

Winter 2023

CHILD INJURY PREVENTION NEWSLETTER



saskatchewan
preventioninstitute
our goal is **healthy** children

IN THIS NEWSLETTER

PAGE

- 2** A Safe Holiday Season
- 3** Winter Wonderland: Play Safely in the Cold
- 4** Dressing Children for Cold Weather
- 5** SK Child Injury Prevention Network
Child Injury in the News
Visit the Library: Recommended Reading



A SAFE HOLIDAY SEASON

Holidays are filled with the joy of decorating our homes, gathering with loved ones, and sharing tasty treats and gifts. Help to ensure everyone can enjoy the season safely by being aware of potential hazards that could harm children.

GET READY FOR THE HOLIDAYS:

- Test smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors. Make sure every family member knows what to do if they hear these alarms.
- Create or review a fire escape plan with the whole family.
- Check that fire extinguishers are in good shape (e.g., no dents, cracks, or rust), and the needle on the gauge is pointing to the green section marked “charged”.
- Know where to find fire extinguishers in your home and how to use them.

DECORATIONS

Keep small or breakable decorations out of the reach of children. Keep tripping hazards, such as lights and cords, out of the way to prevent falls. Choose battery-operated flameless candles to reduce the risk of fires and burns.

TRAVEL

Double-check your child car seats before road trips to ensure proper installation and fit. Remove winter coats before buckling children into car seats.

VISITORS

Remind visitors of safety precautions in your home. Put coats and purses out of the reach of children as they may contain hazardous items (e.g., medication, hand sanitizer).



TOYS

Throw away packing materials such as plastic bags, Styrofoam pellets, and other items that could cause suffocation or choking. Check new toys for loose parts, and ensure battery compartments are secured with a screw or strong tape.

TREATS

Keep candy, nuts, and other choking hazards out of the reach of young children. Ensure treats containing alcohol or cannabis are kept locked away, up high, and out of sight of children.



RESOURCE 4-019 HOLIDAY SAFETY FACT SHEET

This fact sheet provides safety tips to help ensure an injury-free holiday season and includes a colouring page.

[CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD.](#)

WINTER WONDERLAND: PLAY SAFELY IN THE COLD

Playing in the snow is an opportunity for creativity, imagination, and experimenting. Winter presents endless opportunities for outdoor play. Children's play and learning environments can be expanded when they are encouraged to embrace the cold and are taught how to play safely in winter weather.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO KEEP CHILDREN SAFE WHILE PLAYING OUTDOORS

- Supervise young children and use the buddy system for older children. Staying together allows you to help keep each other safe.
- Dress children in layers of warm clothing appropriate for the temperature and wind chill. If clothing gets wet, replace it with dry clothing as soon as possible.
- Use appropriate equipment for each activity, remembering to protect the brain with a certified helmet.
- Check the thickness of ice before going on frozen ponds, sloughs, or lakes. Ice must be at least 15 cm (6 in.) thick for walking or skating, and 20 cm (8 in.) thick for skating parties or games. Teach children to stay away from ice in spring when warmer weather weakens ice.
- Encourage children to stay hydrated by regularly offering warm drinks.
- Use sunscreen, even on cloudy days.



TOBOGGANING

A ski or snowboard helmet is recommended for anyone who is tobogganing. A thin, warm hat that covers the earlobes should be worn under the helmet. The safest position to be in while tobogganing is kneeling. Sliding headfirst on the stomach or lying on the back increases the risk of injury to head, spine, or spinal cord.

Build snow people
Have a snowball fight
Plan a winter scavenger hunt
Walk on snow and ice
Build a snow castle
Go ice skating

IDEAS FOR OUTDOOR WINTER PLAY

Dig in the snow
Paint with food coloring
Find twigs and pinecones
Go tobogganing
Listen to the winter sounds
Go for a nature walk

DRESSING CHILDREN FOR COLD WEATHER

Saskatchewan winters can be long and cold. Winter can also be a lot of fun! Remember to check the weather forecast before going outside and be aware of the wind chill factor. Following the tips below will help children stay warm and dry, helping them to enjoy the outdoors all winter long.



- Cover your child's head with a warm, close-fitting hat that covers the ears.
- Use a tube-shaped neck warmer instead of a scarf. If a scarf is used, tuck the ends into the jacket to avoid strangulation.
- Dress children in layers that can be put on and taken off easily as the temperature or their activity level changes.
 - Choose a warm inner layer that sits against the skin. Avoid cotton and choose breathable fabrics such as polyester, nylon, or wool.
 - Pick flexible, cozy clothing for the middle layer. Fleece or knit sweaters and sweatpants work well for this layer.
 - Select waterproof clothing for the outer layer. Raincoats, parkas, splash pants, and ski pants are typically made to keep out wind, water, and snow.
- Keep hands warm with soft knit mittens layered under waterproof mittens.
- Layer wool socks on the feet to keep toes warm.
- Choose waterproof boots that have enough space around the feet for layering socks. Tuck boots into splash pants or ski pants to keep water and snow out of boots.



DRESSING KIDS FOR WINTER POSTER

www.activeforlife.com

This poster shows how to dress correctly and stay safe while being active outdoors in the snow and ice.

[CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD.](#)



CAPC WINTER SAFETY INFOGRAPHIC

This printable winter safety infographic provides winter safety tips for parents and caregivers.

[CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD.](#)

To learn more, visit <https://skprevention.ca/safety/winter-safety/>.

SASKATCHEWAN CHILD INJURY PREVENTION NETWORK – JOIN US!

Do you teach children and caregivers about safety? Is the prevention of childhood injuries important to you? The Saskatchewan Child Injury Prevention Network is a group where you can ask questions, engage in discussions, and share information and resources related to child injury prevention. For more information or to join, email Robyn Stewart at rstewart@skprevention.ca.

“Through playing outdoors this winter, children will learn to assess risk, problem solve and adapt while also building their self-confidence in navigating challenging situations and everything this season has to offer.”

From “Outdoor Winter Play for the Whole Family” in *Psychology Today*.

CHILD INJURY IN THE NEWS

[Saskatoon high school student calling for changes to bike safety.](#)
- [Global News](#)

[Learning from Sask’s safest intersections can improve road safety:](#)
[U of S researcher - Star Phoenix](#)

[Lives are at stake: Why is injury prevention an underfunded public health concern?](#)
- [Healthy Debate](#)

saskatchewan
preventioninstitute
our goal is **healthy** children

VISIT THE LIBRARY: RECOMMENDED READING

Books available through Saskatchewan’s Public Library System.



[Be Careful and Stay Safe](#)
by Cheri Meiners



[The Safety Bugs Say...](#)
by Robin Rose



[Your Fantastic Elastic Brain](#)
by JoAnn Deak

Feel free to distribute this newsletter to others. If someone you know is interested in receiving future editions of the newsletter, you have a contribution for a future newsletter, or you would like to be removed from this list, please contact Robyn via email at rstewart@skprevention.ca.