



Raising Safe Kids, *One Stage at a Time.*

Nationwide, unintentional injury is the leading cause of death and disability. Sixty-eight percent of injuries occur at home and most are preventable.

Preventing unintentional injury begins with understanding each stage of your child's development.

The physician practices affiliated with:



JEFF GORDON
Children's Hospital

For more childhood injury prevention information visit:

www.carolinasinjuryprevention.com or www.jeffgordonchildrenshospital.org

Infant Stage

Infants have larger heads than older children and less muscle strength in their necks. This means they frequently fall head first. Since they don't have the skills to protect their head when they fall, a higher likelihood of a head injury occurs at this young age.

Safety Recommendations

Never leave an infant alone on a high structure for even a second.
Never place an infant to sleep on or near soft bedding or surfaces.



Toddlers/Early Elementary Stage

Toddlers/early elementary-aged children are unable to gauge size and distance accurately, control impulsive decisions or use “protective” concepts for protection of their head.

Toddlers/early elementary-aged children are shorter than the sight vision of vehicles, making it harder for drivers to see them when they are near roads or driveways.

Toddlers/early elementary-aged children are still wired instinctively to use taste as a way to learn about new items.

Toddlers/early elementary-aged children are naturally drawn to water and can become unconscious within two minutes of falling into a pool.

Safety Recommendations

Falls - Limit the places and height of structures your children can access in and outside the home.

Poison - All chemicals and medicines should be stored out of a child's reach.

Pedestrian - Children under the age of 10 should always walk and bike with a parent when on or near the road.

Pool- Children should never be left unsupervised around a pool or other body of water. Remove from the pool toys and other items that may attract a child's attention.



Late Elementary/ Middle School Stage

Children are still unable to make complex safety decisions without guidance.

Children are still learning and are unable to see long term consequences of their actions.

Children “need” to belong to a peer group socially.

Safety Recommendations

Motor Vehicle - Children younger than 13 should be buckled in the rear seat of a vehicle

Bike - Children seek independence at this age however the one way to protect them from a potential brain injury in a fall is a bike helmet.

Set Limits - Children still need to know the “limits” of their independence; setting limits will help them negate the peer pressure of trying drugs, alcohol and other behaviors.

Peer acknowledgement - Find a positive peer group for unsupervised time.



April 25 through May 3 is Safe Kids Week! Get to know the stages of your child's development. Create an environment with a combination of supervision and protective measures to decrease the likelihood of serious childhood injury. Injuries are not accidents, and serious injuries don't have to be a normal part of growing up.



Talk to your doctor about ways to keep your child safe or any concerns you may have about child safety.

**Information compiled by Carolinas Center for Injury Prevention.*

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