

# *Stay safe*



*Safety information for parents and carers of children aged 5 to 11 years*





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# *Introduction*

Learning about safety is an important life skill that you can share with your child. As your child grows her/his ability to judge dangerous situations and make safe decisions grows. Your child's level of independence grows, however he/she still needs care and guidance from you.

Injuries may happen because of forgetfulness, excitement, showing off to friends or disobedience. Children like to test their abilities and your child may think that he/she is more able than he/she is.



The information in this booklet is designed to help you and your child learn about safety and how to prevent injury.

# *As your child grows*

## **5-7 years**

As your child starts national school a lot more will be happening in her/his everyday life. There will also be a lot more influences from outside the home on her/his behaviour. She/he may start to get mixed messages about safety – “But my friends mum lets her/him do that”.



## **8-11 years**

By now your child will have a large amount of knowledge about safe and unsafe behaviour. Many injuries are now a result of play and boys are more likely to have get injured than girls.

# *Teaching your child about safety*

**Learning about safety is important.**

**You can help your child learn about safety by:**

- Setting a good example.
- Explaining why some behaviour is dangerous.
- Continuing to talk about safety issues as he/she grows.
- Showing your child how to deal with dangerous situations.
- Giving your child a chance to try out new skills, while you are supervising her/him.
- Praising good safety behaviour and gently correcting unsafe behaviour.
- Encouraging your child to join clubs and organisations that might teach her/him more about safety, such as Boy or Girl Scouts.

# *Safety tips to help your child learn and grow in safety*

Each child is different. Between these ages of 5 to 11 years the differences are mainly in how your child thinks and feels. Judging what your child can or cannot do safely may be difficult, however, it is the best skill you have to help your child learn and grow in safety.

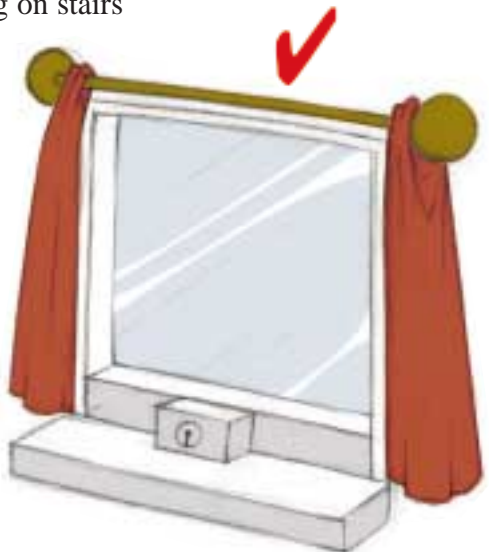
The information and safety tips in this booklet will help you help your child to learn and grow in safety. You know your child best, so use the age ranges in this booklet only as a guide.

## *Falls*

Falls are the most common cause of injuries.

### **Here are some safety tips:**

- Teach your child to hold onto banisters when going up or down stairs.
- Discourage your child from playing on stairs
- Take your child to play in well designed, stimulating playgrounds.
- Fit locks to all windows that your child could reach by climbing. Teach your child about the danger of playing or fiddling with windows, for example falling out of them.
- Teach your child about the dangers of playing on building sites, derelict buildings and other dangerous areas.



# Choking

It is still possible for your child to choke on food

## Here are some safety tips:

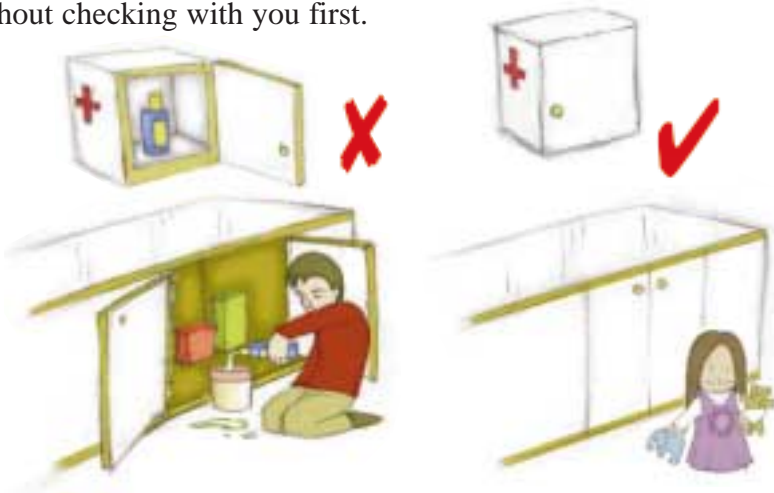
- Teach your child to sit or stand still while eating.
- Avoid giving peanuts to children under 6 years of age.

