

### Play it safe these holidays!

Every holiday, and especially the Festive holiday season brings a harvest of accidents to our children!!!



The festive holiday time is upon us again. Childsafe would like to remind everyone that as well as fun, there are some dangers out there for children. We would like to ask you to take particular care of children over the next few weeks. Know where your children are and what they are doing. Supervise at all times, especially the young.

The incidence of injury reporting to the Trauma Unit of Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital increases every year during the festive season. This is clearly an indication that children are not cared for properly during this time period. Injuries increasing over this time period varies from road accidents, drowning, burns, poisoning, falls, sexual molestation, abuse and many more.

During the holidays, parents and caregivers should be extra vigilant to keep all children safe. There are many extra factors that put children more at risk for injury during the holiday season, including gatherings at the homes of friends and family that may not be childproof, excessive alcohol consumption, home decorations such as Christmas trees and lights, and outdoor activities such swimming, hiking and many more.

We would like to urge parents and caregivers to take care when consuming alcohol. Numerous injuries to children occur when caregivers are under the influence of alcohol.



### Holiday safety for 2016/2017

Alcohol consumption impairs self-control and adequate supervision of children cannot take place. Being a smart party host or guest should include being sensible about alcoholic drinks. Most traffic fatalities are alcohol-related. Use designated drivers, people who do not drink, to drive other guests home after a party.

Allow your child to do interesting things this holiday, but always make sure that he/she is protected from real danger, thus preventing the sort of accident that leads to serious injuries, or even death.

When determining what to allow and what not, a parent should take into consideration the stage of his child's development. A situation, which might be dangerous for a child at a certain age, may be quite safe for a child of a different age.

Some safety tips brought to you from the Childsafe.



#### ARE THEY SAFE ON THEIR OWN?

Schools out and so are our children. Some parents might still be working and can't be with their children all the time, so how do we give them freedom and keep them safe?

#### Is it safe to leave children alone?

Small children have numerous limitations and should not be left on their own to walk about and play on their own in the community. They should be supervised. For older children, rules should be made as to where they are allowed to go and where not.

The maturity of the child and the type of area you live in are also important to consider.

#### The following are some examples of rules that parents should inform children about:

- ◆ Always say where they are going, with whom and when they will return. It is better to walk in groups rather than on their own.
- ◆ Inform parents if plans change.
- ◆ When meeting or visiting friends, the friends should be informed as to when they can expect them.
- ◆ Always use safe, familiar routes that are well lit. Plan with your child what routes to take.
- ◆ Prepare children what to do in an emergency.

## Holiday safety (3)

- ◆ Don't play or walk near overgrown places, parking lots, empty buildings, public toilets, and strangers at movies, swimming pools and parks.
- ◆ Never accept lifts from anyone.
- ◆ Never accept sweets, drinks, or anything from strangers.



### Safety while playing outside

- ◆ It is the job of all that is responsible for children at play to assess and manage the level of risks that children are given at play. We need to provide controlled opportunities for children to encounter and manage risk otherwise they may be denied the chance to learn skills. If not, they are more likely to choose to play in uncontrolled environments where risk is greater.
- ◆ Parents must have rules that children who are old enough to play by themselves must always tell caregivers or parents where they will be playing.
- ◆ Designate and develop safe play areas within your own neighbourhood.



- ◆ Teach children where the safe places to play are, and warn them of possible danger areas in the neighbourhood that are not safe to play.
- ◆ Make sure that you know where your children are playing and with who. Care groups of responsible adults can be formed to take turns to supervise children at play in the community.
- ◆ Pre school children should be supervised during play at all times.
- ◆ Scan and identify dangers in your neighbourhood and environment together with your children for possible danger. Notify your local council of danger areas that you have identified, and insist on making these safe in order to reduce the risks to children.
- ◆ It is the local municipalities' legal obligation to make sure that the environment is safe and free from dangers. Danger areas (open masses of water, rubbish dumps, unsafe or poorly maintained play equipment in play parks, busy roads, open electrical wiring, unfenced electrical substations and more).



## Holiday safety (4)

### SAFE TRAVELING

- ◆ It is important to plan your route beforehand. Always allow time to stop and visit interesting places and allow time for rest stops every couple of hours.
- ◆ Make sure you always buckle-up your children and yourself, for short distances as well as long distances.
- ◆ Always buckle children up in an approved restraint system when traveling in a motor vehicle. There are different restraints available for different age groups. All occupants in a car should wear safety belts if they are available.
- ◆ Lock all doors of the car. Use the child-lock for babies and toddlers.
- ◆ Stop frequently so that children can stretch their legs and take them out of their seats for a while.
- ◆ Sometimes older children want to climb out of their safety seats. Stop the car at a safe place and explain to the child that you will not resume the trip until he/she buckles-up again.



- ◆ If you stop along the road, always keep an eye on the children. They can be impulsive and because it is new surroundings, they could do anything without warning.
- ◆ Do not drink and drive!!!

### The Beach is a Great Place!

- ◆ Whether swimming, surfing, boating, always treat the sea with respect.
- ◆ If children cannot swim they should not go out of their depth and should be supervised at all times. Even good swimmers can be swept out to sea by currents.
- ◆ Never disregard dangers notices.
- ◆ Do not drink alcohol before swimming: Alcohol makes a person less responsible. Many people who drown have been drinking.

**Bored and unstimulated children could mean that children explore or create danger. So make sure that children are kept busy and stimulated this holiday.**

