

# How To Protect Your Kids From Danger, Injury and Harm



By

**Julie Joyce**

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*It is often said that  
“What you don't know can hurt you.”*

*But I believe it is just as important  
to realize that:  
what you do know can save your life!*

*-Julie Joyce -*

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## About Julie Joyce

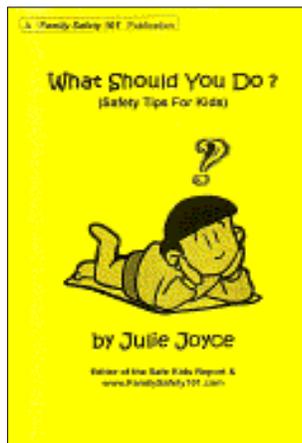


Julie Joyce (a.k.a. the "Super Safety Mom") is a "Child and Family Safety Expert" committed to educating parents and children about safety issues and injury prevention strategies. She is the Editor & Publisher of the "**Family Safety Alert**" Newsletter and the Safety Education web site: <http://www.FamilySafety101.com>

Julie Joyce's mission is to change the statistics\* by teaching parents how to protect their children from the many risks they face. She is passionate about safety awareness and its role in protecting children from harm.

Julie is the author of a variety of educational and family resource books and publications, most of which have been made available for FREE to help as many families as possible.

1. Family Safety 101- Free Child Id Kit. [www.FamilySafety101.com](http://www.FamilySafety101.com)
2. How To Protect Your Kids From Danger, Injury, and Harm.
3. What Should You Do ? (Safety Tips For Kids). [www.KidSafetyBook.com](http://www.KidSafetyBook.com)



Julie has also written several articles on child and family safety. Her articles have been featured in a variety of electronic and print publications. For more Information about Julie Joyce, go to: [www.JulieJoyce.com](http://www.JulieJoyce.com).

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# Letter to Parents & Caregivers

**Dear Parents & Caregivers:**

This parent's guidebook is designed to focus on some of the most common causes of danger, injury and harm to young children.

## Some disturbing statistics

It is estimated that:

- Over 700,000 children are reported missing every year.
- Almost 3 million children are bitten by dogs every year.
- 1 in 4 kids is a victim of bullying.
- 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys will be sexually abused before age 18.
- 1 in 5 kids receive unwanted sexual solicitations online.
- Poison control centers get over a million calls a year because of accidental poisonings.

I believe that if parents are armed with knowledge that helps them to clearly understand the dangers that their children face and strategies that could dramatically reduce the risk of preventable injuries...then we can really put a dent in these chilling statistics.

Most importantly, these statistics aren't just numbers...these are actual children who should have the opportunity to experience what all children deserve...  
.....a happy and safe childhood!

I hope you will find this book effective in helping you to protect your child. And I hope you will help me to "spread the word" about this free book that I pray makes a wonderful difference in many children's lives.

And please remember ..... guard your child as if his/her life depends on it ..... because it does !

To Your Safety,

*Julie Joyce*

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## Protecting Your Kids From Abduction

For any parent, the thought of having a child abducted triggers the most unimaginable anxiety and fear. However, parent and child can both learn strategies and tactics that can dramatically reduce the risk of abduction. Both parent and child must be proactive in a family campaign to prevent such harm.

According to the National Center for Missing and Exploited children, over 700,000 children are reported missing every year. Many of these children are runaways or are taken by family members. Approximately 50,000 are taken by non-family members or strangers. While any child could be abducted, statistically girls who are aged 12 to 19 are most at risk.

Regardless of your child's age or gender the following are some measures you can take to prevent an abduction-kidnapping.

# 1- Do you know where your kids are?

Teach your children that: "Any place you go your parents need to know!"

# 2- Do your kids know their personal safety information?

Make sure when your child is old enough to talk that they know their full name, their parents full name, their phone number and address. Rehearse often so this critical information is accessible if needed.

# 3- Check your state's sex offender registry.

Currently there are approximately a half of a million registered sex offenders in the United States. They live in cities and towns all across the country. They are in "poor" and "affluent" neighborhoods. And they could be on your block. The twice-convicted pedophile who raped and murdered Megan (Megan's Law) Kanka lived across the street from her home. Every parent should make it a priority to do a quick search to educate themselves about potential risk exposures that may be "dangerously" close.

# 4- Empower your children.

Let them know that it is okay to say NO to an adult, especially if that person is suggesting something that is making the child feel uncomfortable.

# 5- Beware of Adults Needing Help.

Explain to your children that very rarely will an adult need a child's help. If an adult they do not know, asks your child for help in finding an address or finding a lost dog, etc. these are likely tricks to lure them.

# 6- Make a scene and call for help.

Teach your kids to scream for help if someone tries to grab them. Tell them to yell, "help, this is not my mother (or father)."

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**# 7- Adult supervision is critical.**

Younger children should always be supervised by an adult. If your 4 year old is outside playing with another 4 year old, you just entrusted a 4 year old to “watch your kid.” Do your best to coordinate with other parents to supervise children at play and to escort kids to and from school. Older children (teens) should be encouraged to always travel in groups. There is safety in numbers!

**# 8- Know who to ask for help.**

Teach your children who they should ask for help in various situations, locations and circumstances. If lost in a store, go immediately to a store counter clerk or service desk to ask for help. Be sure to keep a recent photo of your child with you since most children do not carry identification and you may need to “prove” that your child is yours.

**# 9- Define and clarify strangers, acquaintances and “safe” adults.** Many parents have explained the “Stranger-Danger” scenario to their children. However, the term “stranger” can be misinterpreted by children to only include people who they do not know and who “look” dangerous. However, this narrow parameter may make your child much more vulnerable than you realize.

Many abductors are well groomed and appear to be friendly and harmless. They may even be someone that your child is familiar with in the neighborhood. Your child may assume that if he/she knows a person’s name, that person is not a “stranger” and therefore not someone to worry about. They must understand that they are to be cautious of “any person” that attempts to lure them to any place or into any vehicle without your knowledge and approval.

**# 10- Don’t advertise your child’s identity.**

Many parents “advertise” their child’s name on book bags, purses, jackets, etc. Any predator can approach your child by name and pretend to know them or to be sent by you to pick them up. Keep such items at home.

**# 11- If you are divorced and there are custody issues make sure that your child’s school is clearly informed about who has authorized access to your child and who does not.** Be aggressive in your notification efforts.

**# 12- Complete a child ID Kit for your child/children.** Even though an Id Kit could be invaluable in expediting the search for a lost child it can also help with prevention. As you complete a kit you have the opportunity to discuss various dangers and safety tips with your child.

Get Free Child Id Kits at: [www.FamilySafety101.com](http://www.FamilySafety101.com)

## How Many Sex Offenders Live On Your Block ?



For any parent, learning that a convicted sex offender lives on the same block, can be a chilling discovery. The thought of it alone, can be disturbing. Most parents can't imagine that someone, who could be so potentially dangerous, may live somewhere on their block or along the path their child takes to school. However, it is highly likely that there are registered sex offenders in your neighborhood.

Beginning in the mid 1990's legislative actions established guidelines for tracking convicted sex offenders and making such information available as part of a community notification effort. In 1994 the Jacob Wetterling Act began requiring states to register individuals convicted of sex crimes against children. The "Pam Lychner Sexual Offender Tracking and Identification Act of 1996" was enacted by Congress to provide for the nationwide tracking of convicted sexual predators.

"Megan's Law" (1996) further served to clarify the public nature of information and authorized the release of relevant information that is necessary to protect the public. Together, these three key pieces of legislation have shaped the structure of sexual registries, nationwide. Today, almost every state maintains a registry of sexual offenders, and makes this information easily accessible via the internet. Some states may not allow online access. However, they will explain, online, the procedure to follow to gain access to their registry.

