

# Health Awareness

A County Health Pool Publication



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## Child Safety and Preventing Injury

**R**esearch shows more than 4.5 million U.S. children are injured in the home every year. Taking simple prevention measures and closely supervising children can help protect them from common household hazards such as fires, burns, drowning, suffocation, choking, firearm injury, poisoning and falls.

### Preventing Accidental Injury

Each year in the United States, nearly 500 children die in residential fires. Eighty-five percent of these children are under age 10, and more than 56 percent are ages 4 and under.

Smoke alarms are extremely effective at preventing fire-related death and injury. The chances of dying in a residential fire are cut approximately 50 percent when a smoke alarm is present.



- Use smoke alarms on every level of your home.
- Teach children that only grown-ups use fire.
- Keep lighters and matches out of reach of children.
- Have your fireplace and chimney inspected yearly and cleaned as needed.
- Do not smoke or allow smoking in your home.

### Kids Buckle Up

Riding unrestrained is the single greatest risk factor for death and injury among child motor vehicle occupants. Among children ages 14 and under killed in motor vehicle crashes as occupants in 2002, 50 percent were not using safety restraints at the time of the collision.

Misuse is common. An estimated 85 percent of children who are placed in child safety seats and booster seats are improperly restrained. Misuse includes, but is not limited to, using an inappropriate seat for a child's age and size, placing an infant under 1 year or under 20 pounds in a forward-facing seat, not securing the seat tightly in the vehicle and not securing the child correctly in the seat.

The back seat is safest. It is estimated that children ages 12 and under are up to 36 percent less likely to die in a crash if they are in a rear seat of a passenger vehicle.

*(Over)*

## Child Safety . . . (Continued)

- Properly restrain children in age- and weight-appropriate car seats or booster seats.
- Passengers over age 8 should serve as good role models by using safety belts on every ride.
- Children under age 13 should be seated in the back seat.

### Children Are Pedestrians Too

In the United States, pedestrian injury is the second leading cause of injury-related death for children ages 5 to 14, claiming the lives of 669 children in 2001. In 2002, nearly 43,300 children were treated in emergency rooms for pedestrian-related injuries.

It takes a lot of repetition to teach young children about the dangers of streets, cars, and other vehicles. Because motor vehicles can cause severe injury and death, it is very important that you are not lax about enforcing these rules.

Help prevent an accident or injury by following these suggestions:

- Do not allow your child to play near the garage or driveway or around cars.
- Make a habit of checking under and behind your car before driving.
- Closely supervise children while they are playing or riding tricycles or bikes near the street. If possible, keep all activities in areas that are protected from the street and cars.

## Benefits Corner

### Children's Benefit

Children's Preventative Benefit is available through County Health Pool if your child is a covered dependent.

### Wellness Check-ups and Immunizations

A list of wellness checkups and immunizations for all age groups are listed in the County Health Plan Documents at [www.ctsi.org](http://www.ctsi.org) or by calling customer service at 1-866-698-0087.

### Just a Reminder . . .

If you have an address change, please fill out an application and give it to your entity contact to forward to CHP so your files can be updated.

- Never let a child younger than age 10 play near or cross the street alone.
- Model good behavior, such as crossing streets appropriately at lights and crosswalks.
- Reinforce looking left, right, and left again before crossing the street.
- Teach your child to walk facing traffic on the far left-hand side of the street, unless there is a sidewalk.

Source: [www.usa.safekids.org](http://www.usa.safekids.org) and [www.webmd.com](http://www.webmd.com)

