

# Summer Safety Tips

Whether your kids are home for summer, on the road with you or away at camp, use these tips to keep your family safe and healthy.

## Fun in the Sun

- Protect your child from too much sun. The sun's rays are strongest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., so be extra careful during that time.
- Whenever your child is outside, use sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15. Choose one that protects against UVA and UVB rays.
- Apply sunscreen 30 minutes before going outside. Reapply every 2 hours and after being in the water or sweating.
- Keep children under 1 out of the sun as much as you can. Dress your baby in lightweight, light-colored clothing with long sleeves and long pants. Always cover their head. Children under 6 months of age can have small amounts of sunscreen put on their faces and the backs of their hands, but be careful not to get it in their eyes or mouth.
- Most of the sun's burning rays go right through clouds, so use sunscreen even on cloudy days.
- Select sunglasses for babies and children that provide 100 percent UV protection.
- When it is 90° or above and humid, children should not play outside or exercise for more than 30 minutes at a time.
- Make sure your child drinks plenty of fluids even if they are not thirsty. Water is best.
- Take breaks to cool off in the shade.



## Safe Travel

- Always strap children in a properly fitted car seat, booster seat or seat belt when traveling by car or airplane.
- The back seat is the safest place for children to ride. In Washington state, the law says children under 13 must ride in the back seat where it is practical to do so.
- Children in rear-facing car seats should never be placed in the front seat if it has an air bag.
- Check the owner's guide for your child's car seat to make sure it is approved for airplane travel.
- Reserve a car seat or booster seat, or bring your own, when renting a car, riding with friends and family, or using a car share service.
- Lock all doors when driving.
- Never leave children alone in a car, even for a minute. Children left in cars are at risk for heat stroke, which can lead to death. Other risks are setting the car in motion and getting

injured by playing with power controls. Keep empty cars locked at all times.

### Water Safety

- Never leave children alone in or near the water, even for a minute. Actively watch children when they are in and around water. Have adults take turns being “child watchers” at family events.
- Young children need to wear life jackets when playing in or near water and while on docks. Children, teens and adults should wear life jackets for boating and while swimming in lakes, rivers or the ocean.
- Bring life jackets with you on outings and vacations. Make sure they fit and are comfortable.
- Teach your children to swim. Be aware of the hazards of swimming in a lake or river.
- Toys and mattresses that inflate will not keep children safe. U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets are the only flotation aid you can rely on.
- Children should swim only when lifeguards are on duty or if an experienced swimmer is watching.
- Pools need a fence that has 4 sides, is at least 4 feet high, and is self-latching and secured.
- Cover your spa when not in use. Keep long hair away from intake drains at the bottom of spas.
- If you spend time in boats, learn about boating safety. Visit [boatus.org](http://boatus.org) to learn more.
- Ponds, 5-gallon buckets and wading pools are drowning hazards for very young children. Empty water from buckets and wading pools, and make sure children are supervised around water.

### Lawn Care

- When you mow the lawn, keep children under 5 inside or away.
- Never let children ride on mowers or in carts towed by mowers.
- Don't allow children under 12 to use a push mower or those under 16 to drive a riding mower.
- Store mowers away from children. Toddlers can cut or burn themselves on mower parts.
- Avoid using insect or weed killers on your lawn or garden. If you do, keep children out of the yard for at least 48 hours.

### Window Falls

- Move furniture, and anything else a child can climb or stand on, away from windows.
- Install window guards or stops on windows. Kids can fall from windows open as little as 5 inches.
- Don't rely on window screens -- screens keep bugs out, but they don't keep kids in.
- If you don't have window guards or stops, keep windows latched.
- Watch young children closely.

### Riding Safe

When your child is ready to roll, make sure they:

- Always wear a helmet when riding a bike, scooter and skateboard or roller blading.
- Wear knee and elbow pads for scooter riding, and add wrist guards for roller blading or skateboarding.
- Ride a bike that fits them.

### For Family Bike Rides

- Children under 1 shouldn't ride as passengers on adult bikes.
- Children ages 1 to 4 (or less than 40 pounds) should ride belted and wearing a helmet. They ride best in a carrier seat mounted on the bike or in a bike trailer.
- Children follow your lead, so always wear a helmet when you ride!

### Playgrounds

- Watch children while they play at the playground.
- Keep children away from the front and back of swings while in use.
- Make sure metal slides are cool to prevent burns.
- Check play equipment for exposed bolt heads, sharp edges and places where fingers can get pinched. Cover these with rubber.
- Place new play equipment over wood chips, sand or another soft surface.
- Avoid riding double on swings and slides.
- Teach children to take turns and not push or roughhouse on play structures.

### Bites and Stings

- Teach your child to never surprise or scare a dog and never approach a dog they don't know.
- Check eaves and under decks for bee or wasp nests. Teach children not to touch or throw things at nests.

- Avoid using insect repellent on babies younger than 2 months.
- Use repellent that contains no more than 30 percent DEET.
- Use repellent on the outside of clothing and on exposed skin. Avoid putting it on cuts. Do not spray repellent on your child's face. Instead, spray a little in your hand and rub it on their face. Be careful to avoid their eyes and mouth.
- Avoid dressing your child in brightly-colored and floral print clothing.
- Avoid using scented soaps, perfumes, and hair products.

### Ticks

To protect against ticks, especially when playing or hiking in woods or fields with long grass:

- Have children wear long-sleeved shirts and pants.
- Tuck clothing into pants and pant cuffs into socks.
- At the end of the day, check your child's whole body for ticks.

#### To Learn More

- [seattlechildrens.org/dp](https://seattlechildrens.org/dp) to learn more about water safety
- [seattlechildrens.org/health-safety/keeping-kids-healthy/prevention](https://seattlechildrens.org/health-safety/keeping-kids-healthy/prevention)
- Your child's healthcare provider

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Seattle Children's will make this information available in alternate formats upon request. Call Marketing Communications at 206-987-5323.

This handout has been reviewed by clinical staff at Seattle Children's. However, your child's needs are unique. Before you act or rely upon this information, please talk with your child's healthcare provider.

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