

Safe Kids New London County

E-Newsletter contains information on new recalls, safety announcements, and events to help ensure your little ones safety all year long!

November 2010

Travel Tips from Safe Kids to Ensure Safety Stays a Top Priority

Having fun while traveling is important, whether you go to Disneyland or Grandma's house, but planning ahead to ensure safe travels should be a top priority for all parents.

"If your vacation includes a stay at a relative or friend's, make sure you plan ahead and talk to your host about the possibility of installing age-appropriate safety devices such as cabinet locks or outlet covers to prevent injuries to your kids," says Esther Pendola, Safe Kids coordinator. "This is especially true when visiting people whose children have already grown or those without children, as safety devices may be out-of-date or nonexistent."

When traveling by car, always bring your child's car seat or booster seat. Babies should be kept rear-facing for as long as their car seat allows, usually to about age 2 and 30 pounds - but at least until age 1 and 20 pounds - and a forward-facing car seat can protect older toddlers up to 40 pounds or more depending on the weight limit for the harness.



Plan Ahead When Traveling by Car or Plane, Regardless of the Distance

Safe Kids coalitions around the country hold child safety seat check-up events where certified child passenger technicians teach parents about proper installation and car seat safety. Call our office for an appointment to ensure your little ones seat is installed correctly.

When traveling by airplane, Safe Kids and the Federal Aviation Administration strongly recommend using a car seat. Infants and toddlers are safest in an approved car seat with a harness, in case of turbulence. "A child who rides in a car seat on the ground should ride in that car seat on a plane," says Esther Pendola. "While most car seats can fit on standard airplane seats, make sure your child's car seat is labeled 'certified for use in motor vehicles and aircraft.'" Children who have outgrown car seats should sit directly on the airplane seat and, like all passengers, keep the lap belt buckled across their thighs or hips. Booster seats cannot be used on airplanes, because they require shoulder belts and airplane seats have only lap belts.

Planning ahead also involves packing appropriate gear for your children. If they will be biking, riding a scooter, rollerblading, skateboarding, etc, make sure to pack a helmet that is appropriate for the activity and fits them properly. If you have a baby and the trip involves staying overnight, bring your own folding playpen if possible, rather than relying on borrowed cribs. In several surveys from 2001-2006, Safe Kids Worldwide found many hotel-issued cribs to be defective, damaged or even recalled from the market.

"If you must use a hotel's crib," says Pendola, "inspect it carefully for broken or missing parts and look up the model on www.Recalls.gov to make sure it isn't subject to any safety notices."

Fires and burns are the third leading cause of accidental injury-related death among children ages 1-14.

Recalls

[09/01/2010 – Swing Sets Recalled by Kompan Inc. for Repair Due to Fall Hazard](#)

[09/07/2010 – Step2® Recalls Children's Transportation Station Toys Due to Choking Hazard](#)

[09/08/2010 – The Land of Nod Recalls Toy Vegetables Due to Laceration Hazard](#)

[09/09/2010 – Jo-Ann Fabric and Craft Stores Recalls Roll-Up Blinds due to Risk of Strangulation](#)

[09/14/2010 – Fun Stuff Recalls Children's Toys Due to Choking Hazard](#)

[09/14/2010 – Albee Baby Recalls C & T International/Sorelle Brand "Prescott" Cribs Due to Entrapment, Suffocation and Fall Hazards](#)

[09/15/2010 – Giant Starbuilders and Giant Stars Building Sets Recalled by Edushape Due to Choking Hazard](#)

[09/16/2010 – Children's Hooded Jackets and Sweatshirts with Drawstrings Recalled By Burlington Coat Factory Due to Strangulation Hazard](#)

[09/21/2010 – Children's Mood Rings and Necklaces Recalled by D&D Distributing-Wholesale Due To Risk of Lead Exposure](#)

[09/29/2010 – "S T U F F" and Paw Wall Hooks Recalled By Midwest-CBK Due to Violation of Lead Paint Standard](#)

[09/30/2010 – Fisher-Price Recalls Children's Trikes Due to Risk of Serious Injury](#)

[09/30/2010 – Fisher-Price Recalls Little People Wheelies Stand 'n Play Rampway Due to Choking Hazard](#)

[09/30/2010 – Fisher-Price Recalls Healthy Care, Easy Clean and Close to Me High Chairs Due to Laceration Hazard](#)

[09/30/2010 – Fisher-Price Recalls Infant Toys with Inflatable Balls Due to Choking Hazard](#)



Carbon Monoxide Alarms Could Prevent Half of All CO Poisoning Deaths

With the arrival of the holiday season comes the arrival of colder weather, as well as an increase in the number of fuel-burning appliances being used in the home. These appliances include ovens, space heaters, generators, indoor grills and fireplaces, and they can cause dangerous levels of carbon monoxide (CO) to build up in the home.

“Families today are better at understanding the importance of having working smoke alarms in every sleeping area, but what about carbon monoxide alarms?” says Esther Pendola, Safe Kids New London County coordinator. “Carbon monoxide is so dangerous because it is odorless, invisible, and it can kill. CO can make a child seriously ill in small doses that might not noticeably affect an adult.”

Important safety tips to protect families from CO poisoning:

- **Prevent CO buildup in the first place - make sure heating appliances are in good working order and used only in well-ventilated areas.**
- **Don't run a car engine in the garage, even to warm it up; move the car outside first.**
- **Install a CO alarm outside every sleeping area, on every level of your home and at least 15 feet away from every fuel-burning appliance.**
- **When you check your smoke alarm batteries each month, check the batteries on your CO alarms at the same time – and replace the batteries twice a year.**
- **If a CO leak is suspected, open windows to allow fresh air into the home. If someone who has been in a poorly ventilated room with a fuel-burning appliance exhibits symptoms including headache, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, or confusion, move the victim to fresh air and call 911.**



Safe Kids Offers Kitchen Safety Reminders

As the holiday season approaches, Safe Kids reminds parents and caregivers to check the kitchen for preventable hazards and to supervise children at all times in the kitchen.

"It's important to keep cabinets closed and locked, and to store hazardous substances out of reach, but that's not enough," says Kelly Murphy, Safe Kids assistant coordinator. "The most important safety precaution in the kitchen is constant, close and attentive supervision." Simply being in the same room as a child is not necessarily supervising. An actively supervised child is *in sight and in reach at all times*.

"Burns — from spills, steam, hot surfaces and flame — can be especially devastating injuries," says Murphy. "Because young children have thinner skin than adults, they burn more severely and at lower temperatures."

Scald burns from hot liquid or steam are the most common type of burns among children ages 4 and under. A child will suffer a full-thickness burn (third-degree burn) after just three seconds of exposure to 140-degree water, and will need surgery and skin grafts.

Remember Kitchen Safety for the Holiday Season

Safe Kids recommends these precautions against kitchen burns:

- Never leave a hot stove unattended. (Unattended food on the stove is the number one cause of home fires.)
- Never hold a child while cooking or carrying hot items.
- Cook on back burners whenever possible, and turn all handles toward the back of the stove.
- Don't allow loose-fitting clothing in the kitchen.
- Keep hot foods and liquids away from the edges of counters and tables. Be especially careful around tablecloths — children can pull hot dishes down onto themselves.
- Tie up electrical cords of small appliances. A toddler playing with a dangling cord can pull a toaster or microwave down from a countertop.

In addition to hot surfaces, hot liquids and sharp objects, the other major hazard in the kitchen is poison. Store potentially hazardous goods, such as cleaning products and alcohol, in locked cabinets out of children's reach. Also, install a carbon monoxide detector to alert everyone to get out of the house in the event of a buildup of the odorless toxic gas given off by fuel-burning appliances.

Children who can follow directions may be ready to help out in the kitchen with tasks that do not involve knives, appliances or heat. "You know your own children. Don't give them knives or let them handle anything hot until they have shown the maturity and coordination to do it safely," says Murphy. "Some children mature faster than others, so it's up to parents to use good judgment about each child's capabilities."

Safety Experts now recommend that children remain rear facing until the age of two! Real crash data tells us that they are 5 times safer in the rear facing position!!!!!!!

Recalls Make Toy Shopping More Stressful; Most Deaths Caused by Choking

With more than 65 percent of the toys bought in the United States between the Friday after Thanksgiving and Christmas, parents and caregivers are heading into the country's busiest toy-buying season.

But with millions of toys being recalled because of dangerous lead paint and magnets, toy shoppers need to remember that that number is a small fraction of the overall number of toys -- approximately 3 billion -- sold in the United States every year. "Shoppers need to be even more informed than usual to make sure they buy safe, age-appropriate toys, said Esther Pendola, Safe Kids coordinator. "Even though most toys in the U.S. today are considered to be safe, it doesn't mean we should throw caution to the wind."

Email Alerts Keep Shoppers Up-to-Date on Recalls

To stay informed, Pendola recommends that parents sign up for emails that will keep them up-to-date on recalls. "It's too difficult to get your information piecemeal from TV or the newspaper," said Pendola, "so if you get the emails sent to you each time a recall happens, you'll be up-to-the-minute and won't have to worry."

To sign up for recall emails, go to www.cpsc.gov and click on Sign up for Email Announcements.



Safe Kids Offers Toy Safety Reminders

Parents and caregivers shouldn't hesitate to report defects or design features that seem dangerous. "If your child has a close call, the next child might not be so lucky," says Ms. Pendola. "Report safety concerns about toys to the Consumer Product Safety Commission at 800-638-2772 or www.cpsc.gov. Your experience could be part of a pattern that might lead to a recall."

Avoid Second-Hand Toys

Pendola also reminds parents that most toys are safe, especially if you buy from a reputable retailer. "That doesn't mean you have to go to a 'big box' store, but if you shop a locally-owned toy store, make sure that the owner is aware and vigilant about getting recalled items off the shelves. And avoid used toys, which could have been recalled and not removed from circulation."

"If you buy toys secondhand or get hand-me-downs, visit www.cpsc.gov to make sure the toy hasn't been recalled for safety reasons," says Esther. "If a new toy comes with a product registration card, mail it in right away so the manufacturer can contact you if the item is ever recalled."

Other Precautions to Take

- **Make sure to buy age-appropriate toys.** All toys are clearly marked if they have small parts; do not buy toys with small parts (or allow a child under age 3 to play with those kinds of toys belonging to an older sibling).
- **Identify dangerous small parts.** To be sure of a toy's size, use a small parts tester (available in quantity from the Safe Kids Resource Catalog). Do not let small children play with anything that can fit into one of these cylinders.
- **Inspect toys to make sure they are in good repair.** Do not let young children play with toys that have straps, cords or strings longer than 7 inches, due to the risk of strangulation.
- **Actively supervise children.** Caregivers should actively supervise children playing with any toy that has small parts, moving parts, electrical or battery power, cords, wheels or any other potentially risky component. Simply being in the same room as your child is not necessarily supervising. Active supervision means keeping the child in sight and in reach and paying undivided attention.
- **Practice proper storage.** Teach children to put toys away after playing, to help prevent falls and unsupervised play, and make sure toys intended for younger children are stored separately from those for older children. Toy chests should be equipped or retrofitted with safety hinges that prevent the lid from closing on a child who is leaning over the open chest; if a chest does not have safety hinges, remove the lid.