

Skills Children are Learning

Children at this age are becoming increasingly independent and adventurous. Small children still have little understanding of danger. Favourite pastimes include climbing and exploring. The best way to prevent injury is through adult supervision.

Common Causes of Injury

The major causes of injuries requiring hospitalisation are:

Falls in the home, and from bicycles, scooters or play equipment.

Cutting, piercing and bruising from running into hard objects or sharp corners. Being hit, struck or crushed by an object or person and running into low branches on trees and bushes.

Animal related injuries. Children under five are particularly at risk of dog bites and often require hospital treatment.

Transport and pedestrian injuries from children running across or playing near the road and from car crashes.

Burns and scalds from touching hot objects such as stoves, fireplaces, heaters, irons, hair straighteners and from hot liquids, food and oil.

Poisoning from medicines, cleaning chemicals, personal hygiene products, alcohol, cigarettes and vapes/vape refills.

Drowning in backyard swimming pools, bathtubs and other sources of water in and around the home is the highest cause of death in children under five.

At Home

Teach children about safety around the home.

Don't leave handbags and groceries containing personal hygiene products, detergents and household cleaners lying around. These potential poisons are easily accessed by children.

Keep medicines up high, out of reach and locked away. Where possible, purchase medications with child resistant lids. However remember that these are child resistant, not child proof.

Bed sharing with young children is not recommended. It is difficult to apply Red Nose safe sleeping guidelines, and babies can be injured by rolling out of bed or from adults rolling on top of them.

Use safety glass or shatter resistant film on low windows and doors, and place brightly coloured stickers at the child's head height so they can see there is glass in their path.

Work out a fire escape plan in case of an emergency and practice it regularly.

Always supervise children in the kitchen.

Keep matches and cigarette lighters out of reach.



At Play

Install gates to reduce the risk of children running out onto the road or driveway.

Install playground equipment and cubbies away from hazards such as hard paths, garden edging and stakes.

Place impact absorbing material underneath and around equipment. The fall height from play equipment should be less than 1.5 metres.

Trampolines can be dangerous. If purchasing a trampoline buy one that conforms to the Australian Standard (AS4989) or retrofit your trampoline with a frame padding system. Install in a pit surrounded by softfall or purchase an above-ground trampoline that has safety net walls.

The rule is: 'One child at a time'.

Always supervise children and babies around animals, and separate them at meal time.

Choose play equipment that is age suitable, size and stage of development, especially for bikes, skateboards and scooters.

Supervise all bicycle, scooter and skating activities and don't allow children to ride or skate on the road.

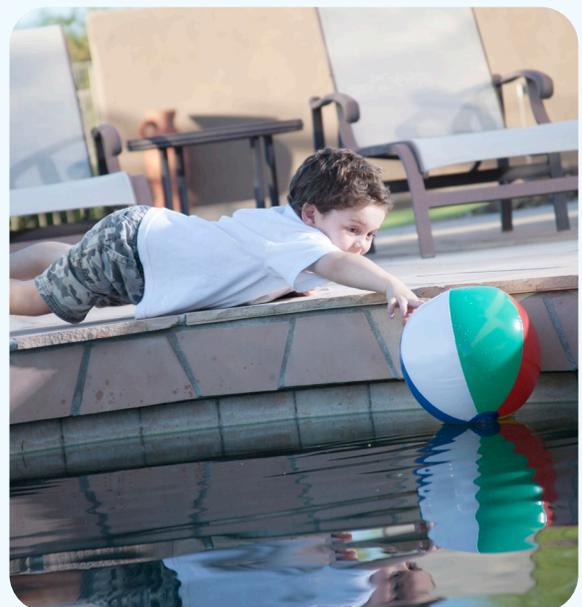
Ensure children always wear a helmet when skating or riding a bicycle, skateboard or scooter, and that the bicycle and helmet are the right size. Children should also wear wrist guards, elbow and knee pads when skating.

Provide an appropriately sized bike and make sure it is in working order and free of damage.

Watch out for low branches at children's eye level from trees and bushes.

Pools and spas should be fully enclosed by a fence with a self-closing, self-latching gate that is never propped open.

Always actively supervise children within arms reach when in or around water.



Helpful Tips on Buying Safety Helmets

Involve children when choosing a helmet. They need to try it on to test that it fits them correctly and that they are happy with its appearance. Ensure that:

- The helmet meets Australian Standards
- You are wary of second-hand helmets – it can be hard to see any damage caused by previous impacts
- The helmet should:
 - ✓ fit snugly - if it is too big it will not protect the child
 - ✓ not move forward obstructing vision
 - ✓ not move backward exposing the forehead
- Don't forget to replace helmets every 3 years or sooner if subjected to any impact
- Hats (especially caps) should not be worn under helmets - They can cause scalping and can block peripheral vision
- Adjust the head band inside the helmet and the side straps so that the side buckle sits below the earlobe and the straps form a V directly below the earlobe
- The straps should adjust so there is enough room for only two fingers between the chin and the strap

In the Car

Use a child car seat that is correctly fitted, less than 10 years old and meets the requirements of the Australia/New Zealand Standard (AS/NZS 1754).

Ensure children stay in their current car seat until they have outgrown it. It is recommended that children stay in an in-built harness for as long as possible, for some children this can be past 8 years of age.

By law, children under 4 years of age must be in a harnessed car seat or a booster seat with a lap sash seatbelt.

Children between 4 and 7 years of age must be in either a booster seat with a lap/sash seatbelt or a h-harness or in the earlier stage of restraint (a car seat with an in-built harness).

Make sure the restraint is installed correctly to your vehicle and that the harness is correctly adjusted each time you travel.



Never leave your child alone or unsupervised in the car. The temperature inside your car can increase by more than 30 degrees within fifteen minutes. When you leave your car, take your child with you - even for small errands.

Ensure children are in the habit of entering and exiting the car on the kerb side to minimise their exposure to traffic.

For more information

Kidsafe ACT (02) 6290 2244
www.kidsafeact.com.au

Red Nose 1300 998 698
rednose.org.au

Cancer Council - SunSmart 13 11 20
www.sunsmart.com.au

ACT Fire and Rescue (02) 6205 2927
esa.act.gov.au/fire-rescue

Poisons Information Line 131 126

St Johns Ambulance First Aid Course 1300 360 455
stjohnact.com.au

Royal Life Saving Society (02) 6260 5800
www.royallifesaving.com.au

Access Canberra 13 22 81
www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au

ACCC 1300 302 502
www.accc.gov.au
www.productsafety.gov.au

National Burns Awareness Month
kidsafe.com.au/national-burns-awareness-month

On the Street

Children of this age should only ride in off street areas, such as backyards and parks, and should always be supervised. Teach children to STOP, LOOK, LISTEN and THINK.

Always hold children's hand when near the road and explain what they should look for.

Never allow children to skate or ride a bike, scooter or skateboard on the road.

Make sure you know where children are whenever anyone is coming or going from your house.



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