

Summer Safety:

"For everything there is a season, a time for every activity under heaven." Ecclesiastes 3:1 NLT

After the long winter and rainy spring, everyone is anxious for summer and the activities that take us outdoors. To be sure you enjoy all that summer has to offer, remember to be observant and practice safety measures.

Don't miss out on the summer fun. Follow these tips when making your plans:

Camping – Be sure to plan for unexpected weather or storms, carry plenty of water if hiking, take a map/compass to prevent getting lost, wear comfortable walking shoes, wear a hat and sunscreen for sun protection, use insect repellent for mosquitoes and ticks, and wear a whistle to use in case you get lost.

Swimming or Boating – Drowning can occur in less than 2 inches of water so teach your children to swim, wear properly fitting flotation devices, keep children out of hot tubs (they get dangerously overheated), use the buddy system, dive only in areas marked for diving, watch for shallow depths in lakes, and supervise all activity.

Fireworks – Explosions of any kind are dangerous so handle with care, keep sparklers outside and at arm's length (they can reach 1,800 degrees), have a bucket of water nearby in case of fire, don't allow children to handle them before or after firing, and keep pets indoors as they get frightened and may get injured.

Bicycling – Head injuries are common so protect children with properly fitting helmets, replace ones that have hit a hard surface, wear bright clothing for visibility, tie loose pant legs to prevent tangling in the chain, teach the rules of the road, never wear headphones, and maintain the bike (inflate the tires, oil the chain, adjust the handlebars, replace worn out brakes, and adjust the seat).

Sun Exposure – Sun damage is cumulative (children gather 50% to 80% of their lifetime exposure before 18) and cause wrinkles, sunburns, cataracts, damage to the immune system, and skin cancer. Be extra careful with skin protection if you have very fair skin/hair, a family history of moles, a family history of skin cancer, or take medicine that causes increased sun sensitivity.

(Source: www.kidshealth.org)

References / Resources:

<http://womenshealth.about.com/library/usercontent/uc061802a.htm> - HON approved site for family summer safety

www.haveasafesummer.com/index.php - tips from Connecticut Dept of Children and Families

www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/Seasonal_Advisories/SummerDrivingTips2006/ - tips from National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

www.fda.gov/Food/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/ucm109899.htm - food tips from US Food and Drug Administration