



# Home & Safe



Home & Safe is a newsletter designed to provide information, support, and resources for anyone caring for children. Our goal is injury and illness prevention, in and outside the home, throughout the year. Information found here was collected from various approved safety agencies including The Center for Disease Control, The American Academy of Pediatrics, American Trauma Society, and The National Safety Council.

## School Bus Safety



School will be starting soon. Before many children even get to the classroom, they will have to get on the bus. Here are some safety tips to practice so your children arrive safely.

Get to the bus stop about 5 minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive. Make sure you know how long it will take to walk to the bus stop so you know when to leave. Give extra time for bad weather and make sure the child is wearing appropriate clothing while they wait. Pack school bags and lunches the night before in order to have everything together so they are not dropping things on the way... We do not want them to lose that homework they worked so hard on the night before.

It is best to walk your child to the stop, though older children can walk with groups. If you are unable to walk your child to the stop, find other kids in the neighborhood with whom your child can walk. Remember, there is safety in numbers. Find a safe route. A sidewalk is the best way; avoid wooded areas or vacant lots where strangers might be. Once they get to the bus stop, remind the child that cars will be driving by and playing around can cause accidents. Many drivers are not expecting to see children so early in the morning. This is especially true during the first few weeks of school.

Be sure the child is 10 giant steps away from the bus when it arrives. This is the Danger Zone, because it is hard for the driver to see children that are too close to the bus. After the bus comes to a complete stop have the child look both ways, form a single file line and use the handrails to get on the bus. Teach your child to sit down in a seat with their backpack on their lap and facing forward for the whole ride. It is okay to talk, but talk quietly so the driver will not be distracted. When the driver gets to a railroad crossing everyone needs to be quiet so he/she can hear if a train is coming. During the ride tell your child to keep hands, arms, heads, and feet inside the bus, and, of course, no throwing. If there is an emergency listen to the driver's instructions.

On the way home, the same rules apply. Try to meet your child at the bus stop. Remember to meet them on the side of the street on which the bus will stop. After school they can be so excited to see you that they may forget to look before crossing the street. Since you cannot be with them all the time, teach your child to protect themselves and stay safe.

## Huffing

The dangers of huffing include damage to the heart, lungs and brain. Some substances may even increase the chances of getting leukemia, a form of cancer.

To a child, huffing may seem like a harmless way to “get high.” The everyday household products are non-threatening and easy to get, but they need to know that it can be dangerous and even deadly. Talk to your kids while they are still young. Huffing can lead to the abuse of other substances, which becomes a more difficult problem for everyone.



### Signs that a child may be huffing:

- Breath and clothing that smell like chemicals
- Sores around the mouth
- Paint or stains on body or clothing
- Drunk, dazed or glassy-eyed look
- Nausea or loss of appetite
- Anxiety or irritability

## Safe on the Playground

Children learn many things from playing. They practice social skills and mimic adult behaviors. In order to enhance their learning, teaching children safe-play is a must. According to the Center for Disease Control every two-and-a-half minutes there is a playground injury seen in the emergency department. That is approximately 200,000 children every year.

To prevent these injuries two things must happen. First, we need to teach children how to play safely, and, second, we need to remove any hazards in their way.

Teaching children safe-play can be frustrating. Once they are free on the playground it seems everything they were told is forgotten. While this is normal, parents need to be present to remind them of safe behaviors. Some ways parents can help is by reinforcing positive behaviors such as saying “Look how Johnny waits until the other kids finish sliding down the slide before he takes his turn,” or “Hold on to the monkey bars with two hands please.” These are better ways to teach your children than by saying “Billy get off the slide!!” or “Billy don’t use one hand on the monkey bars!!” Another important thing to teach your children is not to push other children or crowd equipment. Both behaviors have led to many broken bones.

Some hidden dangers about which adults may not even be aware are drawstrings on the hoods of sweatshirts and jackets. These drawstrings have caused the death of children by strangulation. Parents are encouraged to cut off any strings.

Teach your children to stay away from sharp objects, such as jagged edges on equipment or broken glass in the area. And on a hot sunny day that metal slide can cause burn injuries in just a few seconds.... Ouch...



### Calendar of Upcoming events:

August:

September:

October:

The surface under the playground equipment is also something to consider. If a child falls it is better to have a 3-4 inch layer of mulch or other surfaces that will cushion a fall.

Remember the job of a child is to learn through play. To do it safely, they need adult guidance and protection.



Injury Free Coalition  
for Kids