Currently there are approximately a half of a million registered sex offenders in the United States. They live in cities and towns all across the country. They are in "poor" and "affluent" neighborhoods. And they could be on your block. The twice-convicted pedophile who raped and murdered Megan (Megan's Law) Kanka lived across the street from her home. Every parent should make it a priority to do a quick search to educate themselves about potential risk exposures that may be "dangerously" close. It is commonly said that, "What you don't know can hurt you." But more importantly, what you DO know can save your life!

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As you search the various databases it is important to realize some important issues. Not all databases are complete. Some only have listings for a small time period. Others only list certain types of sex offenses. While these registries represent a noble effort to empower the community with access to information about dangerous individuals that may still pose a threat, they are by nature incomplete. Not all jurisdictions update and maintain them with the same level of commitment. And compliance to maintain them is not known. You must also realize that every "offender" has a first victim and not every offender is caught. Such offenders would not be listed on any registry or criminal database.

The FBI maintains links to the various state's registries. Access their links at: (<http://www.fbi.gov/hq/cid/cac/states.htm> ). However, surprisingly it is not the most up-to-date list available. The Klaas Kids site is a comprehensive site with extensive details about the types of offenders that appear on the various state's registries. Access their database at: (<http://www.klaaskids.org/pg-legmeg.htm> ). And a newly updated link list has just been posted at the Family Safety 101 site, at: (<http://www.FamilySafety101.com> ).

For parents, access to this invaluable information will serve many purposes. One, it will help families to identify potential risks in their own neighborhoods. Two, it will encourage parents to initiate defensive behavioral changes that may dramatically protect their children from predators. And third, it will inspire parents to educate their children about the dangers that exist and the safety strategies that will help to protect them from harm.

## Protecting Your Kids From Molesters



Okay parents, are you ready to be horrified ?

It is estimated that 1 out of every 4 girls & 1 in 6 boys will experience sexual abuse before they turn 18!

Most of these victims will never report the unspeakable abuse that they are enduring. Even more shocking is the fact that about a third of victims are abused by a family member. Two thirds are abused by people that are known and “trusted” by the victim’s family.

The emotional and psychological damage that such “unchecked” abuse can cause is alarming. We as parents must realize that we need to aggressively monitor and guard our children from the people that may cause them such harm, while educating ourselves and our children about the situations that may indicate concern, alarm or danger.

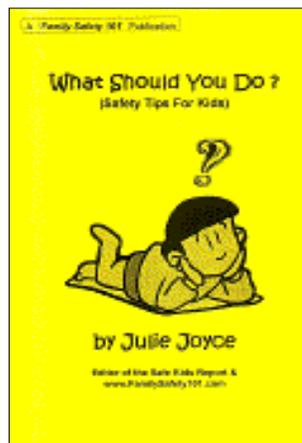
Children need to realize that no matter who the person is, (relative, family friend, coach, clergy, teacher, camp counselor, baby sitter, etc.) they do not have the right to touch them in places or ways that are personal and/or sexual. Children need to know that they can say “NO!” to adults (or others) who try to make them do or participate in activities that make the child feel uncomfortable. It may also be helpful with smaller children, to explain that if anyone tries to touch them in their “private zones” (easily described as what is usually covered by a bathing suit) to tell you immediately.

Often abusers may use the authoritative relationship they have with children to assure their “silence” about the abuse. For a child molester, secrets are empowering. Teach your children that they can tell you anything. Let them know that if anyone is hurting them or has done something to make them feel uncomfortable to entrust you with that information. Explain that your job is to protect them from harm and you can't do your job if they keep secrets from you. Make sure that they know that if someone tells them to keep a secret “*or else*” that person will hurt them or you, it is a trick. Explain to them that they should never be afraid to tell you about anything.

The best defense is prevention. And supervision is the best tool to help parents protect their children. We can't expect children to be savvy enough to elude a manipulative sexual predator. Parents must proactively evaluate the activities that their children will be involved in and the people that their children will spend time with. Over 80% of such abuses occur when children are alone with one adult. Make sure that you do all that you can to limit your child's 1:1 situations to

protect him/her from such a vulnerable scenario. You need to monitor all of your children's relationships with the zeal of a "guard dog."  
Your precious "puppies" are depending on you.

## **What Should You Do ? (Safety Tips For Kids) by Julie Joyce**



**What Should You Do ? (Safety Tips For Kids)**  
This Children's Book is designed to help you teach  
Your children important safety tips in a way that  
Will help them remember what to do  
in dangerous situations.

Take a Peek.....

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## How Children Are Lured Into Danger



Sometimes it is very difficult for parents to realize, that children need to know that there are vicious people out there that could cause them serious harm. It is a delicate balance to educate our children without frightening them. However, they must have this knowledge. To protect them from harm, we must discuss what can harm them.

Some parents may not even realize just how easily their children can be deceived by those who wish to lure children. Child predators come in all shapes, sizes, colors and genders. They live and prowl in underprivileged and in affluent neighborhoods. Some look "creepy" and others look very trustworthy. Some are "strangers" and some may be the "nice" neighbor who lives on your block.

Regardless of their appearance or status in the community, predators will use some method to lure children. Whether they intend to establish a "relationship" (to have repeat access to a child) or plan to violently abduct and injure; they will use "tricks" to lure their prey. Your children need to be aware of these "tricks" so that they can react appropriately and defensively.

These are some known deceptions that have been used to lure children to danger:

- 1 - Asking a child/teen to assist them in some way such as with directions, finding a puppy, etc.
- 2 - Pretending to be someone with authority such as a store guard or someone trustworthy such as a priest or firefighter - to make the child/teen leave the scene with them.
- 3 - Pretending to be a sympathetic online friend while building a "trusting" relationship and then arranging a "secret" meeting with the child/teen.
- 4 - Pretending to be a regular patron at a park, amusement park, water park, playground etc. while waiting for an opportunity and an easy target to abduct.
- 5 - Pretending that the parents of child/teen sent them to retrieve him/her.

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They may pretend that the parent was in an accident and that they were sent to get the child/teen.

6 - Pretending to "know" the child/teen or pretending to be a family friend. This is why children should not wear clothes or accessories that advertise their names.

7 - Offering to give a child/teen something such as gifts, toys, money, alcohol, drugs, etc.

8 - Offering to give a child/teen a "job" in order to befriend and gain access.

9 - Offering a child/teen an "opportunity" to model, act, audition for a part, etc.

10- Offering a child/teen extra attention and affection especially in situations where he/she may not be getting "love and attention" at home.

11 - Playing games or other activities to lure a child/teen away from public or parental sight.

12 - Threatening to harm a child/teen or his/her family unless he/she engages in certain activities.

13 - Threatening to immediately injure a child/teen with a weapon (gun, knife, etc.) unless he/she leaves the area with the predator.

What you need to do NOW:

A – Talk to your kids.

This information can't help your children if you don't share it with them.

B - Check your state's offender registry. Keep in mind this is just so that you are aware of potential threats in your neighborhood. However any nearby listings that you discover are NOT the only predators in your area. Every predator has a victim (or victims) before being caught and put into an offender database. And not all offenders are caught and convicted. Some may just be "passing through" your neighborhood and could be looking for a victim of opportunity. So, the registries are by no means a complete assessment of your neighborhood's risk factors but you need to know what IS in the registry.

C - Remember that: We are always told that what you don't know can hurt you. But more importantly, what you (and your children) DO know, can save your life!

## Protecting Your Kids From Online Predators



The evolution of the internet has had an unquestionable progressive impact on our everyday lives. The ability to immediately transfer sites, sounds, information and experiences that we could only imagine a decade ago, is now part of our daily routine. However, as with any tool that enables communication there is the opportunity for deception.

According to the U.S. Department of Justice, 1 in 5 kids receive unwanted sexual solicitations online. While online there are some specific activities which could be disturbing and/or harmful to your child.

These include:

- 1- Receiving unsolicited email with adult content, material and pictures.
- 2- Exposure to adult material or content while in chat room conversations.
- 3- Inadvertently being directed to adult sites while surfing or doing web searches.
- 4- Being directly targeted by an online predator who is attempting to develop a "relationship" with the child.

