

## Skills Toddlers are Learning

Toddlers will become increasingly mobile and start to walk between 8 - 18 months of age. They will also become very curious and may try to open cupboards, turn switches on and off and seek out items they know exist, even if they are hidden from view. Toddlers may want to test everything by putting it in their mouth. Toddlers often copy what they see adults doing, so it is important to model safe behaviour.

## Common Causes of Injury

**Burns and scalds** from touching hot objects (such as stoves, fireplaces, heaters, irons and hair strainers), from hot food, drinks and oils and from having hot drinks, oil and food spilt on them.

**Choking** on hard foods or small toys.

**Cuts and finger jams** from glass, knives, cans and other sharp objects as well as doors, prams and other furniture.

**Falls** from climbing, jumping and falling off furniture and playground equipment. Remember young children are top heavy which makes it easier for them to overbalance.

**Transport and pedestrian accidents** from car crashes, running onto the road or being hit by reversing vehicles, especially in driveways.



## Sleeping

Choose clothing that has a low fire danger. Look for a LOW FIRE DANGER label on all children's clothing especially nightwear.

Remove all objects that could allow toddlers to climb out of the cot and remove bibs and dummy cords before putting children down for a sleep.

Always have the side of the cot raised when children are inside.

Adjust the cot mattress so it is at the lowest level to prevent children climbing out and falling.

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

## Button batteries

If a button battery is swallowed it can become stuck and burn through the child's oesophagus in less than 2 hours, even if the battery is flat.

Keep devices with button batteries out of reach if the battery compartments aren't secure, lock away loose batteries, make sure to check through bowls with coins and if a child swallows a button battery, or you suspect they may have, go to emergency right away. Visit our website for more information.



## Bathing

Always stay with children when in the bath. When household distractions occur, like the telephone or doorbell ringing, take children with you.

The water should be no more than 38°C degrees. Check the temperature of the water before bathing children.

When filling the bath, run the cold water first, then hot, then cold again and mix well. This keeps the tap cold to touch and the water temperature even.

The kitchen and bathroom hot water should be delivered at a maximum of 50°C degrees. Talk to a plumber for more information.

Keep electrical appliances out of children's reach and away from water sources.

## First Aid for Burns

The correct first aid for burns is cooling immediately with cool running tap water for a minimum of 20 minutes. Do not use iced water, ice, butter or oil.

## Out and about

Use a child car restraint that is correctly fitted, less than 10 years old, hasn't been in a crash and meets the requirements of the Australia/New Zealand Standard (AS/NZS 1754).

By law, children under 4 years of age must be in a forward facing child car seat with an in-built harness or a rearward facing child car seat.

Rear facing is the safest option for as long as the child fits (until 3 to 4 years of age). Ensure children stay in their current seat until they have outgrown it.

Make sure the seat is installed correctly to your vehicle and that the harness is adjusted to the size of the child each time you travel.

Never leave children alone or unsupervised in the car. The temperature inside your car can increase by more than 30°C degrees within fifteen minutes. When you leave your car, take children 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.

Keep all handbags out of reach, including visitors'. Young children often take medicines and other poisons out of handbags.



## For more information

**Kidsafe ACT**  
[www.kidsafeact.com.au](http://www.kidsafeact.com.au)

(02) 6290 2244

**Red Nose**  
[rednose.org.au](http://rednose.org.au)

1300 998 698

**Cancer Council - SunSmart**  
[www.sunsmart.com.au](http://www.sunsmart.com.au)

13 11 20

**ACT Fire and Rescue**  
[esa.act.gov.au/fire-rescue](http://esa.act.gov.au/fire-rescue)

(02) 6205 2927

**Poisons Information Line**

131 126

**St Johns Ambulance First Aid Course**  
[stjohnact.com.au](http://stjohnact.com.au)

1300 360 455

**Royal Life Saving Society**  
[www.royallifesaving.com.au](http://www.royallifesaving.com.au)

(02) 6260 5800

**Access Canberra**  
[www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au](http://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au)

13 22 81

**ACCC**  
[www.productsafety.gov.au](http://www.productsafety.gov.au)

1300 302 502

**National Burns Awareness Month**  
[kidsafe.com.au/national-burns-awareness-month](http://kidsafe.com.au/national-burns-awareness-month)

## At Play

Create a safe shady play area separated from pools, driveways and any other hazards. Where possible, install gates to stop toddlers from getting onto the road and driveway.

Supervise children around cars. Driveways should not be used as a play area and make sure you know where children are when people are moving their car in or out of the driveway.

Use sunscreen and dress children in lightweight long sleeves and a hat.

Ensure that your pool or spa is properly fenced. Your local council can advise you on the regulations that govern pools and spas in your area.

Empty wading pools, eskies, buckets and any other water catching objects after every use and store them upside down, on their side or deflated. Place a wire mesh over water features like ponds.

Supervise children on play equipment and choose equipment that is appropriate for their size and level of development.

Install playground equipment or cubbies away from hazards with hard surfaces such as concrete paths, garden edging and stakes. Place soft impact absorbing material underneath all equipment. Slides, climbing frames, horizontal and vertical ladders etc. should be less than 1 metre above the ground.

Lock up and keep pesticides, mower fuel, paints and herbicides out of reach of children. Identify any poisonous plants that may be growing in your garden and remove them or place them in a hanging basket out of reach.

Never allow children to play unsupervised with animals. Supervise and separate children and animals when they are eating.



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