



for Parents

NO. 6 • SPRING 2001

A PROGRAM OF CONNECTICUT CHILDREN'S MEDICAL CENTER

PROTECTING YOUR CHILD

Preventing a fall

Did you know that falls are the leading cause of injury among children? They can fall from windows, down stairs, off furniture, and from bikes and outdoor play equipment.

A child can fall in a second, but the effects of the injury can last a lifetime.

Every year, 2.5 million children are treated in emergency rooms for fall-related injuries. More than 100 children 14 years old and under die, and more than half of these are 4 years old and under. These injuries often occur inside the home – where parents tend to think their child is the safest – as well as outdoors while at play.

With proper supervision and the use of simple safety devices such as safety gates and window guards in the home, and bike helmets and other protective gear while kids are playing outdoors, parents can protect their children from unnecessary harm and injury. ■



We're honored!

This newsletter, generously funded by the Elks of Connecticut, recently won an award at the annual Leadership Conference of the National SAFE KIDS Campaign. The trophy is inscribed: "Best Targeted Education Publication, Connecticut SAFE KIDS Coalition, Parents Quarterly Newsletter, Presented on January 29, 2001."

PREVENTING FALLS AT PLAY

Playgrounds provide children a place to develop motor, cognitive, perceptual and social skills. Unfortunately, playgrounds are often the site of fall-related injuries.

Connecticut SAFE KIDS suggests following these tips to help ensure that your children are playing safely in your neighborhood:

- **Familiarize yourself with neighborhood play areas.** Inspect playgrounds for rusted or broken equipment and dangerous surfaces such as concrete or asphalt. Supervise children while on play equipment.
- **Report any playground safety hazards** to the organization responsible for the site (e.g., school, park authority, city council).
- **Ensure that children use age-appropriate playground equipment.** Maintain separate play areas for children under age 5.
- **Remove hood and neck drawstrings** from all children's outerwear. Never allow children to wear necklaces, purses, scarves or clothing with drawstrings while on playgrounds.
- **Warn children about unacceptable play areas** such as garages, construction sites, abandoned buildings, railroad tracks, dumpsters and waterfronts. These areas should be strictly off-limits. ■



4 Steps For Kids

Protect your kids by taking each step as they grow and have their seats inspected.

The Four Steps of Child Passenger Safety:



Step 1

Rear-Facing Child Seats for children from birth to at least 20 pounds **and** at least one year of age.

Step 2

Forward-Facing Child Seats for children over 20 pounds and at least one year old to about 40 pounds and about age four.



Seat belts can seriously injure or kill small children who are not properly placed in child safety seats, so...



Step 3

Belt-Positioning Booster Seats for children from about 40 pounds to about 80 pounds and 4' 9".

Step 4

Seat Belts for older children large enough for the belt to fit correctly: at least 4' 9" tall and about 80 pounds.



Did you know that at least four out of five children in safety seats are improperly restrained? Have your child safety seats inspected by a certified child passenger safety technician.

To find an inspection location or a certified child passenger safety technician near you, visit www.ctsafekids.org

and click on the "Car Seat Information" link. Or call

(860) 594-2173

for a recorded listing of car seat check-up locations.



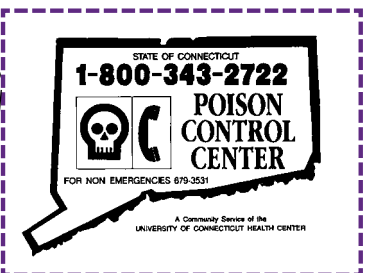
Watch out for poison risks

Commonly used products such as **cosmetics**, **detergents** and **medicines** can be fatal to young children. Even innocent-looking items like household **plants** and **vitamin supplements** can poison a child in less than a minute.

Children ages 5 and under – with their curiosity and natural urge to put everything into their mouths – are particularly vulnerable to poisonings.

Connecticut SAFE KIDS offers the following prevention tips:

- **Keep poisonous products locked and out of reach.**
- **Keep products in original containers**, never put in any container where they could be mistaken for something harmless.
- **Know where you kids are when you're using poisonous household products.** Many poisonings occur while adults are using a household product like a bathroom cleaner or bleach.
- **Never refer to medicine or vitamins as candy.**
- **Flush old medicines and other potential poisons down the toilet.**
- **Be prepared for emergencies.** Keep the phone numbers of the poison control center, physician and emergency medical service next to each telephone. Always keep a bottle of ipecac syrup on hand (one per child), but use it **ONLY** on the advice of a poison control center, emergency medical service personnel or physician. ■



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