



# PAA News to Use Newsletter

## Summer 2007

### Calling all bike riders!

You may think you're a pretty good biker, but crashes happen all the time to very good riders. In fact:

- Wearing a bike helmet is the single most important thing you can do to protect your brain - and your life - when you ride your bike.
- Children between ages 5 and 14 have the highest rate of injury of all bicycle riders.
- Each year, more than 500,000 children go to hospital emergency rooms or doctors' offices due to bicycle injuries.
- More than half of these collisions happen on neighborhood streets, sidewalks, or playgrounds.

#### Ten tips for safe bike riding:

1. Always wear a bike helmet.
2. Stop and check traffic before riding into a street.
3. Don't ride at night.
4. Obey traffic signs and signals.
5. Ride on the right-hand side of the street.
6. Check your brakes before riding.
7. Give cars and pedestrians the right-of-way.
8. Wear light or bright-colored clothing so that motorists can see you.
9. Be extra careful turning left - motorists don't expect it.
10. Avoid broken pavement, loose gravel and leaves - which can cause you to lose control of your bike.

## This summer... “Waterproof” your child.

We all love swimming in summer, but along with the sand, surf and pool come some dangers. According to the Centers for Disease Control, drowning is the second leading cause of unintentional injury-related deaths to children under 14, and a swimming pool is 14 times more likely than a motor vehicle to be involved in the death of a child under four years of age.

- Children, especially non-swimmers, should never rely on floats, water wings or other floatation devices to go into water that they cannot stand in. This gives them a false sense of security. It can easily turn into tragedy, if the child falls off or is knocked off the float into the water, either shallow or deep.
- Children should always wear water-resistant sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15, as directed. Fairer children will require a higher SPF on all parts of their body, including the face, lips and earlobes. While sunscreen will eventually need to be reapplied, it will not wash off as quickly, allowing for additional protection in the water.
- Take advantage of accredited swimming classes in your area. Children should be familiar with basic swimming skills, so that they can get themselves out of a dangerous situation. Non-swimming adults should also take classes in the event that they have to jump in to save their child. It is never too late to learn how to swim.
- Take notice of lifeguards at the beach and pool. Swim close to where the guards are stationed, and don't swim when guards are not on duty. Take heed

of signs/flags indicating treacherous swimming conditions.

- Have children swim with a buddy at all times.
- Children with sensitive ears should wear earplugs to avoid swimmer's ear.
- Water at the beach and pool isn't the only threat to children. If you are washing your car with a bucket filled with water, make sure to monitor it and dump it when through. Small children may lean into the bucket, lose their balance and submerge their head, causing injury or death in even a few inches of water.
- Remember that no form of water protection can replace the most important one -- PARENTAL/ADULT SUPERVISION. Most drownings or submersion injuries (brain damage) can occur in the amount of time that it takes an adult to run and answer the phone -- even in shallow baby pools. NEVER LEAVE ANY AGE CHILD UNATTENDED IN OR NEAR WATER!



## BOATING SAFETY

Source:

<http://www.aap.org/family/tippslip.htm>

- Children should wear life jackets at all times when on boats or near bodies of water.
- Make sure the life jacket is the right size for your child. The jacket should not be loose. It should always be worn as instructed with all straps belted.
- Blow-up water wings, toys, rafts and air mattresses should never be used as life jackets or life preservers.
- Adults should wear life jackets for their own protection, and to set a good example.
- Adolescents and adults should be warned of the dangers of boating when under the influence of alcohol, drugs and even some prescription medications.
- Life jackets should be worn by people of all ages on all watercraft, even when it is anchored or at the dock. The wake of a passing boat can make the boat rock, causing loss of balance, which can lead to someone falling in the water unexpectedly.

## Open water swimming

- Even good swimmers need buddies -make sure your child knows never to swim alone.
- A lifeguard (or another adult who knows about water rescue) needs to be watching children whenever they are in or near the water.
- Make sure your child knows never to dive into water except when permitted by an adult who knows the depth of the water and who has checked for underwater objects.
- Never let your child swim in canals or any fast moving water.
- Ocean swimming should only be allowed when a lifeguard is on duty.
- Younger children should be closely supervised while in the water – use “touch supervision,” keeping no more than an arm’s length away.

## *Nutrition Update*

Did you know that almost 1 in 3 children over the age of 2 years are overweight or obese? And the number is on the rise. As you look toward the future for your children think about the aspects of your life that may need to change to keep your child’s future healthier. Remember your child will copy what you do so make the following healthy choices so your child will too.

Eat 3 well balanced meals a day. Make sure to not let your busy life be the excuse to make 1 or more of those meals fast food. The recommendation is to limit eating out to no more than 2 -4 times in a month. This choice will save you money too.

Start choosing mainly healthy fruits and vegetables as snacks early so that mac and cheese, chips and French fries are not their favorites. As the parent, we need to model this behavior as well.

Choose to watch less TV so your child we see you exercising or reading and copy these healthy behaviors.

Keep in mind that portion sizes of any food are about the palm of your hand and not what covers up your whole plate. The same holds true for your child. Offer seconds of fruit and veggie instead of bread or pasta.

Even children can experience the health related risks of obesity including sleep apnea, high blood pressure, joint pain, diabetes and more. Make changes now so your children will make these healthy lifestyle choices.



## LAWN MOWER SAFETY

Source:

<http://www.aap.org/family/tiplawn.htm>

- Try to use a mower with a control that stops the mower from moving forward if the handle is let go.
- Children younger than 16 years should not be allowed to use ride-on mowers. Children younger than 12 years should not use walk-behind mowers.
- Make sure that sturdy shoes (not sandals or sneakers) are worn while mowing.
- Prevent injuries from flying objects, such as stones or toys, by picking up objects from the lawn before mowing begins. Have anyone who uses a mower wear hearing and eye protection.
- Do not pull the mower backward or mow in reverse unless absolutely necessary, and carefully look for children behind you when you mow in reverse.
- Always turn off the mower and wait for the blades to stop completely before removing the grass catcher, unclogging the discharge chute, or crossing gravel paths, roads, or other areas.
- Do not allow children to ride as passengers on riding mowers.



