WATER SAFETY

Around Home

Never leave a child unattended in the bathtub or sink for any reason. Children can drown in as little as six inches of water. Be aware that infants, toddlers, and children do not know how to close bathroom doors or prevent children from entering. Use layers of protection, such as:

• active supervision
• isolation barriers around pools and spas
• self-closing and self-latching gates that open outward away from the pool or spa
• keep rescue equipment (a shepherd's hook-a long pole with a hook on the end and a life preserver) and know how to use them
• keep a telephone in the pool area

Outside The Home

• always swim in a designated supervised area and obey rules and posted signs
• keep children a safe distance away from boats and the water
• when on a boat or near the water, children should wear U.S. Coast Guard approved lifejackets at all times. Make sure the life jacket is the correct size and is worn properly (snugly) with all buckles fastened
• plastic: water wings, toys, rafts, and air mattresses are not life jackets

BABY-SITTING SAFETY

Many local police departments have safety tips for babysitters. DHS also has safety tips you can download from their website at www.lapublichealth.org or have mailed (call the Injury and Violence Prevention Program at 213-351-7888)

• Never leave a child unattended in the bathtub or sink for any reason. Always pre-plan and have items available that you need before you bathe the child (i.e. soap, towel, clothing, diaper, powder, etc. and place these items where you can easily reach them)
• Never leave to answer the phone, answer the door, etc. If you must leave, take the child with you and close the bathroom door
• Bath Seats: some bath seats and rings adhere to the bottom of the bathtub with suction cups. Never leave the child unattended in these devices as suction cups often come loose and the child can tip over. If you choose to use these devices always be in arms reach of the child
• An infant or toddler should never be left with an older sibling
• Keep toilet seats down to prevent toddlers from falling in
• Keep bathroom doors closed at all times

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Children under the age of 15 are at risk for death and hospitalizations due to pedestrian injury. This decreases as children get older

Children learn by observing behaviors of their parents and caregivers so they must model safe pedestrian behavior. This includes:

• crossing streets at corners
• obeying pedestrian signals
• using crosswalks when possible
• making eye contact with the driver prior to crossing to make sure the driver sees you
• looking left, right and left again before crossing the street
• never running into the street for any reason
• walking facing traffic on sidewalks or paths
• walk as far to the left as possible when there are no sidewalks
• always be aware that cars and delivery trucks can be backing from a driveway or alley when crossing the sidewalk

Parents and caregivers should also set limits for their children as to when they are allowed to travel as a pedestrian.

• Children under the age of 10 should never cross streets alone because they do not have the skills and judgment on traffic behavior.
• When older children are walking at night or dusk have them carry a flashlight and wear reflective material.
• Parents and caregivers should know the safest path (most direct route with the fewest crossings and other safety measures) for older children to walk and plan these prior to the child leaving.
• Never let younger children play in driveways, unused yards, streets, or parking lots

Motor Vehicle Safety

Child Safety Seats

California law requires that children under the age of 18 wear approved safety belts when riding bicycles, scooters, skateboards and skates

• DHW on the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) strongly recommend protective gear such as elbow and knee pads, and wrist guards for those riding skateboards and in-line and roller skates
• When riding scooters, the rider should also wear elbow and knee pads in addition to the helmet for protection
• Never ride skateboards or scooters near traffic
• When riding a bicycle always ride with traffic, use bicycle lanes when possible, and obey all traffic laws

Fun In The Sun Safety

Sun Protection

Exposure to the sun can cause skin damage to the sun, even on cloudy days. Wear a hat, sunglasses that block 99-100% of ultraviolet rays, and cotton clothing to cover as much skin as possible should be worn.

• Avoid the peak intensity of sun exposure between the hours of 10:00am and 4:00pm

Dehydration Prevention

Children are more susceptible to dehydration and heat illness than adults. Remember:

• children absorb more heat because they have a greater surface-area to body-mass ratio than adults (whereas the smaller the child the faster the heat is absorbed)
• children produce more metabolic heat during physical activity,1 are unable to dissipate as much heat through sweat,2 and like adults, often do not have the physiological drive to drink enough fluids to replace the loss of sweat during prolonged exercise.
• children should drink at least 12 ounces of fluid 30 minutes before the activity begins
• during activity, children under 90 pounds, should drink 5 ounces every 20 minutes; and children over 90 pounds should drink 9 ounces every 20 minutes
• after activity children should drink another 5 ounces every 20 minutes during the first hour after the activity to make up for fluid loss.

Playground Safety

The United States Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) estimates that nearly 100,000 playground-related injuries requiring emergency room visits occur each year.

• Most playground-related injuries are associated with inadequate supervision. The National Program for Playground Safety recommends parents be more active in watching their children while on the playground.
• Parents should visually inspect the equipment for potential safety problems and make sure children do not play on any unsafe equipment.
• Make sure that metal slides are cool to prevent a child's hand and legs from being burnt from the hot sun

1. J. Shulman. Safe RIDE study