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**2017 Summer Safety Tips for Parents!**

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There is still time for a lot of summer fun. But, parents must remain vigilant, as children can encounter plenty of mishaps. During the past week, two children in my family ended up in the hospital due to a scraped knee injury and a vicious tick bite. Their parents quickly realized that something was awry and took action. Here are some tips that The NYSPCC believes can keep infants and children safe.

**Bug Safety**

The American Academy of Pediatrics offers great tips to protect children from bugs. Here are a few of them, their website has many more.

- When outside in the evenings or other times when there are a lot of mosquitoes present, cover up with long sleeved shirts, pants and socks to prevent bites.
- Children should wear hats to protect against ticks when walking in the woods, high grasses or bushes. Check hair and skin for ticks at the end of the day.
- If possible, eliminate stagnant water, such as in bird baths or fish ponds, in your yard. Dump any buckets or tires that may contain standing water. Check that your window screens are tightly fitted and repair any holes to keep bugs out of the house.
- Combination sunscreen/insect repellent products should be avoided because the sunscreen needs to be reapplied every two hours, but insect repellent should not be reapplied that often.
- Use insect repellents containing DEET when needed to prevent insect-related diseases. Ticks can transmit Lyme Disease, and mosquitoes can transmit West Nile, Zika virus, Chikungunya virus and other viruses.
- The current AAP and CDC recommendation for children older than 2 months of age is to use 10% to 30% DEET. DEET should not be used on children younger than 2 months of age.

## Scrapes and Cuts Safety

Most cuts and scrapes are minor and can be treated with local care at home. Playdate.com offers the following advice. You can get more tips here.

### Basic care for a cut or scrape:

- Hold pressure on the bleeding area for 10 minutes with a clean cloth or tissue. If the area is scraped (not cut) less time is needed.
- If the cut is deep, and bleeding continues after 10 minutes of firm pressure, call your child's pediatrician and continue to hold pressure over the area.
- If bleeding has stopped after the first 10 minutes, rinse with water and look more closely at the injured area.
- If the edges of the injured area come together and are lined up then apply antibiotic ointment (Neosporin, polysporin, etc.) and cover the area with a clean bandage.
- For a scrape, wash gently with soap and water, and hold under running water to remove any dirt or debris before applying the antibiotic ointment and clean bandage.
- Wash twice a day with mild soap and water, cover with antibiotic ointment and a clean bandage.

**Call your doctor if** redness around the injury is spreading; if there is a green or thick white discharge; if your child develops a fever or if you feel that something is just not right, you are the expert on your child!

**Water Safety** • Public pools, backyard pools, the beach and lakes are all great places for swimming, but have different safety challenges — be familiar with them. • Learn how to swim (adults too!) Most city Parks Departments offer free courses. • Learn CPR; classes are offered all the time. Visit the American Red Cross website

**Sun Safety** • Avoid having your children exposed during the strongest rays of the day between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. • Use sunscreen consistently. Make sure the label says it contains both UVA and UVB protection. For children six months and older, use at least SPF 30, preferably higher. Reapply it every two hours. • Keep infants out of the sun. Sunscreen is not recommended for infants under six months

old. If they must be in the sun, dress them in clothing that covers the body and a brimmed sun hat. • For more sun safety info, visit this site.

**Heat Safety** • Never leave your child alone in a car, not even for a minute; the temperature can rise quickly putting them at risk. • Plan early morning play; avoid peak sun hours between 11am and 2pm. • Keep your children hydrated; carry water bottles with you, especially on hot summer days or trips to the beach where they'll be in the sun. • For more heat safety info visit this site.

## **Traffic Safety**

Transportation accidents, where children are hit while on the street, are a leading cause of child injury deaths. **Parents**, most traffic injuries occur when the driver is making a left-hand turn, please don't excel across the intersection until you check for children crossing the street!

Children need to be taught these traffic safety tips: • Never run out into the street from between parked cars • Cross only at the crosswalks when the signals indicate it is safe. • Don't be distracted by earphones or an iPhone when crossing the street

**Bike Safety** • Everyone in your family should wear a helmet; in many states, it's required. Children should wear reflective clothing. • Know and practice the rules of the road with your child. Children are killed as pedestrians in transportation accidents much too often. Teach them to ride in the same direction as cars, stop at all stop signs and obey traffic lights and how to use hand signals. • For more bike safety info, visit [kidshealth.org](http://kidshealth.org).

**Barbecue Safety** • Keep small children away from the barbeque; it's easy for them to get burned. Never leave the grill unattended. • Keep matches and lighters away from children. • Never use a propane or charcoal grill on the terrace or roof of any building. Thousands of fires are set accidentally each year. If you do have a propane tank, don't store it indoors or underground and please keep it away from children.

**Fireworks Safety** • Keep your children away from fireworks; in some areas, it's illegal to have them at home. Each summer, we learn of tragedies when lighting them goes awry. Leave fireworks to the professionals.

**Practice Playground Safety** • Watch out for hot surfaces that can burn children such as slides and swings. • Make sure the safety surfaces are thick enough to protect children if they fall. • Make sure there is an adult present to supervise at all times. • For a playground safety checklist visit the Consumer Product Safety Commission

**Practice Summer Camp Safety** • Make sure the camp has American Camp Association accreditation • Find out how the staff are screened and the ratio of staff to children • Find out how the camp handles emergencies • For more information on camp safety visit [www.nyspcc.org](http://www.nyspcc.org)

Let's make sure that summer is a wonderful and safe time for our children! Please visit [NYSPPC.org](http://NYSPPC.org) for more safety tips and also on protecting children from child abuse and neglect.