7 Summer Safety Tips to Help Kids

The young children look forward to summer and often long for all the wonderful summertime activities offered in the NW. Summer is our opportunity to embrace outdoor activities with our friends and family. But, it’s important to ensure that children stay safe while having fun in the sun.

Here are 7 suggestions to help keep your little ones safe this summer.

1. **Continue to Practice Hand Hygiene**

Germs can live on surfaces we touch, and many viruses are spread when an infected person releases virus particles into the air by breathing, talking, coughing, or sneezing.

Solution: Parents and caregivers can continue to enforce good hygiene during the summer, by washing their (and their child’s) hands for 20 seconds with soap and water. You can use alcohol-based hand sanitizers when soap and water are available.

1. **Stay Hydrated, and Watch for Signs of Heat Exhaustion**

Even in the Northwest, we can experience stretches of high temperatures. During outdoor and/or summertime play, keep in mind that children’s bodies don’t cool down as rapidly as adults. Toddlers and preschool children cannot regulate their body temperatures well and need more water when the weather is hot. So, caregivers should make sure children always have a clean, filled water bottle with them.

Solution: Consider scheduled, frequent hydration checks when water is offered. It is a great way of ensuring that children consume adequate amounts of water each day (depending on exact age, medical conditions, activity levels, and the weather).

1. **Avoid Burn Hazards, Like Grills, Fireworks and Firepits.**

Fireworks can be extremely dangerous and can cause significant damage. Hot sparklers can be extremely dangerous in the hands of young children. They can get as hot as a welding torch. So, enjoy the fireworks at a distance (out of the reach of children. There are several professional fireworks displays coordinated in our area. So, consider leaving the fireworks to them and enjoy a stress-free and safe display.

Grills and bonfires can also pose a danger or risk to children, who can fall near them and get seriously burned.

Solution: Parents and caregivers should create a safe, child-free area 5-6 feet away from any “hot zone.” A hot zone is an area where fireworks, firepit, or grill are used or displayed. Remember children can be burned by embers or metal that has not yet cooled completely.

1. **Use Protective Clothing and Apply Sunscreen**

During the summer, ultraviolet rays are at their strongest, and children under the age of 18 are the most at risk for skin damage.

Solution: Sun-protective clothing with a UPF (ultraviolet protection factor) of 50 is an excellent source of protection from harmful ultraviolet rays, in addition to wearing hats, sunglasses, and other shading. You might enlist the help of your child to help choose UPF clothing. For areas that cannot be covered, apply a broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen with an SPF (sun protection factor) of at least 30 to all exposed skin. Re-apply about every two hours and after swimming or sweating.

1. **Ensure Children Wear a Helmet While on Wheels**

Wearing a helmet during activities such as riding a bicycle, skateboard, or electric scooter can prevent head and brain injuries in children. A helmet should meet the bicycle helmet safety standards of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission and be worn properly. Studies show that properly fitted helmets reduce the risk of head injuries.

Solution: Attend a free helmet fitting in your area. Watch a helmet-fitting video, like the one provided [here](https://www.seattlechildrens.org/health-safety/keeping-kids-healthy/prevention/health-safety/).

1. **Beware of Bugs During the Summer**

Summer is often the peak season for ticks and insects such as mosquitoes, which can carry diseases.

Solution: To prevent bites, wear long sleeves and pants tucked into socks when in wooded or grassy areas, along with close-toed shoes. Please consult with your child’s pediatrician when considering insect repellants.

1. **Encourage Water Safety with Children (and Designate an Adult to be a Water-Watcher)**

Many of us love to cool down from the summer heat by taking a dip into in the summer temperatures, children may want to escape the heat by dipping in a lake or pond.

Solutions: Parents and caregivers should increase water safety by designating an adult as the water-watcher, using properly fitted life jackets when on open bodies of water, or when participating in water sports, and NEVER leaving a child unattended near the water.

Late Spring and early summer are the best times to check that pool gates and any entries to water sources are secure. Late Spring is also a wonderful time to sign up for swim lessons and water safety classes.

Please keep these safety tips in mind as you enjoy outdoor activities with your children this summer.

Sources:

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/9-tips-to-help-kids-keep-safe-during-summer>

https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/publication/summer-safety-tips

https://www.childrens.com/health-wellness/10-summer-safety-tips-for-kids