

PREVENTION *Counts*

New Jersey Coalition for Prevention of Developmental Disabilities

Summer 2009

Presenting A Special Summer Edition...



Childhood Injury Prevention



**Coalition for Prevention
and
Safe Kids New Jersey**

The
Arc
of New Jersey



Safe Kids
New Jersey

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Drowning is Quick and Quiet: New Anti-Entrapment Law

"Kids drown quickly and quietly," says Carol Ann Giardelli, director of Safe Kids New Jersey. A drowning child cannot cry or shout for help. The most important precaution for parents is active supervision. Simply being near your child is not necessarily supervising. Even a near-drowning incident can have lifelong consequences. Kids who survive a near-drowning may have brain damage. After four to six minutes under water, the damage is usually irreversible. Although 90 percent of parents say they supervise their children while swimming, many acknowledge that they engage in other distracting activities at the same time - talking, eating, reading or taking care of another child. A supervised child is in sight at all times with your undivided attention focused on the child. When there are children in or near the water, adults should take turns serving as the designated "Water Watcher," paying undivided attention.

Drowning is the second highest cause of unintentional death for children ages 1 to 4 and 10 to 14.

One of the most horrific ways for a child to be injured or killed in a pool or hot tub is entrapment. A new law makes it illegal to manufacture, distribute or sell drain covers that do not adhere to the standards for anti-entrapment safety set by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). The Act also requires public pools and spas to be equipped with these anti-entrapment drain covers as well as a device to disable the drain in the event of an entrapment. Another important component of the law is that it establishes a grant program to reward states that adopt comprehensive laws mandating certain safety devices for all pools and spas. Additionally, the law creates a national drowning prevention education program and media campaign administered by the CPSC. For additional information, please visit the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool & Spa Safety Act Advocacy Web Page on www.safekids.org

It's a warm summer day and you're at the beach with your kids. Your cell phone rings and you answer it, shifting your focus from your kids to the conversation. Good idea?

Not at all, according to Safe Kids New Jersey, and it could even be deadly. Children can get into trouble in a matter of seconds when around water, so Safe Kids New Jersey recommends that parents actively supervise - with their eyes on their kids at all times - when they are in or near the water. Drowning is the second highest cause of unintentional death for children ages 1 to 4 and 10 to 14. Approximately 3 out of 4 pool submersion deaths and 3 out of 5 pool submersion injuries occur at a home pool. Overall, approximately 830 children ages 14 and under die each year due to unintentional drowning, and on average, there are an estimated 3,600 injuries to children after near-drowning incidents each year.

**The
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To help keep kids safe this pool season, Safe KidsNJ recommends these precautions:

Always actively supervise children in and around water. Don't leave, even for a moment. Stay where you can see, hear and reach kids in water. Avoid talking on the phone, preparing a meal, reading and other distractions. If you have a pool or spa, or if your child visits a home that has a pool or spa, it should be surrounded on all four sides by a fence at least five feet high with gates that close and latch automatically. Studies estimate that this type of isolation fencing could prevent 50 percent to 90 percent of child drowning in residential pools; A pool or spa should be equipped with an anti-entrapment drain cover and a safety vacuum release system to prevent children from being caught in the suction of the drain. The powerful suction forces can trap a child underwater or cause internal injuries; don't leave toys in or near the pool, where they could attract unsupervised kids.

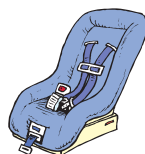
For extra protection, consider a pool alarm and alarms on the doors, windows and gates leading to the pool; enroll your kids in swimming lessons around age 4, but don't assume swimming lessons make your child immune to drowning. There is no substitute for active supervision; don't rely on inflatable swimming toys such as "water wings" and noodles. If your child can't swim, stay within an arm's reach; learn infant and child CPR. Contact your local hospital or recreation department for information about local CPR classes; and, keep rescue equipment, a phone and emergency numbers by the pool.

These guidelines apply to inflatable and portable pools, not just in-ground pools. **A child can drown in just an inch of water.** For more information about drowning and water safety, call: visit www.usa.safekids.org/water where you can also download a free **Water Watcher badge!**

DONT CUT CORNERS ON SAFETY

The last thing a parent wants to do is buy a car seat to keep a child safe in a car only to find out that the car seat itself wouldn't protect the child properly.