This (#4) of course, is the most alarming and dangerous. Child molesters, pedophiles and others involved in illegal child pornography will pursue online "relationships" with children. Initially these predators may pose as a sympathetic young friend. They may even email another child's picture to sustain the deception that this new "friend" is a peer. The predator may eventually seek access to personal information that would put the child's safety in jeopardy. They may encourage a child with family problems to runaway. And, they may attempt to lure the child into a meeting that will certainly lead to an ominous outcome.

### What kids can do to protect themselves

Never provide your name, photo, address, phone number, school or other personal information to anyone you meet online. It is imperative that children understand that having a supportive and helpful "online friend" is only acceptable if the "friend" does NOT do the following:

- 1- discusses things that make you feel uncomfortable
- 2- sends pictures, links or information that makes you feel uncomfortable
- 3- asks for personal information such as your full name, address, birth date, school name, etc.
- 4- tries to arrange a secret meeting with you

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These are warning signs that the "friend" is not who you think and is very likely a predator intending to cause you harm. Never agree to meet with anyone that you met online, without your parent's permission. It is also a good idea to avoid "private" chat rooms, where you are most vulnerable to the lures and tricks of predators. Always remember that chat rooms are frequently used by predators to find victims. Someone describing themselves as a 12 year old girl could easily be a 40 year old sex offender with a criminal record. So protect your identity and personal information at all times. Tell your parents if you receive any emails, photos, offers, etc. that make you feel uncomfortable. Don't keep secrets from your parents. Any questionable online situation you experience, must be brought to their attention so that they can take the appropriate measures to protect you from any harm. Help your parents so that they can do their job, to protect you.

### What parents can do to protect their kids

Keep computers with internet access in public areas of your home. Children and other users are less likely to access inappropriate sites in the family room, kitchen etc. By allowing a child to have internet access in the privacy of a bedroom, you lose your ability to monitor "unwelcome and dangerous intruders" into your home and into your child's life. Supervise your child's computer use and internet/email activities. The reality is that there will always be negative or harmful influences that could intrude upon your child's safety.

These dangers are not just online, but at school and in your neighborhood. Many parents blame "adult" content providers, internet service providers or the government for not protecting children. Regardless of who is to "blame" parents need to focus on what THEY can do to protect their own children. Realize that no one cares as much about your child as you. And no one is in a better position than you, to protect your child. Your child's safety ultimately rests with you.

## Is Your Child A Runaway Risk ?



Most of the children reported missing every year are missing because they have decided to run away from home. While some children are undoubtedly escaping situations at home that are unconscionable, there are children whose parents love them and care deeply about them, yet may be oblivious to the impending risk of flight.

You need to monitor and evaluate changes in your child's behavior. Don't assume that your child will outgrow erratic or unusual behavior. Do your best to identify the basis for dramatic changes in personality. Make sure that your child knows that he/she can come to you with any problem and together you will work to find a solution. Most behavioral changes have a cause. The causal factor may be physical, social, psychological or emotional. Either way the cause must be identified.

Your child may be experiencing abuse, suffering from a medical condition or may be having trouble dealing with emotional or social issues. Your child may need your help. Let him/her know you are ready to do just that. And if your child's needs are beyond your ability to help, seek the help of a counselor, educator, physician, social worker or other appropriate professional.

## Protecting Your Kids From Dangers At School



While starting a new school year can be such an exciting time, it can also be a time in which your children are exposed to school related dangers. Awareness, preparation and prevention can dramatically reduce your children's risk of injury.

The following ideas may not apply to all students in all age groups. This list is designed to help you in determining what must be done to protect your children in situations that they may likely encounter.

Here are some possible dangers that your kids may face as they head back to school:

# 1 - Every year thousands of children are injured and many are killed in school bus incidents. Make sure your kids approach, board, ride and depart school buses in a safe and responsible manner.

# 2 - Kids who walk to school are also at risk of injury. Carve out the safest path to school, for your kids. Any environmental or structural dangers along the path should be brought to the attention of the appropriate authorities. Adult supervision is a terrific safety tool.

# 3 - Abduction - protect your child from this risk exposure by carefully evaluating your child's route to and from school as well as during after school activities. It is best to make sure that your child never travels alone. It is even better if children always travel with a supervising adult. If you work and are unable to escort your kids, work out a plan with a reliable neighborhood stay-at-home mom to escort your kids with hers. And remember, do not visibly label your children's clothes and accessories. This makes children vulnerable to predators who can pretend to know them.

# 4 - Every year thousands of children are injured by the weight of their backpacks. If your child has a heavy load, get a back pack with wheels and a retractable pull handle.

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# 5 - Bullies can be in full force. Please review an extensive list of suggestions for handling this very complex problem in the next section on bullies. Also, review your child's school procedures for supervising playground activities and disciplining bullies.

# 6 - Playground dangers - In addition to the dangers posed by bullies on the playground, children may also be at risk from injury on playground equipment. Make sure that you discuss any dangerous equipment and unsafe playground surfaces with a school administrator.

# 7 - Weapons at school create chilling possibilities for injury. If you learn of any students who possess guns, knives or other weapons you need to immediately report it to a responsible adult, (even if you need to do it anonymously).

# 8 - Diseases - protect your kids from contagious childhood diseases by maintaining a recommended vaccination schedule. Talk to your family doctor or community health care department for specifics. Seasonal illnesses such as the flu may also pose a threat. Flu and pneumonia vaccines may be appropriate.

# 9 - Sleep deprivation - Make sure that your kids get at least 8 hours of sleep, daily. Children (and adults) who get less will not only be less productive and creative but will be more likely to experience an accidental injury. Attention skills are compromised in those who receive inadequate sleep.

# 10 - Sports injury - as your children engage in school related sports programs, make sure that the program is committed to maintaining safety and injury prevention standards. No game win is more important than your child's safety and emotional well being.

# 11 - Disaster preparedness - Review your child's school's procedures and prevention strategies for handling: fires, tornadoes, hurricanes, terrorist attack, violent incidents, weapons discovery, and substance abuse.

### **Dangers For Your College Bound Kids:**

Dorm break-ins –

Get a portable door alarm or other type of room alarm.

Dorm fires –

Make sure your dorm has working smoke detectors and sprinkler systems.

Always map out 2 escape routes, especially on higher floors.

Date rape & rape attack –

Never leave a beverage unattended and never accept opened beverages.

Travel about the campus at busy times and with company.

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### **Campus safety –**

Investigate campus crime statistics (often underreported).

### **Substance abuse-**

Liquor, drugs, & cigarettes are prevalent on campus. Know the risks and the harm that these products cause. Avoid users to prevent peer pressure.

There are plenty of health conscious kids on campus to befriend.

### **Sexually transmitted diseases –**

Know the risks of unprotected sexual activity. Take protective and preventive measures to protect yourself from life threatening illness.

### **Meningitis –**

College students appear to have an increased risk of getting this contagious disease. Talk to your family doctor or school's health department about the Meningitis vaccine.

### **Hazing –**

This timeless ritual of "earning" entrance into a social "group" has led to injuries and some deaths among college students. Parents can only hope that they have instilled a level of common sense and self respect in their children that would discourage participation in such a potentially dangerous ritual. Talk and listen to your kids.

As you review this list of potential "back to school" dangers, you can determine what risk exposures apply to your children. This realization alone could help you to take the preventive and protective actions that could protect your kids from harm. Have a wonderful and safe school year!

## Protecting Your Kids From School Violence *The Danger Caused By Bullies*

Everyday on playgrounds and school buses all across the country, bullies prey upon their more vulnerable peers. Some crime statistics estimate that 1 in 4 kids is bullied. While some "bully" behavior takes the form of mild teasing, all too often it takes the form of much more disturbing behavior with an aggressive and progressively violent path.

Bullying is not a game and it is not child's play, or "kids just being kids." It can, and often does, trigger dangerous consequences. Bullying at a minimum can cause young victims to feel depressed, angry, frightened and emotionally distressed. A victim may also develop stress related health problems. Even worse, if allowed to fester it can easily lead to violence, revenge and injury. A severely demoralized and defeated victim may become suicidal and/or homicidal.

