

# Making safe simple At play

## Wheeled-sport safety

Each year more than 175,000 children are treated in emergency departments for skating, non-motorized scooter, and skateboarding injuries. Thankfully, proper use of the appropriate helmet can reduce the risk of head injury by as much as 85 percent. It is estimated that as many as 75 percent of bicycle-related fatalities among children could be prevented with a bicycle helmet. Prevention is not difficult. It does require your attention and some effort.

### Helmet Tips

- ✦ Make it a rule – wear a helmet every time you ride bike, skateboard, ride a scooter, or in-line skate.
- ✦ Always wear the appropriate helmet for the activity. A multi-sport helmet is a good option for children who bike, skateboard, in-line skate, and ride non-motorized scooters.
- ✦ Helmets should be worn every time and everywhere when participating in wheeled sports.
- ✦ To provide proper protection, a helmet should sit level on the head, not tilted back at an angle. Make sure the helmet fits snugly, and the chinstrap is buckled.

### Rules of the Road

- ✦ Ride on the right side of the road, with traffic, not against.
- ✦ Use appropriate hand signals.
- ✦ Obey traffic signals, stop at all stop signs and stop lights.
- ✦ Stop, look left, right, left again before entering a street or crossing an intersection.

### Other Safety Tips

- ✦ Children should not ride when it's dark outside.
- ✦ Wear clothes and accessories that have reflective materials to make sure you are seen.
- ✦ Ensure proper bike fit. When seated on the bike, the child's feet should be able to touch the ground.
- ✦ Make sure equipment is properly maintained and in working condition.
- ✦ Always model and teach safe behavior.



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## ATV Safety

### ATV Injury Facts

- ✳ Children under 16 years old operating a full-size ATV are four times more likely to experience an injury requiring an emergency department visit.
- ✳ ATV injuries commonly occur from rollover crashes, collisions with stationary objects and falling off the ATV.
- ✳ The majority of fatalities result from injuries to the head and neck.
- ✳ Non-fatal injuries commonly include broken bones and head injuries.

### Always wear a helmet with eye protection and other protective clothing including:

- ✳ Long sleeve shirt
- ✳ Long pants
- ✳ Ankle boots
- ✳ Gloves

### Keys to ATV Safety

- ✳ Choose the ATV that is the right size for the operator's age.
- ✳ Always follow the ATV manufacturer's minimum age requirements warning labels.

### Reduce the risk of ATV injury to children.

- ✳ Be aware of and enforce manufacturer's warning labels including:
  - Minimum age requirements
  - Single rider
- ✳ Never allow anyone under 16 years old to operate a full size ATV.
- ✳ Always supervise children under 16 years old on ATVs.
- ✳ Operate ATVs on only trails and at an appropriate speed.
- ✳ Be a good example - always demonstrate safe riding behavior and always wear proper protective equipment and clothing.

### Every rider should take a hands-on rider safety course.

To find a rider safety course near you, visit:

- ✳ Minnesota Department of Natural Resources: [www.dnr.state.mn.us](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us)
- ✳ ATV Safety Institute: [www.atvsafety.org](http://www.atvsafety.org)



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For more injury prevention tips, visit [www.childrensMN.org/makingsafesimple](http://www.childrensMN.org/makingsafesimple)

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## Fall Prevention

More than two million emergency department visits a year are related to childhood falls. Thankfully, many falls can be prevented. Prevention is not difficult. It does require your attention and some effort. Supervision is the most important thing you can do to prevent childhood injuries.

### Prevention tips

#### General

- ✦ Never leave babies unsupervised on any piece of furniture including changing tables, beds, and sofas.
- ✦ Use safety straps and other safety features on high chairs, shopping carts, and changing tables.
- ✦ Use safety covers or install padding on sharp corners.
- ✦ Use stationary “walkers” instead of wheeled walkers.
- ✦ Be sure televisions and other heavy furniture are stable and secure to prevent tipping.
- ✦ Use safety gates to keep young children away from stairs.
- ✦ Don't place toys or items that attract children on top of furniture.
- ✦ Make sure stairs are clear of toys and other objects.

#### Windows

- ✦ Install window guards on all windows above the first floor.
- ✦ Keep the area around windows free of furniture or other things that children could climb on to reach open windows.
- ✦ Do not rely on window screens to keep children from falling out.

#### Playgrounds

- ✦ Always supervise children at playgrounds.
- ✦ Make sure playground equipment is age appropriate. Since 1994, manufacturers are required to have a sticker placed on each piece of equipment indicating the appropriate age group for which it was designed.
- ✦ Be sure surfaces under playground equipment are soft enough to absorb falls.
- ✦ Make sure equipment is specifically designed for playground use.