Car Seats



Car seats should not be used if they have been involved in a crash and their use is recommended for about six years, so a second-hand car seat with no known history should be avoided at all cost.

Check the Consumer Product Safety Commission's Web site - www.cpsc.gov

Play Yards and Cribs

Children spend many unsupervised hours sleeping, which makes it critical that their beds be the safest place in the house. Unfortunately, millions of cribs and portable child beds have been recalled in recent years for having faulty parts that can cause serious harm to a child. Check and see if the bed has been recalled for safety reasons. Also, watchout for old equipment, it may not meet current safety standards or be in disrepair.

Toys

We know from the millions of units recalled in the last few years that there are still many, many toys in circulation that have high and dangerous levels of lead, not to mention magnet danger issues. Shop for more traditional toys such as art supplies, and wooden toys that are from manufacturers known not to use lead paint. When in doubt, don't buy the toy.

Parents can sign up to receive immediate e-mails when dangerous products are recalled at www.cpsc.gov/cpsclist.aspx

Check previous recalls at www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/prerel/prerel.html
There are photos and/or descriptions of the products.

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Community
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A Lead Guide for Parents

Many parents know that lead can seriously harm growing children, not as many know that it's just as big a risk for pregnant and nursing mothers. And even fewer are aware that lead may be found in their own homes. So what is lead? What makes it harmful? What should you do to keep your family safe? Here is a primer on the dangers of lead poisoning.

Lead: A Toxic Heavy Metal

Lead is an element (number 82 on the periodic table). Unlike other elements, such as iron, calcium and potassium, we do not need it in our diets. It serves no known function in the human body. Lead is dangerous because it can harm every system of the body, especially the brain and nervous system. In kids who are still growing, it can cause permanent, irreversible damage. In pregnant women, lead can cause low birth weight, miscarriage or still birth. Lead poisoning can also cause behavior problems and learning disabilities. In high doses, it can be lethal.

But My Kid's Not Eating Paint Chips!

Everybody has heard these kinds of jokes, but the greatest risk of childhood lead poisoning does not come from eating lead paint chips. And just because your home does not have visible lead chips does not mean it is lead safe. It's likely that you could have lead paint in your home and not even know it. Most children today are exposed to lead from the microscopic dust that comes from decaying lead paint. Lead dust gathers on kids' toys, the floor and even furniture. Children who are still crawling or putting things in their mouths are especially at risk.

Is Lead In My Home?

For years, lead was used in construction, plumbing and especially paint in most American homes. Then, as now, many families did not know how harmful lead is for children. Lead paint was outlawed in all construction after 1978, but New Jersey still has at least 9,000 buildings in every county, rented or owned, that predate this ban. Lead is also still used in many products today; everything from jewelry to children's toys to some cosmetics. Parents have to be careful of what they buy or bring into their homes. You can get more information on lead-related product recalls from the NJ Department of Community Affairs at www.leadsafenj.org.

How Can I Keep My Kids Safe?

Lead poisoning is 100 percent preventable through education. Here are three simple things you can do to limit your risk.

1. **Ask your pediatrician to order a blood-lead screening test for your kids.** The only way to know your child's blood-lead level (BLL) is with a test. NJ law requires that all children be tested at ages one and two.
2. **Test your home for lead dust.** You can get a free, easy to use, lead dust test kit from the Wipe Out Lead NJ program (toll-free: 1-888-722-2903). Visit: www.snjpc.org/resources/Ondemand.html to see a video of the test kit in action.
3. **Use lead-safe work practices** when doing home renovation and remodeling, and hire only contractors certified to do the same.

The effects of childhood lead poisoning are devastating and life-long. Prevention is the best defense. For more information on lead safe renovation practices and contractors, blood-lead testing, and the Wipe Out Lead test kit, visit www.leadsafenj.org.

Save the Date!