### Understanding bullies:

A bully has very likely been bullied him/herself. Bullies usually have a low self esteem. They often will exploit the weakness of others to distract from their personal shortcomings or issues. They may be angry about their own family situation. A child whose family experience involves domestic violence, bitter divorce, child abuse, or other aggressive behavior may respond by bullish behavior toward his/her peers.

### Who is most likely to be bullied:

Generally children who are not running with the "popular" crowd are more likely to become the victims of bullies. Bullies feed on other people's insecurities. This is especially true of children who do not have many friends or who are different in some way. A loner is particularly vulnerable. Some victims are just targets of opportunity. They are just available when a bully needs a target.

### What bullies do:

harass, demean, tease, threaten, injure, frighten,  
destroy self-esteem

### What victims do:

Many bring weapons to school (guns, knives, etc.)  
Stay home from school to avoid contact with a bully.  
Fantasize about injuring or killing a bully.  
Consider self injury to "escape" the anguish and terror being experienced.

### Where bullies often strike:

school bathrooms, playgrounds, school grounds, school bus, at school lockers

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### What your kids can do to protect themselves and others:

Don't react physically toward bullies.

Don't engage in violence.

Don't make fun of other children.

Don't participate in the teasing of other children.

Do try to ignore a bully.

Sometimes this is enough to end the attacks.

Do verbally stand up to bullies. By not appearing to be intimidated the bully may lose interest in the target.

Do help others stand up to bullies.

Do travel in groups to discourage attacks from bullies.

Bullies will have more than one victim and the victim group should stick together.

Do ask for help, especially if the bully has crossed the line and has become physically aggressive (pushing, hitting etc.)

Do report bullies to an adult you trust, (parent, teacher or supervisor).

### What you can do to protect your kids:

Make sure that your children know that they can talk to you about any problems they are having, especially at school. Intervention is key. Bring your concerns to a school authority or other adult responsible for supervising the children involved.

You need to be actively involved in your child's life. Your child needs to understand that his/her feelings are valid and important. He/she needs to know that he/she can come to you with any problem that he/she needs help with. And you need to inquire about any behavior or activity that you are concerned about.

You should also seek resources to help your child build self esteem and self confidence. You can ask your local librarian to recommend some good fiction and non-fiction books at your child's reading level. You can also contact your local park district or community center for information on free and low cost programs that will give your child the opportunity to make new friends (with kids that have similar interests) and to build self esteem and physical self confidence.

## Protecting Your Kids From Bullies



Everyday on playgrounds and school buses all across the country, bullies prey upon their more vulnerable peers. Some crime statistics estimate that 1 in 4 kids is bullied. While some "bully" behavior takes the form of mild teasing, all too often it takes the form of much more disturbing behavior with an aggressive and progressively violent path.

To the horror of any parent who has seen the Florida school bus beating that was caught on videotape, a child can be too easily injured even in a "supervised" environment. Children can reduce the risk of becoming a bully's victim by taking some preventive and proactive measures to avoid harm.

Here are 10 Tips to Protect Your Kids from Bullies:

### Do's and Don'ts

- 1- Don't react physically toward bullies. Once a child engages in a physical exchange, the risk of injury escalates.
- 2- Don't engage in violence. Reacting violently to bullies also creates a serious threat of injury.
- 3- Don't make fun of other children. Not only can this empower a bully to attack a vulnerable child, it could also make YOUR child a bully as well.
- 4- Don't participate in the teasing of other children. Just as in number 3, children who behave in such a way become part of the problem and help to fuel the efforts of more serious bullies.
- 5- Do try to ignore a bully. Sometimes this is enough to end the attacks. A bully may become disinterested in a target that appears "unaffected" by the initial confrontations. Once a bully sees that his/her efforts are causing the desired reaction, the attacks could escalate.
- 6- Do verbally stand up to bullies. By not appearing to be intimidated the bully may again, lose interest in the target. Sometimes a mild, verbal indication that the child is not afraid of the bully, may also make the target less desirable.

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-7- Do help others stand up to bullies. Coming to the aid of a bully victim may also help to suppress the bully behavior. A bully has very likely been bullied him/herself. Bullies usually have a low self esteem. They often will exploit the weakness of others to distract from their personal shortcomings or issues. By nature they seek out weak individual targets. Stand up for someone and they can also stand up for you.

-8- Do ally with other bully targets. Travel in groups to discourage attacks. When a group of individual bully targets stick together, they aren't such an easy target anymore. There is strength in numbers.

-9- Do ask for help, especially if the bully has crossed the line and has become physically aggressive (pushing, hitting etc.)

-10- Do report bullies to an adult you trust, (parent, teacher or supervisor). Don't wait until the bully's behavior has escalated to physically violent behavior. Bullies harass, demean, tease, threaten, injure, frighten, and destroy self-esteem. As for the victims, Many bring weapons to school (guns, knives, etc.), stay home from school to avoid contact with a bully, fantasize about injuring or killing a bully and some consider self injury to "escape" the anguish and terror being experienced. Parents, students and educators need to work together to make sure that bully behavior is suppressed as soon as it is identified.

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## Protecting Your Kids From Gun Injury



Trauma caused by firearms is one of the top five causes of death in children. And thousands of children require hospital emergency room treatment annually, for gun-related injuries.

If you keep a gun in your home you must realize that it is necessary to take extraordinary measures to protect your children from injury and serious harm.

Most injuries occur when children are not properly supervised. Make every effort to provide or arrange adequate supervision of your children, from babies to teens.

Always keep your firearms properly secured in locked storage. Keep in mind that most young children KNOW exactly where a gun in the house is stored. They often know more about what is going on than we give them credit for.

Keeping your gun loaded while in storage also creates a potentially dangerous opportunity for the curious or mischievous kid in your house.

Pellet guns and BB guns can be just as injurious, despite the perception that they are “kid’s toys.” *To quote the classic movie, A Christmas Story, “...you’ll put your eye out..”* .....And kids often do just that.

Even if you don’t have a gun in your home, your child could still be at risk. It is not uncommon for children to “find” guns that may have been lost or purposely discarded. It is critical that you educate your child about the proper action to take if a gun is ever “discovered” anywhere. Children may encounter guns at a friend’s or relative’s house, on the playground, and at school.

Explain to your children that they should never handle a gun. If they ever “find” or see someone with a gun they should immediately tell an adult. Guns are NOT toys and can cause serious injury.

Make sure that your children know the risk and how to protect themselves from injury.

## Protecting Your Kids Substance Abuse



As you may have come to realize as you reviewed this publication, your children face several risks to their health and safety. And parents must work overtime to do their best to protect and educate their children to reduce the risks of danger, injury and harm.

Another danger that your child may very likely face is the exposure to drug, alcohol and tobacco usage and abuse. All three pose serious health risks and could easily lead to injury and death.

### PREVENTION TIPS:

Set a good example. If you use drugs, alcohol and/or tobacco you are sending a message that it is “okay” to use these products. Make sure that you know your child’s friends. Peer influence is a major factor in initiating usage. Discourage any relationships with “bad influences.” Encourage activities that help your child to establish confidence and self-esteem. These tools may help your child to resist social pressures. Make sure that your kids know the consequences of abuse which include: health risks, illness, social stigma, loss of opportunities, injury to relationships, and premature death.

## Protecting Your Kids From Accidental Injuries

Every year thousands of children are injured in accidents that are absolutely preventable. Here are some tips to help you dramatically reduce your child's risk of common injuries.

#-1 Make sure that you register your child's toys and furniture with the manufacturer, to be sure you are notified of any recalls. Additionally it is wise to monitor recall news bulletins. For links to recall information go to:

[www.FamilySafety101.com](http://www.FamilySafety101.com)

#-2 Make sure that your child always wears protective gear (helmet, elbow pads, knee pads, etc.) whenever engaging in bicycling, skating, skateboarding, sledding, etc. Kids who are reluctant to wear protective gear may be more compliant if they are allowed to choose "cool" or "cute" equipment that they like. Just be certain that any equipment complies with government safety standards.



