



Child Safety Tips



- Children can drown in as little as two inches of water; **NEVER** leave your child unattended. Half of toddlers who drown, do so when their guardian is distracted - "only for a moment".



- **STAY ALERT**, remember - Nothing takes the place of close adult supervision.



- Don't allow your child to play in kitchen cabinets. By establishing a cabinet as a play space, the child may feel all cabinets are play spaces and may come into contact with harmful substances.



- Keep small objects and toys with small parts away from children under three. Check labels on toy packages for age-appropriateness before letting children play with the toys.



- Remove plastic bags from dry cleaning immediately; keep them completely out of children's reach.



- Keep your purse and those of all guests out of children's reach. They may come into contact with potentially harmful substances (perfume, makeup, medication, etc) or objects that may pose choking hazards.



- Make sure that grandparents and caregivers also childproof their homes. No one regrets the time they spent taking precautions, only the time they wish they spent.



- In 2001, there were 66,994 missing-child reports made to Canadian police agencies, of which 53,434 were classified as runaways, 387 as parental abductions and 48 as stranger abductions.* Teaching a child SELF-ESTEEM, how to recognize "bad feelings", warnings of danger, and self confidence can thwart most of these attempts. Kids need to know that if they get a bad feeling inside, something's probably not right and they need to get help. They also need to know not to worry that they might be wrong, if they feel uncomfortable, they need to get help right away. They must be told that it is OK to tell

an adult "NO", run away and tell someone they trust. There should be a "NO SECRETS" policy in your family!



- Teach your child to cross the street safely. Children under nine years are at risk in traffic because:

- They often lack a sense of vulnerability, not understanding that, if hit, a car could seriously hurt or kill them.
- Young children are restless, impulsive, and have trouble waiting (for lights to change for example)
- Their sense of perception is different than that of adults. They may think that large cars move more quickly than small ones, or that wide streets are more dangerous than narrow ones.
- Young children may believe that grown-ups will look out for them. They think that if they can see an adult driver, the driver must be able to see them and will stop.
- Children can have difficulty judging whether a vehicle is moving or how quickly it is traveling.
- Children tend to focus mainly on the things that interest them most, such as retrieving a ball from the road, rather than traffic.
- Children's peripheral vision is not fully developed. It is two-thirds that of an adult.
- A child's height can cause visibility difficulties for both children and drivers.
- Children often have trouble locating the source of a sound and turn the wrong way searching for it.

Tips to teach your kids:

- **How to cross the street safely.** Teach them to stop, look left, right and left again, and to listen for traffic before stepping out into the street. Have them make eye contact with drivers to be sure they are seen. Teach them to cross when the street is clear and to keep looking for cars until they have reached the other side.
- **To cross or not to cross.** Children should know pedestrian crossing signals but not rely solely on them. Remind them to make sure traffic has stopped and to make eye contact with drivers before crossing. They should be taught to respect the role of the crossing guard and to understand the guard's signals. Make sure they know to continue across if the light changes to 'Don't Walk' while they are in the crosswalk.
- **Under nine?** Don't cross alone. Children under the age of nine years should be accompanied by an adult or an older child when crossing the street.
- **Sidewalks are safest.** Teach children to always walk on the sidewalk. If there is no sidewalk, they should walk as far away from traffic as possible and walk facing approaching traffic.
- **Stay away from parked cars.** Teach children about the dangers of crossing the street between parked cars or when not at a corner. Children should cross only at corners or pedestrian crosswalks.
- **Beware of intersections without lights.** Children should be extra alert when crossing at a corner with no traffic lights.

- **Know the stopping zones.** Children should stop at driveways, alleys, and areas without curbs. They should never run out onto the street.
- **Help drivers see them.** Have children wear reflective or colourful clothing to be more visible to drivers.
- **Railway crossings are deadly.** Teach kids that the only way to cross at a railway is to use the designated crossings. Playing games at railway crossings or around trains can be deadly.

As a parent, one of the most important things you can do for your child is to be a good role model. Follow the same rules that you want your child to follow.



- When it comes to safety around a pool, supervision is key. While supervising remain sober (free from drugs, alcohol or distraction) Doorbells, phone calls, chores or conversations can compete for your attention. If you must leave the area for some reason, take the child with you and carefully secure the gate behind you.



- Don't label children's clothing with their first name or allow them to wear clothing displaying their name.



- Dress your child in brightly coloured clothing to help make it easier to spot them in a crowd.



- Make a mental note of what your child is wearing every day.



- As soon as your child is able, make sure they know their full name, address and telephone number.



- Make sure your child knows that if you become separated, you will not leave without finding them.



- Establish a meeting place in case you become separated.



- Teach your child to never accept food, drinks, money, ride tokens or toys from a stranger.



- Teach your child to pay attention to what you are wearing so if you get separated, they can describe you to someone who is helping them.



- Teach your child how to use a pay phone and to always have change or a calling card or teach them how to reverse charges in case of emergency.



- Teach your child to recognize "safe strangers", like staff and security personnel who can help them.



- Teach your child that if they become lost, to stay in one place and to wait for the person they were with to return.

* How safe is your family? - Family Safety Check