

Stay warm, but stay safe

The improper use of electric space heaters is the leading cause of wintertime home fires. If an electric heater must be used:

- Never place it on carpet. Space heaters should only be placed on flat, non-combustible surfaces.
- Never leave an electric heater unattended.
- The sides and tops of electric heaters can get hot enough to burn skin. Never place them where children play or where people might trip over it.



Fire safety

- Have working smoke alarms on each floor AND outside every bedroom. Check them once a month to see if the batteries work.
- Install at least one carbon monoxide (CO) alarm in sleeping areas.
- Talk to your children about fire safety and draw out a home escape route. Practice it regularly, so in the event of an emergency your family will be ready.
- Keep young children away from working wood stoves and fireplaces. Their sides and surfaces may not look hot, but can easily get hot enough to burn skin.



Bicycle safety

Teach your child proper bicycle safety and all the rules of the road.

- Wear a helmet for bike riding, and make sure it fits correctly. The helmet should hug the wearer's head tightly, and the strap should be snug under the chin.
- Always ride on the right side of the road, with traffic, and use appropriate hand signals.
- Follow traffic signals, stopping at all stop signs and stoplights. Stop and look left, right and left again before crossing an intersection.
- Children should not ride a bicycle when it's dark, or in low-visibility conditions. If this is unavoidable, use a bright, flashing light and reflectors on the bike.
- Dress young riders in fitted clothes that won't get stuck in wheels, gears or passing obstacles, and wear accessories that have reflective materials.



Cycling should be restricted to off-roads (sidewalks and paths) until age 10.



Boston Children's Hospital
Injury Prevention Program

Fall and winter safety tips for kids



Boston Children's Hospital
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Watch for cars that are turning or backing up. Just because you can see the driver DOESN'T mean he or she can see you.

Pedestrian safety

Autumn is back-to-school time for many kids. If your child will be walking or biking to school, or for exercise after class, make sure they know these important safety tips:

- Look left, right and left again before crossing a street. Keep looking as you cross.
- Walk, don't run, across the street.
- Walk on sidewalks or paths. If there are no sidewalks, walk facing oncoming traffic, as far to the left as possible.
- Parents and children should hold hands while walking in parking lots.

Stay safe on the playground

Playing outdoors is a great way for children to get exercise, but it's important for adults to keep a close eye on children on playgrounds to make sure they stay safe.

- Children should NEVER push or roughhouse while on jungle gyms, slides, seesaws, swings or other equipment.
- Use equipment properly—slide feet first, don't climb outside guardrails and don't stand on swings.
- Remove all drawstrings from children's clothing before they enter the playground. Other loose objects, like necklaces, should also be removed.
- There should be only one child on a playground device at a time. More than one child on any given device highly increases their risk of injury.



Make sure children wear clothes without drawstrings, cords or necklaces that could get caught on equipment and cause the child to trip or choke.

Avoid holiday hazards

Holidays are a great time to celebrate, but did you know childhood injury rates spike during holidays? Avoid a trip to the hospital during your holidays by following these tips.

Halloween

- Never let children trick-or-treat alone. Have them walk in groups with a trusted adult.
- Use a flashlight to help you see (and help others see you).
- Always walk, don't run from house to house.
- Wear well-fitted masks, costumes and shoes to avoid blocked vision or trips and falls.



Winter holidays

- Artificial trees should be fire resistant. Live trees should be fresh. Old, dry trees present a fire hazard.
- Turn off all lights and blow out all candles when you leave the house or go to bed.
- Avoid sharp or fragile decorations for small children.
 - Avoid giving toys that have a pull string of more than 12 inches long, as these can be a strangulation hazard. Avoid toys that have to be plugged into an electrical outlet. Battery-operated gifts are less likely to cause burns or electric shocks.



Never assume it's safe to skate on a frozen lake or pond—ice must be at least 4 inches thick to be safe—children should only skate on public indoor or outdoor rinks.

Outdoor winter activities

Snow and ice offer unique play opportunities for children, but can be dangerous in many situations. To keep kids safe while enjoying winter activities:

- Always supervise children when they're sledding, skating or participating in other winter sports.
- Sled in well-lit areas far from car traffic, free of obstacles like trees or roots.
- Use sleds you can steer. Makeshift sleds are dangerous.
- Always sit up with feet forward when sledding—lying flat increases the chance of head and abdominal injuries.
- Children under 16 years old should not operate snowmobiles. Children younger than 5 should never ride on a snowmobile, even with an adult.
- Always wear a helmet while snowmobiling, sledding, skiing or skating.
- Keep children away from snowblowers and snowthrowers.
- Melting or falling ice or snow can be dangerous for children. Avoid the sides of buildings or structures where snow or ice may have collected above.