#-3 Carefully inspect and evaluate your child's playground equipment and play areas. Play area surfaces need to be padded with soft materials to properly cushion falls. Swings should be made with soft seats to prevent injury. Caregivers should never leave children unattended or unsupervised.



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#-4 Never leave children unattended near water.

Babies should never be unattended in a bathtub. Children should always be supervised while swimming in pools or other water venues. Children should wear flotation devices. It only takes a few seconds and a bowl of water for a child to drown.



#-5 Inspect your windows for falling and choking hazards. Window blinds and cords should be cut to prevent choking. Cribs should not be placed near windows or curtain strings. Be sure that all screens and window panels are properly secured to prevent a child from falling through them.

#-6 Every year over 4.5 million people are bitten by dogs. Of that, about 60% are children. It is important to realize that any dog can and may bite if provoked either intentionally or accidentally. Dogs may feel especially threatened while eating, playing with a toy or bone, sleeping and while tending to their puppy litters. Don't leave babies and toddlers alone with any animal, even if the animal is the "harmless" family pet. Any interaction between the child and animal could frighten either one, causing a potentially harmful exchange. If approached by an unfriendly dog it is best to remain as still as possible. Do not make direct eye contact with the dog. Do not scream or run from the dog. By remaining calm the dog may lose interest and walk away from the child.



## Protecting Your Kids From Auto Injury



Parents can and should maintain some basic safety habits to protect their children from auto related injuries.

No children should every ride in the front seat! Children are especially vulnerable to deadly injury when they ride up front. All infants should be in rear facing carriers that meet all government safety guidelines. Toddlers should be in car seats or booster seats depending upon their age, weight and height.

Contact your local law enforcement agency or baby furniture store to inquire about car seat safety clinics. Your child's car seat will only be able to provide the intended protection if it is properly installed. Always put emergency contact information under your child's car seat. In case of an accident you may not be able to provide this information to rescuers.

All passengers should wear safety belts. Parents who do not buckle-up send a dangerous message to their children as well as risk personal injury. I remember seeing a poster on my dentist's wall that said "you don't have to floss all of your teeth– just the one's you want to keep." Well parents, you don't have to buckle up all of your kids – just the one's you love. *(p.s. I can only hope that anyone reading this understands my message. All children deserve to be loved by their caregivers. And all caregivers must do what they can to protect their children).*

Teach your kids the "rules of the ride." Before each ride begins remind them of the rules. Explain that they must not disturb the driver. Set a tone to be able to quickly notify all passengers that they need to immediately settle down during more stressful driving conditions. Do not allow passengers to throw objects, hit each other or argue loudly during transport. Set the rules for safety and stop the car if they are not followed. To review my complete list of: "Rules of the Ride" see the next safety section.

## Teach Your Kids the “Rules of the Ride”



Keeping your children safe during transport can often be a truly challenging experience. All kids, from babies to teens, can contribute to circumstances and conditions that could distract the driver. And it only takes one distraction to cause an accident.

While all drivers must learn the "rules of the road" passengers must also learn the "Rules of the Ride." By firmly establishing rules that your children/passengers must adhere to, your family may be able to dramatically reduce the likelihood of auto accident injuries.

### THE RULES OF THE RIDE:

-1- No kids in the front. The safest place for children is in the back seat. Air bags are designed to accommodate adult size passengers in the front seat and if deployed can pose serious injury risk to a child in the front seat. Also, don't overlook the potential hazard of side air bags. You need to determine if your child's seat is too close to such air bags.

-2- Every passenger wears a seat belt.  
No exceptions!

-3- Children up to about 8 yrs. old should be seated in a safety restraint that is appropriate for their age and height. As your child grows, follow manufacturer guidelines on car seats, booster seats, and seat belt adjusters. Having a safety seat is not enough. Most seats are not correctly installed. You may be able to locate a trained installation technician to give you a free install demonstration. Contact your local police department, auto dealer, local baby furniture store or contact the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration:

<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov>

Click on: Child Seat Inspections.

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-4- Do not disturb the driver. No matter how late or busy you may be, you need to make it crystal clear to your passengers that any disturbance can not and will not be tolerated. Any violations should cause you to STOP the car immediately. Refuse to proceed regardless of the consequences until all passengers comply.

You need to realize that there is no greater consequence than injury or death which could most certainly result when the driver's attention is compromised. (Of course, this does NOT mean stopping in a manner that creates a traffic hazard or violation. Safely park the vehicle. Stop when and where it is safe to do so).

-5- Never throw things in the car. For obvious reasons, the driver could be dangerously distracted.

-6- No fighting or yelling is allowed. (This goes for parents too!). Stop the car until the issues are worked out or all passengers agree to postpone the argument until you have reached your destination.

-7- Limit eating and drinking while your vehicle is in motion. Any abrupt stop or impact could cause those eating to have food items lodged in the throat (causing choking) or to have hot beverages spill (causing burns).

-8- Limit radio/music playing to a sound level that will allow the driver to hear approaching emergency vehicles or other important traffic concerns.

Oh, and here are some rules for parents:

-1- Never, ever, leave a child or children alone in a vehicle. Not only are they at risk of abduction, but also harm from exposure to extreme temperatures.

-2- Don't overload your car. Too many passengers creates a very dangerous opportunity for multiple distractions. Again, it only takes one to cause an accident.

-3- Despite the warnings and hazards someone is right now driving while under the influence of drugs or alcohol, sleep deprived, dialing/using a cell phone, reading a map or book, eating a doughnut or fries, and putting on makeup. Make sure you are watching out for this irresponsible person who could be about to run into your family. If YOU are guilty of the above... please park your car before you kill your or someone else's kids.

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## Protecting Your Family From Fire Injury



You can dramatically reduce the risk of fire injury to your family by using some simple safety and survival strategies.

### FIRE PREVENTION

Properly install and maintain fire & smoke detectors.

Always tend to a stove when cooking. Don't keep flammable items, (paint, propane, gasoline, turpentine etc.) in the house. Keep curtains and clutter away from any heat sources (fireplace, furnace, stove, dryer, space heater, electric heater, lamps, candles etc.). Never allow anyone to smoke in bedrooms or near bedtime. Too many deadly fires have started from people falling asleep with a lit cigarette in hand. Keep matches and lighters out of the reach and site of children.

### FIRE SURVIVAL

Have an escape plan and practice it. Make sure all family members are aware of it. Use safety night lights that light up when power is lost. These can light the exit routes to safety. Have a meeting place outside the house where everyone should meet to assure that all family members are accounted for. Have multiple escape routes/methods planned for floors higher than ground level. How would you escape if your stairs were on fire? Apartment dwellers must be especially diligent in planning and identifying escape routes as well as monitoring if smoke detectors in halls and stairways are being maintained and serviced properly. Never go back into a burning house or building to retrieve personal items or pets. It is a good idea to have a fire extinguisher on every floor of your home and in your kitchen. And make sure you know how to use them.

### CAMPUS-DORM SAFETY

Often parents and students are oblivious to safety procedures on campus and in student housing. Make sure you know about smoke detectors, sprinklers, escape routes, maintenance and fire code compliance.

### SMOKE, FIRE & CO DETECTORS

It is best to have a working smoke and fire detector in every room possible. At a minimum you should have detectors in bedrooms, hallways, basement, laundry room, and kitchen. Change your batteries at least 2 times per year. A good way to remember is to change them whenever the time changes (standard / day light saving) in the fall and spring. Check your alarm once a week.

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Carbon monoxide is an odorless and tasteless gas that could be deadly. Dangerous levels of CO could be present in your home if your furnace or gas appliances are not functioning properly. Every year there are deadly CO leaks caused by space heaters with obstructed ventilation. It is a good idea to have carbon monoxide detectors in every bedroom.

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## Protecting Your Kids From Illness & Disease



Protecting your children from the numerous diseases that they could be exposed to requires research, diligence, and awareness.