# Poisoning

Your child will understand better what he/she can eat and drink as he/she grows older. There is still a danger of him/her mistaking a harmful medicine or chemical for food or drink if it is not stored or labelled correctly.

## Here are some safety tips:

- Store medicines and chemicals in a locked cupboard or a cupboard that is out of your child's reach.
- Keep chemicals in the containers you bought them in to prevent confusion.
- Store alcohol safely.
- Teach your child never to eat anything he/she finds outdoors without checking with you first.





# Strangulation and suffocation

When playing your child will use everyday objects in imaginative ways.

## Here are some safety tips:

- Teach your child about the danger of putting anything tightly around her/his neck.
- Teach your child that plastic bags are not toys and should never be placed over her/his head.
- Be aware of your child digging tunnels or burying herself/himself in the sand.



# Cuts

Cuts from broken glass, tin cans and other litter become more likely as your child's play becomes more adventurous.

As your child's independence and involvement in household tasks grows he/she should be shown how to use sharp knives and scissors correctly.

## Here are some safety tips:

- Teach your child how to correctly use and store sharp knives and scissors.
- Try to stop your child playing in areas where litter is lying around.

# Burns and scalds

As your child grows he/she will become more involved in chores around the home. Some of these may involve your child coming into contact with hot objects. You will need to decide what chores are too difficult and dangerous, while making sure that the chores they are involved in are interesting and satisfying.

With a younger child, aged 5 to 7 years, you will need to help with chores where hot food or drink are involved. As your child gets older, aged 8 upwards, you can teach him/her to do these jobs safely. Teaching your child how to avoid burns and scalds is very important.

## Here are some safety tips:

### In the home

- Keep matches and lighters out of reach.
- Teach your child the dangers of playing with matches and lighters.
- Turn the water thermostat down to avoid immediate scalds if your child turns on the hot tap.

### 8+ years

- Show your child how to put water into a kettle, boil and pour the water safely.
- Teach your child how to use the oven or microwave safely.

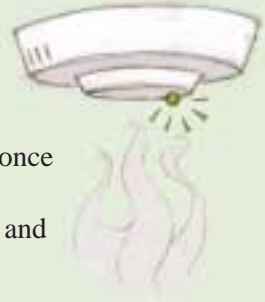


***Never allow your child to use a chip pan, even if you are helping him/her.***

## *Fires in the home*

There are some general fire safety rules that everyone should follow:

- Fit a smoke detector and check that it is working once every month.
- Always use a fireguard with open or electric fires and heaters, solid fuel, oil and gas stoves.
- Put out cigarettes and matches completely.
- Keep matches and cigarette lighters out of the reach of children.
- Do not overload electric sockets and repair old or worn flexes.
- Close interior doors to prevent fire spreading.
- Teach children what to do if they discover a fire or hear the smoke alarm.
- Work out your family escape plan now and practise it.



## *Drowning*

Your child should be taught how to swim. If your child is not taught in school you should enrol her/him in swimming lessons. As they grow children become more adventurous and are more likely to be playing in areas away from home.

### **Here are some safety tips:**

- Teach your child that the safest place for swimming is a public swimming pool.

### **Under 8 years**

- Supervise your child when playing in or near water.
- Think about starting swimming lessons for your child.

***No one, not even strong adult swimmers should swim in canals, rivers or flooded gravel pits.***

# Travelling in the car

Your child will be able to use an adult 3-point seat belt. For a young child, aged 5 to 7 a booster cushion may be necessary.

## Here are some safety tips:

- Teach your child about the importance of wearing seat belts.
- Always make sure that all passengers are correctly belted in, even on the shortest journey.