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# Making safe simple At home

## Household Safety

Did you know that injuries are a leading cause of death in children? Each year 5,000 children die and another six million are hurt as a result of unintentional injuries. One in four children is hurt seriously enough to need medical attention. Most childhood injuries occur at home and many of these injuries could be prevented.

### Falls

- ★ Never leave babies unsupervised on any piece of furniture including changing tables, beds, and sofas.
- ★ Use safety straps and other safety features on high chairs, shopping carts, and changing tables.
- ★ Use safety covers or install padding on sharp corners.
- ★ Install window guards on all windows above the first floor.
- ★ Do not rely on window screens to keep children from falling out.

### Poisoning

- ★ Review the poison prevention home checklist from the Minnesota Regional Poison Center at [www.mnpoison.org](http://www.mnpoison.org).
- ★ Keep all potential poisons up high and out of the reach of children—preferably in a locked storage container.
- ★ Keep medications and vitamins out of the reach of children.
- ★ Keep products in original containers. Do not use food storage containers to store poisonous substances (i.e. plant food in a drink bottle).
- ★ Identify all household plants to determine if poisonous.
- ★ Post the Poison Center phone number, **800-222-1222**, near each phone in the home.

### Burns

- ★ Install smoke alarms on every level of your home.
- ★ Set your water heater to 120 degrees.
- ★ Keep electrical cords out of reach.
- ★ Cover any unused outlets.
- ★ Install barriers around fireplaces and furnaces.
- ★ Always supervise young children in the kitchen and around electrical appliances and outlets.

### Choking, Suffocation, and Strangulation

- ★ Keep small objects out of reach of young children.
- ★ Do not let children under age 3 eat small, round, or hard foods including hot dogs, hard candy, nuts, or whole grapes.
- ★ Buy only age appropriate toys for your toddler.
- ★ Do not allow infants or toddlers to sleep on sofas, chairs, regular beds or other soft surfaces.
- ★ Never allow young children to play in poorly ventilated spaces such as laundry machines, car trunks, or toy chests.
- ★ Tie up all window blinds and drapery cords to keep them out of reach.

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# Car Seat Safety

Motor vehicle crashes are a leading cause of death to children. According to Safe Kids USA, an estimated 2,446 children ages 14 years and under die in motor vehicle crashes each year. Thankfully, there are many things you can do to reduce the risk of injury in a car crash – one of them is as easy as being a good example. Always use your seat belt.

## Rear-facing Car Seat tips

- ★ Rear-facing child seats should be used for infants as long as possible – up to the height or weight limit specified by the seat manufacturer. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends children ride rear-facing until at least two years old. Be sure to check your specific seat for height and weight limits.
- ★ Read the car seat and vehicle owners' manuals to ensure the seat is installed properly.
- ★ Position the harness straps so they are at or below the child's shoulders.
- ★ Make sure the harness straps are buckled, properly positioned, and snug.
- ★ Make sure the chest clip is at armpit level.
- ★ If installed properly, the car seat should not move more than one inch in any direction.
- ★ Never put a rear-facing car seat in front of an active airbag.
- ★ Children are always safest in the back seat.

## Forward-facing Car Seat Tips

- ★ Forward-facing car seats should be used once a child has reached the maximum weight or height limit of a rear-facing seat.
- ★ Use a forward-facing car seat with a harness until the child reaches the height or weight limits specified by the seat's manufacturer before transitioning into a booster seat.
- ★ Read the car seat and vehicle owners' manuals to ensure the seat is installed properly.
- ★ Position harness straps so they are at or above the child's shoulders.
- ★ Some convertible seats require the use of top slots when the seat is forward-facing; be sure to read the car seat manual carefully.
- ★ Make sure the harness straps are buckled, properly positioned, and snug.
- ★ Make sure the chest clip is at armpit level.
- ★ If installed properly, the car seat should not move more than one inch in any direction.

## Booster Seat Tips

- ★ Booster seats should be used for children once they have outgrown the forward-facing car seat.
- ★ Use a belt positioning booster seat until the child reaches a height of 4 feet 9 inches and is between 8 and 12 years of age.
- ★ Use a booster seat with the vehicle lap AND shoulder belt. Be sure the seat belt is properly buckled.
- ★ Never place the shoulder belt under the child's arm or behind the child's back.
- ★ Use a booster seat correctly in a back seat every time your child rides in a vehicle.
- ★ Children should ride in the back seat away from airbags until they are 13 years old.

  
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