Immunizations (vaccines) help to stimulate the body's immune system to fight against certain contagious diseases that may be either bacterial or viral. Currently parents are encouraged to follow a recommended immunization schedule that protects children from contracting Polio, Measles, Mumps, Rubella (German measles), Hepatitis B (liver diseases), Varicella (chicken pox), Pneumonia, Bacterial Meningitis, Diphtheria, Tetanus (lockjaw), and Pertussis (whooping cough).

Your family doctor can provide you with a recommended immunization schedule. Make sure that your doctor is aware of any medications that your child is taking, any illnesses your child has had or currently has, and any current health concerns that may not have been evaluated or diagnosed yet. Depending on your child's condition it may be critical that some vaccines be administered as soon as possible while others should be delayed until the child is healthier or should not be given at all.

Despite the unquestionable benefits of vaccines there is cause for parents to be anxious and concerned. Although small, there is the risk of serious and debilitating side effects. Don't be afraid to question the necessity and risks associated with any suggested vaccine. It is also good to be cautious of "new" vaccines. One week after my daughter was given the Rotavirus vaccine we learned that it had been linked to a serious side effect that caused bowel obstruction and required painful treatment and surgical correction. I can't tell you how frightened we were as we waited the few weeks until she was out of the side effect "danger zone." The CDC no longer recommends the Rotavirus Vaccine. Unfortunately, some children suffered very painful experiences for this recommendation.

Another major change is that OPV (oral polio virus vaccine), is no longer an acceptable immunization method. Children should only be given IPV the injected vaccine. Although small, there apparently is a greater risk of actually contracting Polio from the oral vaccine.

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Another major vaccine debate is the link between the MMR vaccine and Autism. The MMR is a combination shot that vaccinates against measles, mumps and rubella in a single shot. Both the ACIP (Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices) and the AAP (American Academy of Pediatrics) conclude that it is safe to combine these vaccines. However, there are suggestions by some that there may be a link between such a vaccine "cocktail" and the development of Autism. The medical community vehemently defends the safety of the combination and contends that there is no scientific evidence that such a link exists. They generally blame the timing of the events for the appearance of a link. Most children who develop autism usually begin to display symptoms at about the same age when the 1st. MMR is administered.

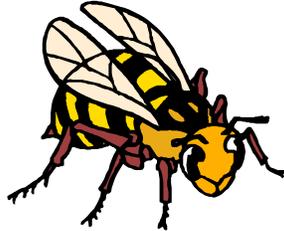
Regardless of whether or not there is a causal relationship between the MMR and autism, parents are faced with a decision that could significantly impact their children. It is important to realize that one reason that these three vaccines are combined is to make sure that - just in case parents are not diligent in follow up doctor visits, their babies are vaccinated from all three in one shot/one visit.

Parents can ask their pediatrician to administer only 1 of the MMR vaccines at a time. This may not be the best option for children in daycare, who are exposed to many other children. However, it may protect from the chance that the combination is "too strong" for a baby's system. Without definitive data that absolutely proves that there is no link to autism, parents may choose to request a less intense delivery schedule. Discuss your concerns with a trusted health advisor that respects any reservations or concerns that you may have and addresses them in a caring and informed manner.

Before your child receives any vaccine make sure that your doctor explains what normal reactions you should expect, such as swelling or fever. Be sure you also know what reactions warrant immediate emergency care.

If your child experiences a serious side effect make sure that your health care provider reports it to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System or call VAERS directly at 1-800-822-7967. This helps to alert health officials of broad risks and side effects that need to be addressed to protect children from future vaccine injury.

## Protecting Your Family From Bugs (Mosquitoes, Ticks & Bees)



Bugs are an annoyance that can ruin any outdoor event or activity. Even though some kids (and parents) may think bugs are cool, they can cause dangerous health problems. Insects that bite and sting humans can spread diseases and viruses. And some bites or stings can easily trigger life threatening allergic reactions.

Protecting your kids from bugs can be as simple as locking them in the house all summer long and never opening your windows or doors. Of course, that would be regarded as a "cruel and unusual" game plan. To effectively protect your family from bug bite and sting dangers you need to realize who your "enemies" are and recognize the tools that could protect your kids.

### **MOSQUITOES:**

The good news is that only the female mosquito bites. The bad news is that her bite can transfer a variety of life threatening diseases and viruses. After a female mosquito bites and has her meal, (blood from a human or animal) she then lays her eggs in water or in any wet place. Within 3 weeks those eggs become more mosquito attackers.

The biggest concern is that mosquitoes can infect humans (and animals) with the West Nile Virus (WNV) that they acquired after biting an infected bird. Most people (about 80%) who have been exposed to WNV show no signs. The remaining 20% will experience symptoms that range from mild flu like (fever, nausea, head ache, body aches, skin rash, vomiting) to severe symptoms that are similar to encephalitis and meningitis.

About 1% may experience the most severe and life threatening symptoms. Because there is no known treatment or vaccine for WNV, preventive measures are necessary.

Your best defense against mosquito bites is to block them either physically or chemically. Check your screens and windows for holes that could give insects access. Cover your stroller with a mosquito net. Do not allow your children to play in stagnant water where mosquitoes love to breed. Check your yard for stagnant water in tires, pool covers, bird baths, buckets etc. Also minimize skin exposure from dusk to dawn, when mosquitoes are most active.

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Chemically you can block a mosquito's ability to smell you with insect repellents. Choose from Soybean based, citronella based or DEET (diethyl-m-toluamide) repellents. Follow directions carefully to make sure your product choice is appropriate for the ages and sensitivities of your family members. DEET is also effective against ticks and biting flies.

### **TICKS:**

Ticks are the notorious spreaders of Lyme Disease. They are prevalent in woody and grassy areas. Ticks latch onto a bare area of skin to feed on the blood of animals or people. A bacteria called spirochetes lives inside some ticks. If such a tick bites you it will infect you with this bacteria which can cause Lyme Disease.

It may be difficult to even notice a tick on your body. They can be as small as the head of a pin and their bite is painless. It may take 2 weeks for you to experience symptoms. You may initially have flu like symptoms and later a migrating circular red rash. Facial nerve paralysis may occur in later stages if the disease is not treated.

Some children do not show symptoms for months and develop symptoms that in the past were mistaken for juvenile rheumatoid arthritis. They can experience painful and swollen joints. Often, the symptoms can be misinterpreted for other illnesses and can easily go untreated. However, if left untreated long enough the result could be very serious nerve and joint damage. An infected pregnant woman can also pass the disease to her unborn child.

Fortunately, if detected early and properly diagnosed the disease can be easily treated with antibiotics. Seek medical advice if you discover a tick on your body or experience symptoms.

Protect your family from tick bites similarly to mosquito bites. Physically block them by minimizing exposed skin in woody and grassy areas. Hikers and campers are especially at risk. Wear lightly colored clothing so that you can more easily spot any dark ticks. DEET has also been found to be an effective tick repellent. Spray DEET on your exposed skin and clothing. And don't forget to protect your pets with a tick collar. They too can be infected with Lyme Disease.

### **BEES (and other stingers):**

Bee stings can be very painful and in some people can trigger a life threatening allergic reaction. If stung, an adult should quickly scrape the stinger off with a fingernail, credit card or other item with a sharp edge. It is important to NOT squeeze or pull the stinger which will cause additional venom to be injected into the skin. After stinger removal, apply ice to reduce swelling and a topical anesthetic to reduce pain and itching.

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Most people will have a local reaction to a sting that may just include pain, swelling, redness and itching. However always monitor someone who is stung in case breathing is obstructed by swelling in the respiratory tract. If you have a family history of severe allergy (anaphylaxis) to stings it may also be critical to always pack an adrenaline shot (epinephrine) that can be quickly injected intramuscularly. Always monitor anyone stung for a week or two for any questionable symptoms and seek a medical evaluation.

