

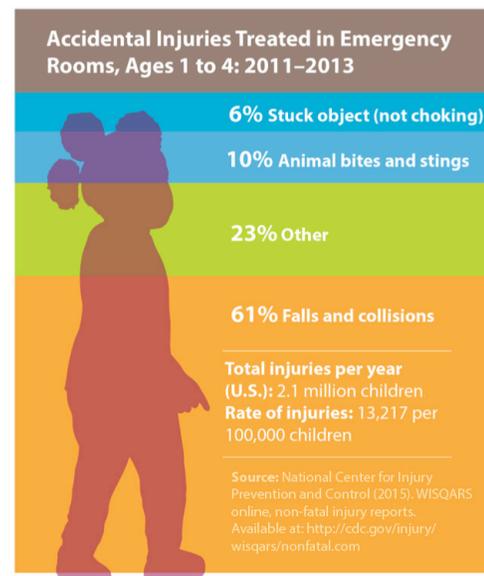


Safety Tips for Dads To Keep Young Kids Safe

(Ages 1 to 4 Years)

Accidents happen to everyone, but there are things we can do to make them happen less often and be less dangerous. To keep children safe, the first step is to know how they are most likely to get hurt. Drawing on data from the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control,¹ this guide gives information about the kinds of accidents that are the most common and the most dangerous for **children between the ages of 1 and 4**, and then offers suggestions about what dads can do to help avoid these accidents.

Most children do not get seriously hurt, but it is important to know what dangers they face. Sometimes, parents worry about dangers that grab the headlines, but those usually are not what hurt the most children.



¹National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. (2015). WISQARS online reports Available at: <http://cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/>

Toddlers and preschoolers are taken to the emergency room more than children of other ages. This is because they are beginning to explore their surroundings on their own, but they do not know how to protect themselves from everyday dangers yet. They need adults to carefully watch out for them and prevent injuries. Caregivers can also begin teaching them how to avoid dangers for themselves.

Most injuries that send toddlers and preschoolers to the emergency room come from falling down or running into something (such as a table leg). Children

this age also end up at the hospital for animal bites and insect stings, or because they have eaten an object or put something in their body, such as a bean into their nose. The second most common cause of injuries is a category called “other,” which includes things like cuts, sprains, and muscle strains.

While accidental deaths at this age are rare, most are caused by car crashes or drowning. Car crashes are especially dangerous if the child is not in a car seat, is in the wrong kind of car seat, or if the seat is not connected to the car correctly.

TIPS FOR AVOIDING SERIOUS INJURIES TO TODDLERS

1. **Supervise young children when they are near places where they could fall, such as stairs or on the playground.**
Supervision means you can hear and see the child at all times, and are aware of possible dangers. The safest playgrounds have soft surfaces under the equipment, such as wood chips or sand, not pavement.
2. **Teach children clear and simple safety rules about crossing the street, not touching things that are hot or sharp in the kitchen, and other dangers.**
Teach safe ways to play with toys and use playground equipment. For instance, slides should only be used feet first.
3. **Do not let children play in the street.**
When children play in the street, drivers do not always see them and they may be hit by a car. An adult should always be

outside with young children when they play. Take turns with other parents and neighbors if you cannot be outside the whole time.

4. **Make your home safer by getting rid of dangers.** Pay attention to places that children could fall down or run into, such as stairs, windows (screens cannot hold a child in), balconies, and table corners. Putting up padding (like squares of carpet or blankets) and devices (like window guards and stair gates) can keep children from hurting themselves. Put dangerous things on high shelves and make sure that cords and wires are taped down or out of reach.
5. **Make your home safe from fires.** Heaters and stoves should not have things like cloth or paper near them, and you should only use them when someone

is in the room and awake. Never smoke in bed. Check smoke alarms often to make sure that they have fresh batteries and they work, and make sure kids recognize the sound of the alarm and know where to go if there is a fire. Property owners are required by law to put smoke alarms in their rental properties in most states. You can also call your local fire station or American Red Cross to find out where to get free smoke alarms for your home.