LEAD AND BEYOND:
Progress in Eliminating Lead Poisoning and New Opportunities for Collaboration in New Jersey

October 2, 2009
Sheraton Hotel
Edison, New Jersey

For more information contact Ellen Dunn
allan.dunn@dnr.state.nj.us

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The New Jersey
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Prevention of
Lead Poisoning

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Safe Kids New Jersey Reminds Parents that Hot Weather and Vehicles can be a Deadly Combination for Kids

Overheating Deaths Are Preventable with A Few Important Tips

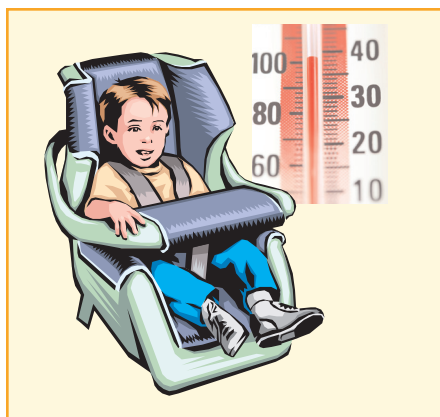
A few minutes might not seem like a long time, but there are circumstances when it can mean the difference between life and death. As temperatures begin to heat up, children are at a serious risk for heat stroke when left alone even for a few minutes in a closed vehicle. Last year, at least 42 children across the United States died from heatstroke caused by being left or trapped in a vehicle. "A child is our most precious cargo and drivers must know that these deaths and injuries are entirely preventable," said Carol Ann Giardelli director of Safe Kids New Jersey. "Our hearts go out to every family that has lost a child in this way. No one ever thinks it would happen to them, and that is why it's essential to get this message out, especially as the weather starts heating up."

Heat is much more dangerous to children than it is to adults. When left in a hot vehicle, a young child's core body temperature may increase three to five times faster than that of an adult. This could cause permanent injury or even death. Heat stroke occurs when the core body temperature reaches 104 degrees Fahrenheit. A core body temperature of 107 degrees Fahrenheit is considered lethal. The inside of a vehicle can rise 19 degrees above the outside temperature in just 10 minutes. After an hour, the temperature inside and outside of a vehicle can differ by 45 degrees or more - even if the window is left open a crack.

Safe Kids USA and General Motors created the Never Leave Your Child Alone program to educate families on the dangers kids face in hot vehicles. According to research conducted by San Francisco State University, even with relatively cool temperatures outside-70 degrees-the inside of a car can reach a dangerous temperature in just minutes. The research also revealed that more than half of these children were accidentally left behind in a closed, parked car by parents or caregivers while nearly a third of these children were trapped while playing in a vehicle unattended. Sadly, one in five children who died were intentionally left in the vehicle by an adult. Safe Kids suggests these tips for parents and caregivers:

❖ PLACE SOMETHING THAT YOU'LL NEED AT YOUR NEXT STOP - SUCH AS A PURSE, A LUNCH, GYM BAG OR BRIEFCASE - ON THE FLOOR OF THE BACK-SEAT WHERE THE CHILD IS SITTING. THIS SIMPLE ACT COULD HELP PREVENT YOU FROM ACCIDENTALLY FORGETTING A CHILD.

❖ TEACH CHILDREN NOT TO PLAY IN, ON OR AROUND VEHICLES.



❖ NEVER LEAVE A CHILD UNATTENDED IN A VEHICLE, EVEN WITH THE WINDOW SLIGHTLY OPEN.

❖ ALWAYS LOCK A VEHICLE'S DOORS AND TRUNK - ESPECIALLY AT HOME. KEEP KEYS AND REMOTE ENTRY DEVICES OUT OF CHILDREN'S REACH.

Never Leave Your Child Alone is a component of Safe Kids Buckle Up, which was created by Safe Kids USA and General Motors in 1996 to teach families how to keep children safer in and around vehicles. Nationwide, more than 19 million people have been exposed to the program through hands-on educational activities, car seat checkup events and community outreach programs.

What you need to know about

Folic Acid

Folate

Folate is a vitamin found naturally in many foods. Folate helps your body make new cells.

Why do women need folate?

Folate keeps your blood healthy. Not getting enough can cause a type of anemia. Having anemia means you have fewer healthy red blood cells than normal. Having low red blood cells makes it hard for your blood to carry enough oxygen throughout your body.

Can women get too much folate?

You can't get too much folate from foods that naturally have folate. But it is possible for some people to get too much folic acid. Taking more than 1,000 mcg of folic acid a day may cause nerve damage in people who do not have enough vitamin B12 in their bodies.

If you think you don't need to take vitamins, think again! It's very hard to get enough folic acid from food alone. Take 100% of what is recommended. When purchasing vitamins look for 100% on the label.

Folic Acid

Folic Acid is the man-made form of folate. It can be taken in vitamin pills. It is also added to many grain products.

