safety courses before riding.
- Dress children in reflective clothing when riding an ATV.
- ATVs are especially dangerous for kids under the age of 16.
- Use lights, reflectors and flags to improve ATV visibility to others.
- Helmets are especially important, so choose ones that are designed for motorcycles.
- Avoid driving an ATV on paved roads or anywhere at night.
- Parents should not drive ATVs while drinking or taking some prescriptions.

Lawnmower Safety

- Use mowers with control stops for the blade if the handle is released.
- Make sure kids wear sturdy shoes around mowers.
- Do not let children younger than 16 use riding mowers.
- Children under the age of 12 should not use push mowers.

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