6. **Take precaution against accidental poisoning.** Carbon monoxide and lead poisoning can be deadly, but they are preventable. Carbon monoxide is odorless and colorless. Without a detector, people often do not know when they are at risk of being poisoned. Carbon monoxide poisoning happens most often in enclosed spaces, such as houses, and when appliances like stoves, ovens, or other gas-operated devices leak. Detectors are often available through local fire departments and are cheap and easy to install without professional help. Make sure to change the batteries every 6 months. Lead poisoning occurs when you breathe or swallow something with lead in it, and is most common in older houses that have old paint or pipes. Other sources of lead poisoning can include toys or candy, especially if they are made in other countries where regulations are less strict than in the U.S. Removing leaded products from the home can be costly, but some areas provide free lead testing and removal services for families that qualify.
7. **Keep small objects that toddlers could choke on or stick in their bodies away from them.** Pay attention to labels on toys that say they might cause choking.

8. **Always supervise children when they are anywhere near pools, ponds, lakes, or streams.** If there is an uncovered pool near your home, put a bell or alarm on the door to let you know when your toddler or preschooler goes outside.
9. **Teach children to swim as early as possible.** Local recreation centers, such as the YMCA or Boys and Girls Club, may have free or low-cost lessons.
10. **Have the right car seat installed the right way.** When riding in cars (including taxis) young children should be in car seats that point them toward the back of the car (rear-facing) until they outgrow them, and then in forward-facing car seats (instructions on the seat will tell you when to switch). In many places, there are local organizations that provide free or low-cost child seats, and others that can help you install them correctly.
11. **Always wear a seat belt yourself when in a car.** It is never too early to show children the right way of doing things (and being a good role model keeps you safer, too).
12. **Never leave children in a car without an adult.** Even in weather that seems cool, cars can get dangerously hot in just a few minutes.
13. **Avoid leaving a young child alone with an animal, and teach children to avoid animals they do not know.** Even well-trained pets can bite when they are frightened or injured. Teach children the right way to play with pets. For example, do not tease or grab at them, and do not bother them when they are sleeping or eating.

More Information

Car seat use:

<http://www.childtrends.org/?indicators=seat-belt-use>

Carbon monoxide FAQs:

<http://www.cdc.gov/co/faqs.htm>

Carbon monoxide safety:

http://www.redcross.org/images/MEDIA_CustomProductCatalog/m4340092_FireCOFactSheet.pdf

Danger of leaving toddlers in the car:

<http://www.webmd.com/parenting/features/hot-cars-and-child-death-prevention>

Finding car seat inspection stations:

<http://www.safercar.gov/cpsApp/cps/index.htm>

Free or low-cost car seats:

<http://buckleupforlife.org/about-our-program>

Home fire safety:

<http://www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster/home-fire>

How to supervise:

<http://cfoc.nrckids.org/StandardView/2.2.0.1>

Installing car seats:

<http://www.safercar.gov/parents/CarSeats/How-To-Install-Car-Seats.htm#>

Installing car seats (videos):

<https://www.youtube.com/user/thecarseatlady1>

Lead safety:

<http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/infographic.htm>

Making your home safe:

http://kidshealth.org/parent/firstaid_safe/home/household_checklist.html

More on risks and dangers:

<http://www.worryclock.com>

Preventing animal bites:

<https://www.asPCA.org/pet-care/dog-care/dog-bite-prevention>

Preventing bee stings:

<http://www.drgreene.com/tips-avoiding-bees-preventing-bee-stings>

Preventing drowning:

<http://ndpa.org/resources/safety-tips/layers-of-protection>

Preventing falls:

<http://www.cdc.gov/SafeChild/Falls>

Staying safe around animals:

<http://kidshealth.org/kid/watch/house/animals.html#>

