

Safety Never Hurts

Beamer the Safety Bug's
Bulletin for parents and caregivers of young children



Fall/Winter Edition



Protect Your Noggin on Your Toboggan

Wear a helmet!

The snow season is a great time to dust off winter toys and play in the snow. Tobogganing is a fun way to get active and enjoy a winter afternoon. Unfortunately many children who go out tobogganing will suffer some sort of injury because they are not properly protected while tobogganing.

Every year in Ontario more than 1700 people visit an emergency department because of a tobogganing injury. Most of these hospital visits are due to a collision with an object (e.g. a tree, rock or fence) or being thrown from a toboggan. The Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto reports that more than half of their tobogganing patients suffer from some type of impact to the head. It is these types of head injuries that have the longest lasting effects on our children's lives.

What can we do to protect our kids' heads while they are tobogganing?

Simple...wear a helmet. Wearing a ski or hockey helmet will help to protect you from serious head or spinal injuries.

Other things you can do to keep children safe while tobogganing include:

- Avoid hills that end in roads, parking lots, frozen bodies of water or other hazards.
- Make sure that the slope is gentle enough that they stay in control of their speed and steering.
- Find a hill with a runoff at the bottom that is long enough to allow for a natural stop.
- Check to see that the hill and runoff is free from trees, rocks, jumps, fences, ditches and other hazards.
- Go down the hill in a kneeling position facing forward. Sledding on your back or head first can increase your chances of a spinal or head injury.
- Teach your kids to walk up the side of the hill and to look up the hill to avoid being hit by kids sliding down.
- Supervise older children until they show that they understand how to manage the risks and can steer, stop and avoid obstacles.

More winter safety tips and information can be found at www.safekidscanada.ca



Winter Poisons

Snow and freezing temperatures mean slippery roads and sidewalks, slush covered cars, and frozen locks.

Canadians rely on windshield washer fluid, anti-freeze, and ice-melting salt to fight these winter hazards.

However, washer fluid, anti-freeze and ice-melting products are very poisonous. Even a small amount of washer fluid or antifreeze can kill a child. Children may want to taste the antifreeze because the bright colours make it look like a tasty drink, or drink large amounts because it tastes sweet.

Here are some things you can do to protect your children from poisoning this winter:

- Windshield washer fluid and antifreeze should be locked away in the trunk of a car or in a locked cupboard in the garage.
- Windshield washer fluid, antifreeze and other chemicals should always be kept in the **original** container.
- Don't leave children alone in a garage.
- Keep ice-melting products, such as rock salt, locked and out of reach of your child.

This information, and more like it, can be found at:
www.sickkids.ca/poisoninformationcentre

Blind Cord Dangers

Stop! Take a moment to look at your blind and curtain cords. Are the cords kept high and out of the reach of children? Did you leave any blind and curtain cords hanging?

Did you know that cords from blinds and curtains are a **DANGER**? Children can strangle on blind and curtain cords. Take action now and do the following:

- Do not leave cords hanging.
- Keep looped or long blind and curtain cords high and out of reach of children.
- Cut cords short when blinds are fully down or curtains are fully closed.
- Whether the blind is up or down, make sure children cannot reach the cords. Tie them out of reach.
- Never put a crib, bed, high chair or playpen near a window or a patio door where a child can reach the blind or curtain cord and strangle.
- Do not put sofas, chairs, tables, shelves or bookcases near windows. This will prevent children from climbing up to reach the blind or curtain cord.

To learn more about blind and curtain cords visit Health Canada's web site at:
www.hc-sc.gc.ca/cps-spc/house-omes/decor/blinds-toles-eng.php

Hazard House Web Fun

When was the last time you looked around your house for safety hazards? It's something that everyone should do.

The London Fire Department has a new miniature "Hazard House" that is used as an interactive teaching tool at the YMCA Children's Safety Village of London and area. The Hazard House is a fun way for children to learn about fire and electricity hazards. The children are always taught to tell an adult about the dangers they notice.

The Hazard House has an interactive web site where you and your children can test your knowledge about home hazards and fire safety. Go to:
www.hazardhouse.com/london

Get Your House Winter Ready!

Do you have smoke alarms installed on every level of your home and in each sleep area?

Are space heaters at least 3 feet away from walls, sofas and anything else that can burn?

Has your chimney been inspected or cleaned in the past 12 months?

Has your heating system been professionally inspected or serviced in the past 12 months?

Visit the London Fire Department web site at www.fire.london.ca for more fire prevention tips.



Did You Know?

A backpack shouldn't weigh more than 15% of your child's body weight. Too much weight can cause back injuries.

Financial assistance provided by:

