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**Parent Alert: Tips for Keeping Your Children Safe this Summer**

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Swimming, biking, barbeques, fun in the sun -- school's out and your children are raring to go. Summer is full of activities that your child should enjoy to the fullest. Unfortunately, it can also be a time of injuries, and no parent wants their child to end up in the emergency room. As a member of the NYC Child Fatality Review Advisory Team (CFRAT), I've reviewed too many tragic, accidental injury deaths. I recently polled my CFRAT colleagues for tips they felt were important for summer safety. Here are some key tips:

**Practice 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. Visit the [American Red Cross website](#) for more info.
- Learn how to swim (adults too!) Most city Parks Departments offer free courses.
- Only swim when there is a lifeguard or an adult is present.
- Pay attention to weather conditions and forecasts. Stop swimming if bad weather approaches.
- Learn CPR; classes are offered all the time. Contact the American Red Cross.

**Practice Sun Safety.**

- Avoid having your children exposed during the strongest rays of the day between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.. Seek shade for your children.
- 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. Their skin is much thinner than adult's, so it absorbs the active, chemical ingredients more easily, increasing the risk for allergic reaction or inflammation. If they must be in the sun, dress them in clothing that covers the body and a brimmed sun hat.
- Have your children wear sunglasses with 100% UV protection

- Medication and sun may not mix and can cause a reaction; check your child's prescription to be safe.
- For more sun safety info, visit <http://www.fda.gov/forconsumers/consumerupdates/ucm309136.htm>

### **Practice 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.
- Children (and adults) should never wear headphones while riding a bike.
- Check your child's bike on a regular basis to make sure it's safe and well-maintained.
- For more bike safety info, visit: <http://kidshealth.org/parent/>

### **Practice Barbecue, Fireworks and Fire Safety**

- Every summer there is increased risk of fires due to the use of barbecues, gasoline, air conditioners and other electric appliances. Fires are one of the leading causes of accidental injury death among NYC's children. The NYC Fire Department offers the following advice:
  - 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.
  - 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.
  - Don't park your car in front of a hydrant; if there is a fire, this can put saving lives in peril.
  - Overloaded electrical outlets are one of the major causes of residential fires. Make sure large appliances that use high wattage, such as air conditioners, have their own outlet.
  - Go over your fire evacuation plan with your child.
- For more summer fire safety tips, visit [http://www.nyc.gov/html/fdny/html/safety/fire\\_safety\\_downloads.shtml](http://www.nyc.gov/html/fdny/html/safety/fire_safety_downloads.shtml)

**For more information on Summer Camp Safety and keeping your child safe from harm visit [www.nyspcc.org](http://www.nyspcc.org).**