## Mosquito season is back!

Mosquito season has already begun in some parts of the country. With mosquitoes comes the risk of West Nile Virus infection and other infections spread by mosquitoes. While people over 50 are more likely to become seriously ill if infected with WNV, people of any age can become mildly to seriously ill. Most people who contract West Nile Virus do not show any symptoms. However, about 20 percent of people may have fever, headache, nausea and vomiting. Severe WNV symptoms include high fever, coma and seizures.

Although it's unlikely you'll be infected with West Nile virus, mosquito bites can still be an itchy nuisance. Protect yourselves from mosquito bites by using mosquito repellent whenever you go out, especially when mosquitoes are most active, such as at dusk and dawn. The CDC recommends mosquito repellents that include one of the following ingredients:

- DEET - those that contain between 10% and 30% of DEET are best
- picaridin or oil of lemon eucalyptus

You should reapply these according to the directions on the product label, which is usually every few hours.

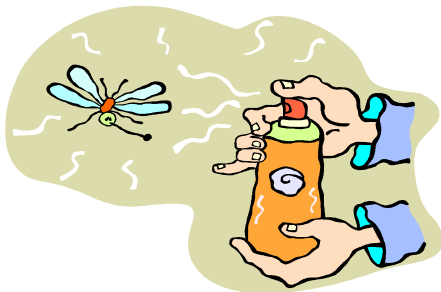
- Don't use insect repellent on skin that is already covered by clothing.
- Don't spray products directly onto your face (spray the repellent onto your hands first and then rub it onto your face), and don't use repellent on your eyes or mouth .

- Wash repellent off once you get back indoors.
- Don't use repellent on areas of the skin that are irritated or cut.
- Stop using a repellent if it gives you a rash or other skin reaction.

You can also take the following precautions to avoid mosquito bites and West Nile virus:

- Wear long-sleeved shirts and pants that cover your skin. You can now buy clothing that has been treated with an insect repellent called permethrin. Manufacturers say that the insect repellent stays on the clothing even after it has been washed a couple of times.
- Don't hang out near puddles or other pools of standing water like gutters or wading pools - they are common breeding grounds for mosquitoes.
- Get rid of mosquito-breeding sites by emptying standing water found in flower pots, buckets, old tires, etc.
- If you find a dead bird, don't touch it with your bare hands or try to move it. Let your parents know so they can contact your local health department right away.

Repellents are not recommended for children younger than 2 months of age.



## FUN IN THE SUN

Sunburns hurt. Sunburns can also cause dehydration and fever. If your child gets sunburn that results in blistering, pain or fever, contact your pediatrician. Otherwise you may treat the affected skin area with soothing moisturizers or aloe gel. Also try to keep the skin cool and encourage drinking fluids.

### What can I do to protect my child from the sun?

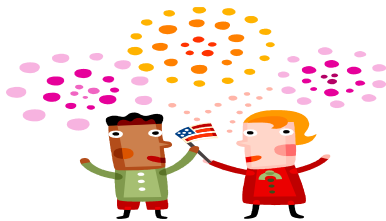
Babies under 6 months:

- Avoiding sun exposure and dressing infants in lightweight long pants and long-sleeved shirts and brimmed hats are still the top recommendations from the AAP to prevent sunburn. However when adequate clothing and shade are not available, parents can apply a

minimal amount of sunscreen to small areas, such as the infant's face and the back of the hands.

#### All Children:

- Apply sunscreen at least 30 minutes before going outside, and use sunscreen even on cloudy days. The SPF should be at least 15. Reapply sunscreen every two hours, or after swimming or sweating.
- **Stay in the shade whenever possible, and avoid sun exposure during peak hours.**



#### SAFETY FIREWORKS

Source:

<http://www.aap.org/healthtopics/safety.cfm>

- Fireworks can result in severe burns, scars and disfigurement that can last a lifetime.
- Fireworks that are often thought to be safe, i.e. sparklers, can reach temperatures above 1000 degrees Fahrenheit, and can burn users and bystanders.
- Parents should attend professional fireworks displays rather than using fireworks at home. The AAP recommends prohibiting public sale of all fireworks, including those by mail or the Internet.

#### ALL-TERRAIN VEHICLES

Source:

<http://aappolicy.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/pediatrics;105/6/1352>

- Children who are not licensed to drive a car should not be allowed to operate off-road vehicles. Off-road vehicles are particularly dangerous for children younger than 16 years who may have immature judgment and motor skills.
- Riding double should not be permitted because passengers are frequently injured.
- All riders should wear helmets, eye protection and protective reflective clothing. Appropriate helmets are those designed for motorcycle (not bicycle) use, and should include safety visors/face shields for eye protection.
- Parents should never permit nighttime riding or street use of off-road vehicles.
- Flags, reflectors and lights should be used to make vehicles more visible.
- Drivers of recreational vehicles should not drive while under the influence of alcohol, drugs or even some prescription medicines. Parents should set an example for their children in this regard.
- Young drivers should be discouraged from on-road riding of any 2-wheeled motorized cycle, even when they are able to be licensed to do so, because they are inherently more dangerous than passenger cars.

American Academy of Pediatrics, June 2007.

## Get Moving!

**Turn off the TV! Say “No” to Game Cube and X Box! Keep them safe and sound by encouraging outdoor play activities! Make some lifelong memories!**