How much folate should women get each day?

Most women need 400 micrograms of folate each day, even if they are not planning to get pregnant. If you are planning to get pregnant folate is needed before and during the first weeks of pregnancy. Pregnant women need 600 micrograms. Folic Acid can help prevent birth defects of the brain and spinal cord. These defects can cause serious health problems and can even cause the baby's death.

Anencephaly is when most or all of the brain does not develop. Babies with this problem die before or shortly after birth.

Spina bifida is a problem with the spine. The nerves that control leg movements and other functions do not work. Children with spina bifida have lifelong disabilities. They may also need many surgeries.

How can women get enough folic acid each day?

The easiest way is to take a vitamin pill. You can also eat foods that are high in folate, such as:

- ◆ Beans and Lentils
- ◆ Peas (Black-eyed peas, chickpeas, green peas)
- ◆ Juices (orange, tomato, grapefruit, pineapple)
- ◆ Fruits (oranges, cantaloupe, honeydew melon, avocado, papaya, raspberries)
- ◆ Soymilk
- ◆ Green leafy vegetables (spinach, lettuce, turnip greens, mustard greens, collard greens, broccoli, brussels sprouts, asparagus, artichokes, okra, corn, cauliflower, beets, green onions, sweet red peppers)
- ◆ Peanuts and peanut butter
- ◆ Nuts
- ◆ Sunflower Seeds
- ◆ Liver
- ◆ Giblets
(Items with folic acid added to them)
- ◆ Breakfast Cereals
- ◆ Breads
- ◆ Pastas
- ◆ Cornmeals
- ◆ White Rice

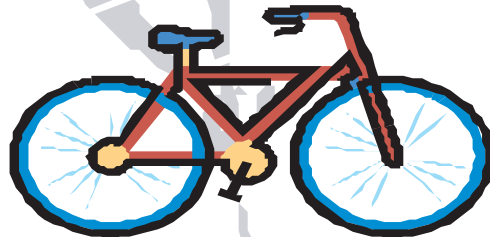
“Think Positive” Helmet Safety Reward Program in Union County, New Jersey



"Think Positive" was launched in 2007 to prevent head injury in Union County by increasing access to and use of helmets by children on bicycles. We were inspired by a similar program in Cranbury, NJ. Helmet use can reduce the risk of head injury by 85 percent and severe brain injury by 88 percent. It is estimated that 75 percent of fatal head injuries among child bicyclists could have been prevented with a bicycle helmet! "Think Positive" has been a cooperative effort of Safe Kids Union County, located at Children's Specialized Hospital in Mountainside and the Brain Injury Association of New Jersey. The Office for Prevention of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities has been instrumental in financially contributing to the program each year.

AllState N.J. Insurance, Ron Bansky and Associates, Kohl's, and Children's Specialized Hospital have all contributed in the past to this campaign to keep kids safe and prevent brain injury. "Think Positive" is carried out by the Traffic Safety Officers in the participating towns. Seven towns participated in 2007 and 2008 and twelve towns are joining "Think Positive" for 2009. Our goal is to get every town in Union County on board with this program in the future. This year's program will run from May through October 2009.

Every child who is observed by a traffic safety officer to be wearing a helmet while on his bike will receive a reward to reinforce positive behavior. Rewards are donated by local merchants and may be a free ice cream cone, a slice of pizza etc. Those children who are not wearing a helmet will receive information and, if judged to be needy, will receive a helmet. They will then have an opportunity to participate in the program. So far, Union County Traffic Safety Officers have received a total of 1,325 bike helmets to dispense to those in need. In 2007 post evaluation data showed an increase of 21.5% in the number of children wearing helmets while biking. In 2008 data showed an increase of 4% at program end.



Our 2007 report noted that "two officers expressed frustration with the number of older kids who were not responsive to wearing a helmet. Several officers asked if we could supply them with a good video or something to convince older kids of the need for protection". We are currently working collaboratively with the BIANJ to produce a video that might help. If you live in Roselle, Roselle Park, Elizabeth, Cranford, Kenilworth, Hillside, Westfield, Mountainside, Union, Linden, Plainfield, or New Providence, make sure your children have their helmets on when they ride their bikes. Be sure to tell them if a traffic safety officer sees them, they'll be rewarded!

Prevention is the way to go!