Prevent bee stings by understanding what attracts them. They like sweet smelling things. Keep food, drinks and garbage covered outside. A bee can fly into a can and can sting the mouth or be swallowed. Perfume and fragrant soaps or lotions can also attract their attention.

The bites of mosquitoes and ticks and the stings from bees can be very dangerous. They can easily lead to life threatening diseases or severe allergic reactions. Protecting your family requires careful preventive and protective measures. To effectively protect your family from these dangers you need to realize who your "enemies" are and recognize the tools and behavior that could protect your kids.

## Protecting Your Kids From Poisoning



A child's world is full of products, plants, chemicals, medicine, cosmetics and other materials that could easily poison him/her. Every year poison control centers receive about one and a half million calls regarding accidental poisonings. Most of these situations involve children under the age of 5. Parents must be diligent in their efforts to avoid such injuries.

### Prevention Tips:

Most poisonings occur in the evening from 4 to 10 p.m. This is usually a busy time for families, so children may be less supervised than usual. Less supervision often leads to dangerous exploration. Do your best to be certain that your children are under a watchful "eye" at all times to prevent an accidental poisoning.

No matter how busy or over extended you get, nothing is more important than the safety of your children. Realize that whenever you aren't looking, they are. And they just might be looking in the cabinets for something to taste. Do your best to watch them with a vengeance.

Keep all medications, over the counter products, cleaning products, soaps, vitamins, pesticides, paint, chemicals, plants, tobacco products, alcohol, etc. out of the reach of children. Be sure such items are in cabinets with protective child resistant locks and are not accessible.

If any adults, relatives, guests etc. have or bring medication into your home - make sure that the pills are in child safe containers and that none is "dropped" or "lost" in your home. Make sure that any easy-open medicine containers/pill boxes are kept out of reach.

Crawl through the rooms in your home at your child's eye level to determine where there are potential hazards and poison risk exposures for your child.

Look for anything that a child could grab and eat that would be poisonous. Then relocate the items to not be within a child's reach.

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Realize that there are many things in your home that could be poisonous to a child. Cigarettes in an ashtray, soap in the bathroom, plant leaves, as well as many other household items could be dangerous and deadly if eaten by a child. Take a fresh look at your child's environment. Move anything that your child could grab and eat that could become a deadly "treat."

Make sure that any medication given to children is accurately dosed. Ask your pharmacist for a dosage syringe or dosage spoon to enable correct and consistent measurement. Using a kitchen teaspoon or tablespoon may not provide an accurate measurement.

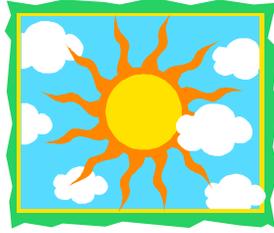
### Identifying & Treating Poisonings:

1-Discard your ipecac. For decades it has been a recommended staple in the medicine cabinet. Ipecac was regarded as a valuable tool in case of poisoning to trigger vomiting. However, recent studies and medical opinions are that it does not provide the best "on the spot" treatment and may cause harmful side effects.

2- Be aware of any symptoms that may indicate that your child has been exposed to something poisonous. Watch for trouble breathing, swelling, drowsiness, vomiting, stomach pain, sore throat, unusual drooling, or any other physiological reactions that appear unusual or alarming to you. Seek immediate professional advice and treatment.

3- Know and post in a conspicuous place the phone number for your local poison control center. If you do not know your local number, call 1-800-222-1222 to be immediately connected to your local Poison Control Center anytime, 24-7.

## Protecting Your Family From Summer Season Dangers



Summer is an exciting time of year. With the kids out of school your family has the opportunity to enjoy an abundance of warm weather activities. Your plans may include: a vacation; camping; swimming; picnics; barbecues; and other fun summertime events.

However, summer fun can easily turn into summer injury. Many summer season activities pose unique dangers and safety risks. With careful planning, safety awareness and preventive measures - you can help your family to have a fantastic and safe summer.

### SUMMER SAFETY TIPS:

#### # 1 - AUTO SAFETY

Children are playing everywhere and can be easily obscured from view. Be extra careful when driving through neighborhoods. Find safe play areas for your children that are not adjacent to any traffic zones. And as you load the kids into the car for all the activities, make sure ALL of your precious cargo is protected by a seat belt. Children under 8yrs. Old should be in an age appropriate car seat or booster seat.

#### # 2 - FIRE-FIREWORKS SAFETY

Despite the dangers, warnings, and legal restrictions some parents think it's a good idea to buy fireworks for their kids to provide a "fireworks show" at home. Every year children and adults suffer burns, vision damage, hearing damage and limb injury due to fireworks. Fireworks are also the cause of thousands of fires. The safest fireworks shows (and the most dramatic) are the ones that are done by professionals. Most local municipalities or fire departments offer (4th of July) fireworks shows, for free. Enjoy the show, without the danger.

#### # 3 - FOOD SAFETY

Wash hands before handling any food, especially at picnics and barbecues. Protect food, plates and utensils, from cross contamination.

**# 4 - OUTDOOR-RECREATION-  
& SPORTS SAFETY**

When playing outdoors you need to guard against the heat, the sun, disease carrying bugs and accidental injuries. Make sure all outside play or sports activity is monitored to protect your children from dehydration and heat exposure. Rest and water breaks should be planned and taken.

Guard against accidents by wearing appropriate protective gear for the activity. Helmets, knee pads, elbow pads, etc. should be used when bicycling, skating, skateboarding, etc.

West Nile Virus (WNV) has now become an endemic disease in most of the U.S. WNV is spread exclusively by mosquitoes. Only 20% of those infected with WNV show any symptoms. However about 1% of those infected experience very serious life threatening conditions. Insect repellents can guard against mosquito bites. Choose from Soybean based, citronella based or deet repellents. Follow directions carefully to make sure your product choice is appropriate for your family. Also minimize skin exposure from dusk to dawn, when mosquitoes are most active.

Ticks also carry diseases such as Lyme disease. When in wooded areas guard your skin. Cover as much of your body as possible and apply tick insect repellent to your clothing.

**# 5 - SUN SAFETY**

Protect eyes and skin from dangerous ultraviolet rays. Make sure you choose sunglasses that provide UV protection. Babies under 6 months should not be exposed to direct sunlight. Children should be lathered up with waterproof sunscreen with a high sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 25-30. Apply about 30 minutes before going out. Reapply after swimming, after sweating, and after 2 hours.

**# 6 - WATER SAFETY**

Summer is all about water activities. Whether you're having fun in your backyard, swimming at a public pool or beach - SUPERVISION is the key to safety. It only takes a few minutes and a bucket of water for a baby to drown. Never leave children in/at a swimming area unattended. Children (and adults) should never swim alone.

A life vest or other appropriate water flotation equipment should be worn by your little "swimmers." Swim shoes also provide important foot protection, especially at public water facilities.

Only allow your family to swim in water areas that are approved and safe for swimming. Many beach areas will post warnings if dangerous undercurrents or

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other water conditions would make swimming especially dangerous. Heed these warnings. It is also important to take notice of lifesaving assistance in the swim area. Are there lifeguards on duty?.....just in case.

Do you know infant-child CPR?...just in case.

Your home pool should be especially secure to not only protect your family and guests but also to protect neighborhood children who may "sneak" into the pool when you are not home. Children are naturally curious, and could easily drown in an unsupervised pool. Secure your pool (and outdoor hot tubs) and restrict access, whenever you cannot supervise.

### **# 7 - YARD SAFETY**

Barbecue carefully. Children should never be in cooking areas - indoors and outdoors. Children should also not be in the yard while grass cutting or fertilizing.

## Water Safety Rules



- # 1 – Never swim alone
- # 2 – Never swim without adult supervision
- # 3 – Wear a protective life vest that is suitable for the water activity
- # 4 – Always heed warnings regarding dangerous water currents, rip tides or other dangerous conditions
- # 5 – Only swim in areas approved for swimming
- # 6 – Secure pool areas to prevent access by children when no supervision is available.
- # 7 – Water & alcohol do not mix.  
Never drink and swim.  
Never drink and drive water vehicles.  
Never drink when supervising children during water play.