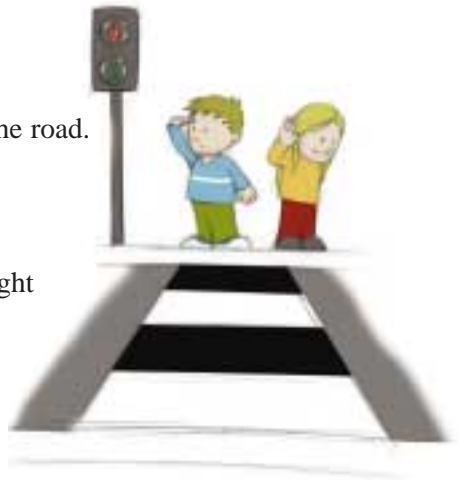


# When walking

Children younger than 7 years of age should not cross the road alone. Your child cannot judge speeds and distance as well as an you can. Her/his smaller size makes it more difficult for drivers to see and your child may not be able to see over cars.

**Your child may forget safety rules in her/his excitement and hurry. It is important to give your child as much supervised experience of dealing with traffic as you can. Set a good example when crossing the road and teach your child the Safe Cross Code:**

1. Look for a safe place to cross
2. Always stop and wait.
3. Look all around before you cross the road.
4. Listen for any traffic
5. If traffic is coming let it pass.  
Then look around again
6. When there is no traffic, walk straight across the road
7. Look and listen for traffic while you cross



# *On a bicycle*

**Children under the age of 12 should not ride bicycles in any type of traffic!**

- All cyclists should wear correctly fitting cycle helmets whenever and wherever they ride their bikes.
- Teach your child the dangers of cycling on pavements and other hazardous places such as uneven surfaces.
- Encourage your child to check and maintain her/his bike regularly.



***When walking or cycling, on dark mornings or evenings, wear light coloured clothes with fluorescent (brightly coloured - usually yellow or orange) armbands or strips.***

# *First Aid*

## Have a First Aid Kit in your home

Your kit should contain

- Scissors
- Bandages
- Band Aids
- Absorbent pad
- Tape
- Antiseptic wipes



***Do you know First Aid?  
Learn now!***

For details of classes in your area contact:

Order of Malta           01 6684891

St. Johns Ambulance   01 6688077

Irish Red Cross         01 6765135

# *Basic First Aid*

*Stay calm and act quickly*

## *Cuts*

### **1. Clean it**

Use cold running water.

### **2. Cover it**

Cover small cuts and grazes with a plaster.

For heavy bleeding put pressure on the cut using an absorbent pad or clean folded cloth until it stops bleeding. If there is something inside the cut, like glass, put pressure on the skin beside the cut.

### **3. Raise it**

Hold up a bleeding arm or leg, as long as you do not think it is broken.

***If the cut is very deep or  
has something in it, take your  
child to the Family Doctor.***

# *Burns and scalds*

## **1. Cool it**

Immediately run cold water over the burn for at least 10 minutes.

## **2. Clean it**

Use cold running water. Remove tight clothing as burnt skin can swell.

## **3. Cover it**

Cover the burn with a clean non-fluffy cloth.

**Take your child to the hospital.**

# *Choking and suffocation*

## **1. Remove any obvious obstruction from your child's mouth or face.**

## **2. Can your child breathe?**

If yes take your child to the hospital at once.

## **3. If unable to breathe dial 999 or 112.**

## **4. Stay on the line and listen carefully to the advice.**

# *Poisons*

## **1. Find the poison**

Find out what your child has taken. If pills are missing, quickly check if they have fallen on the floor or under furniture.

## **2. Call your Family Doctor or hospital for advice**

## **3 Give them small sips of water or milk**

Do not try to make your child sick.

## **4. Take your child to your Family Doctor or hospital**

for further treatment. If possible take the container and a sample of whatever you think has been swallowed.



# *Falls and Head Injuries*

**If your child has been knocked unconscious from a fall:**

**1. Dial 999 or 112 immediately,**

ask for an ambulance. Let the ambulance service know if your child is now conscious or unconscious – they will advise you on what to do while you are waiting.

**2. Do not move your child**

Do not move your child unless you have to, they may have broken bones or internal injuries.

**If your child is conscious (awake) after a fall:**

If your child is conscious and complains of severe pain, is vomiting and drowsy, or you think a bone maybe broken, dial 999 or 112 for an ambulance.









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