

Safety Tips:

Preteens (11-12 Years)



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Childhood Injury Prevention

Safety In and Around Cars

- Millionaires and celebrities pay lots of money to sit in the back seat and be driven around. Take advantage of the law and pretend to be a celebrity: sit in the back seat until you are at least 13.
- A booster seat could save your life. You should remain in a booster seat until:
 - You can bend your knees at the edge of the seat when your back and bottom are against the vehicle seat back
 - The vehicle lap belt fits across your upper thighs
 - The shoulder belt fits across your shoulder and chest
- Always ride with experienced drivers you trust and never get in the car with someone who has been drinking or doing drugs. If you do not feel comfortable, do not get in the car.

Bike and Skate Safety

- You should be able to ride your new bike right out of the store. Make sure to buy a bike that is the right size for you, not one you will grow into.
- Buy a helmet that fits and that you like. Wear it every time you ride your bike, skateboard, scooter, etc. Looking dorky is way better than going to the emergency room.
- Only bike/skate on bike paths or areas set aside in public parks. Ride on smooth, dry surfaces where there is plenty of light to see.
- Before you ride, make sure the reflectors on your bike are secure, brakes work properly, gears shift smoothly, and tires are tightly secured and properly inflated.

Sport Safety

- Make sure you have a pre-participation physical exam (PPE) before playing in organized sports.
- Drink water before, during, and after athletic activities.
- Always warm up and stretch before playing to keep from getting injured.
- If you are in pain, tell someone. It is better to take care of an injury early rather than end up with a more serious or permanent injury.
- You should take 10 weeks in a row off for rest from any one sport every year to allow your body to recover.
- Always wear proper protective sports gear like helmets, mouth guards, pads, shin guards, etc. No matter how uncomfortable they may feel, it is more comfortable than breaking your shin, losing your tooth, or getting a concussion.

Traffic Precautions

- Make sure to look left, right, and then left again before crossing the street and to only cross at corners using traffic signals and crosswalks.
- Do not ever run out into the street or cross between parked cars.
- Make eye contact with drivers before crossing their path and watch for cars that are backing up or turning.
- Walk on sidewalks or paths whenever possible. If there is no safer place to walk, walk facing traffic as far to the left as possible.
- If you need to use your cell phone, stop walking and find a safe place away from the street .
- Do you want to learn more and become an advocate for safety on the way to school? Visit <http://saferoutespartnership.org/> for resources.

Preventing Burns

- More than 600 children die every year from fires or burn injuries. Matches and lighters can be important tools, but they can be very dangerous. Fireworks can be fun to watch, but they are also deadly. Do not ever play with matches, lighter, or fireworks or use them inappropriately.
- Microwaves are meant to heat up food, tea, coffee, and maybe a heat pack, but never anything wrapped in tin foil. Ask for help if you are unsure how to use a kitchen appliance properly.
- Do not leave the kitchen while using the stove or oven.
- Use oven mitts or potholders to remove hot food or pans from the oven or stove.
- Hanging with your friends outside can be a blast, but a painful, humiliating sun burn can ruin the day. Apply sunscreen before going outside and reapply every two hours and after swimming.

Water Safety

- Make sure your home pool has a proper drain cover or shut-off function to prevent body parts, clothing, or hair from getting trapped.
- No matter how good a swimmer you are, you can never anticipate a big wave, an allergic reaction to a bee sting, or a natural disaster. Always swim with a partner whether you are in a home pool, the ocean, or a lake.



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