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## Protecting Your Family From Winter & Holiday Season Dangers



It is important for parents to realize that during the holiday season, your children are more vulnerable to a variety of holiday related dangers. Here are 10 tips to help you to keep your children safe during the holidays and throughout the year.

#1- Your children may be at a greater risk of abduction during the holidays. Families are generally in a rush with much to do. Holidays can easily be stressful times that could wreak havoc on quality child supervision. If possible, shop without the children. Bright flashing lights, sales banners, and long "to do" lists create distractions. A predator may be much more effective in luring children amidst the chaos.

#2- Prepare a Child ID Kit, today. While ID kits are a critical tool in expediting a search for a missing child, they also give you the perfect opportunity to discuss safety tips and safe behavior with your kids. You can access FREE Child ID Kits at: <http://www.FamilySafety101.com>

#3- There is safety in numbers. Make sure that your children are always supervised and accompanied by a parent or other trusted adult, whenever venturing out in public during the especially congested holiday season. Older children (teens) should at a minimum be accompanied by a couple of friends when out and about. Both adults and children who are alone in malls, parking lots, public rest rooms, playgrounds, etc. are especially vulnerable to theft, abduction, or other harm.

#4- Your home is at greater risk of fire during the holidays. Make sure that you have working fire/smoke and carbon monoxide detectors throughout your home. Change your batteries twice a year and take just one minute a week to test each alarm. Early warning is critical to survival. Make sure that all heating systems in your home are in good working order. Chimneys and space heater ventilation should be clear, furnace filters cleaned, etc.

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#5- Do you have a fire escape plan? Prepare your family for fire emergencies by creating and practicing a fire escape plan. This is especially critical when bedrooms are not on the first floor and when you live in a multi-story building. Determine a meeting spot where your family will gather to make sure all are safe. Fire extinguishers may also be helpful for smaller contained fires. Make sure that you know what type of fire you can use your extinguisher on, that it has not expired, and make sure that you know how to use it. Be prepared to:

- 1-pull the pin,
- 2-aim at the bottom of the fire,
- 3-squeeze the lever and spray from side to side.

#6- Holiday decorations also create several fire hazards. Keep all heat sources at least 3 to 5 feet away from flammable materials. Real trees can be too dry and create a fire hazard. Choose artificial trees that are fire retardant. Check lighting for shorts or other damage. Candles should be used sparingly under complete supervision. Never leave candles burning or indoor lighting on if you are sleeping or away from home.

#7- Make sure that the gifts under the tree are not injuries waiting to happen. Many toys are on the market that are clearly regarded as "unsafe" while others may not appear to be dangerous but may not be a safe choice for your child. You can check the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's list of toy evaluations at:

<http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/pubs/grand/toy/toysafe.html>

You should also look at any toy and ask yourself,

Could any part of this toy either suffocate, choke or strangle my child?

Could some part of it poke my kid's eyes out?

Is any part of this toy toxic in case my kid wants to put this in his/her mouth?

You are the best judge of what "crazy" things your child will do with any given toy.

Choose wisely.

#8- Children are more likely to swallow poisonous materials at home in the evening when they are not as closely supervised. The stress and events of the holidays make it even more difficult to monitor children. Realizing this risk exposure will hopefully be enough to help parents realize that nothing on your "to do" list is more important than keeping your kids out of harm's way. Intense supervision is the best defense. Just in case, make sure that you have the number of your local poison control center posted on every phone.

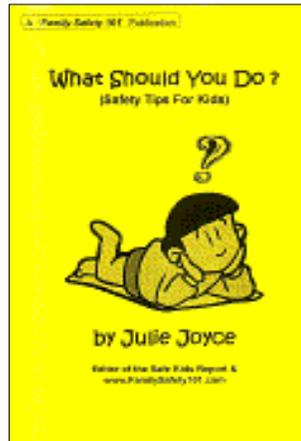
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#9- Just as with poisonings, children are more likely to be injured by a firearm when supervision is compromised. If you have a firearm in your home, make sure that your children can not access it. Don't be fooled, most children know where guns in the home are stored. Unloaded firearms are best.

#10- As you travel about throughout the holidays, make sure your passengers know the "Rules of the Ride." If anyone disturbs the driver, or engages in disruptive behavior, you need to stop the car and demand compliance. It only takes one distraction to cause an accident.

# What Should You Do ? (Safety Tips For Kids) by Julie Joyce



**What Should You Do ? (Safety Tips For Kids)**  
This Children's Book is designed to help you teach  
Your children important safety tips in a way that  
Will help them remember what to do  
in dangerous situations.

Take a Peek.....

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## Keeping Your Family Safe During Threat Level Orange



The U.S. government may at any time and in any specific city, raise the Homeland Security Advisory System threat level to Orange. Orange indicates that there is a high risk of terror attacks. When this occurs Americans, are encouraged to go about their planned activities with the confidence that homeland security at all levels of government is working to keep us safe.

For any adult this situation is confusing and contradictory. For parents with children to protect, this advise creates more questions than answers. What should parents do to keep their children safe? What activities should be canceled or rearranged? and what measures can parents take to prepare for possible attacks?

While there is no perfect way to prepare for the unknown, it is possible to mitigate risk with protective measures and to enhance survivability with preparedness. Here are some tips to help you to protect your family.

-1- Limit air travel to trips that are necessary. Several flights have been canceled based on credible intelligence that terrorists are planning a Sept. 11th. style of attack. If you must travel, be especially diligent in observing the airport and the surrounding passengers. Immediately report any suspicious or unusual activity.

-2- Major public events may involve the same risks as travel, at this time. Be sure that you are familiar with emergency exits and various escape routes. Report any suspicious or unusual activity.

-3- Prepare a family emergency kit. Many Americans may have prepared for extraordinary situations that could have been caused by Y2K problems. A similar preparedness approach could be very helpful. An attack could disrupt

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power service, poison water, air or food supply, restrict one's mobility, etc. A family emergency kit makes good sense for even natural emergencies such as black-outs, tornadoes, hurricanes, etc. Keep the items that could be most critical to your family's survival. Start with bottled water, non-perishable foods, flashlights, batteries, radio, medications, etc.

-4- Make sure you are aware of what safety measures are necessary under different circumstances. Having face masks or something to filter breathing could be helpful during a biological attack. Chemical or radiation attacks make require you to shield yourself from contagious material or distance yourself from it. Have a plan for what your family would do under either situation.

-5- Know your neighborhood. If you see activity that appears to be unusual, criminal or suspicious, report it immediately. You can contact your local law enforcement agency or submit a tip directly to the FBI: <https://tips.fbi.gov/>

-6- Talk with your children's school administrators. Determine what safety measures they are prepared to execute if necessary and what types of emergencies they are prepared for. Make sure that the school and your children have up to date contact information to reach you.

-7- Monitor government web sites for important news, updates and suggestions for preparedness. Visit: Federal Bureau of Investigation- <http://www.fbi.gov> Department of Homeland Security- <http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/> DHS's Be Ready site- <http://www.ready.gov>

-8- Stay calm and strong. You can only help your family through crisis if you maintain composure and focus. Be prepared to quickly assess any risk exposures, access credible news sources for confirmation or instructions, and guide your family through the actions that could keep them safe.

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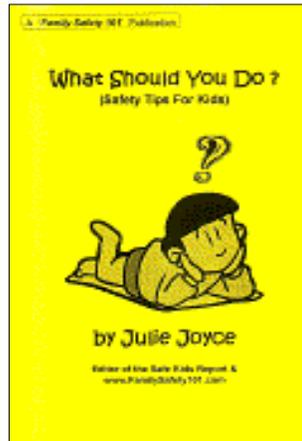
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Statistics – See Crime and Injury Statistics at: [www.FamilySafety101.com](http://www.FamilySafety101.com)

Clip Art from: Microsoft Graphics studio Publisher 98.  
(I know....it's time to get new software.)

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