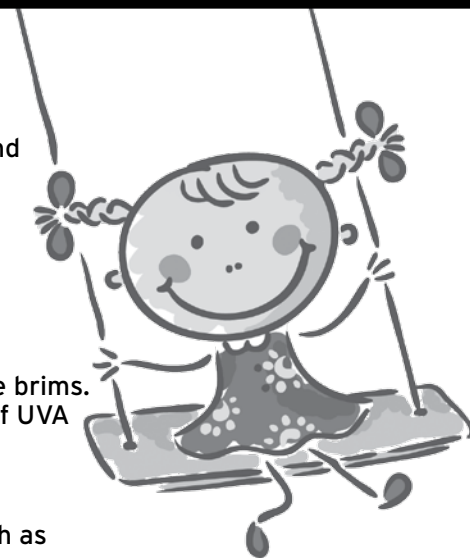


Summer Fun Safety

As the old song goes "it's summertime and the livin' is easy." Keep it easier and safer by following some of these summer fun safety tips.

Here Comes the Sun!

- Sunscreen should be applied at least 30 minutes before going outside, even on cloudy days. Use a brand with a minimum UVB rating of 15 and reapply every 2 hours, more often when swimming or doing vigorous activities that cause heavy sweating.
- Wear clothing that is tightly woven or has SPF built in and hats with wide brims.
- Eyes need sun protection too! Sunglasses that block 99 to 100 percent of UVA and UVB can be purchased for a minimal cost.



Bugs, Bugs, Bugs!

- Even though they may seem to be a minor annoyance, many insects, such as mosquitoes and ticks, can carry harmful diseases.
- Use caution when using repellents that contain DEET. They are effective, but can be toxic or deadly if swallowed.
- Do not apply repellents to a child's face or hands and wash off before bedtime.
- Check with your physician for help in deciding what type of repellent to use for you and your family.

Drinking Enough Water?

- Dehydration can be prevented. Hydrate before going outside and have your child take frequent water breaks (every 15 to 20 minutes) to cool off.
- Sip water, rather than gulp it.

Helmets ARE Cool!

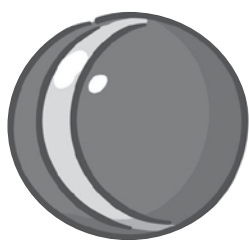
- Helmets are the most important tool available in helping prevent head injury and trauma.
- Use helmets when using any kind of wheel toy - bikes, trikes, skate boards, scooters, etc.

Backyard Safety

- Do you have play equipment in your yard? Make sure the ground beneath it is soft enough. Dirt, asphalt and concrete surfaces are too hard.
- Nine inches of mulch or wood chips in an outdoor play area is recommended by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).

The suggestions above and others can be found at the following website:
www.childparenting.about.com/od/healthsafety/a/summer_safety_checklist.htm.

Other suggestions are at <http://children.webmd.com/primer-on-summer-safety>.



Child Care & Early Education Portal

Changes made due to Lexie's Law have increased the health and safety of child care programs across the state. The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) has established an online option for parents to research the compliance history of child care facilities. This new option allows Kansas families to make a more informed choice in child care. The child care and early education portal can be accessed at www.kdheks.gov/bcclr/capp.htm.

FAMILY FUN ACTIVITIES

Family Fun Activities for School-Age

Research has shown that play is one of the best ways for children to learn, doing so at their own pace. Play is motivating and maintains children's interest, enabling them to learn new skills. As children interact with engaging, hands-on experiences through age appropriate materials, they can be learning in all subject areas. Using the time given over summer break to engage, inspire and create with a school-age child will be rewarding for both the adult and child.

School-Age Children are Young Scientists!

Plan simple experiments that help sharpen skills and create a sense of wonder and imagination. These experiments can include categories like weather phenomena, plant growth, animal habitats, chemistry and physics. Home-based experiments can be found at www.kids-science-experiments.com.

Go Explore Outdoors!

Children are fascinated by bugs, plants and animals. Take along a magnifying glass, bags or jars for collections and create a great adventure. Use your neighborhood resources, such as walking trails, parks and nature preserves. A family shadow walk can provide wonderful opportunities to explore the mysteries of light and shadows. Take time to enjoy the walk and observe shadows as you move about outdoors. Incorporate math skills by measuring the length of the shadows, and, by doing so at different times of the day, science skills can also be sharpened.

Unplug From the Electronics!

Spend at least thirty minutes a day reading with your school-age child. Make reading fun by incorporating fiction and non-fiction books and magazines. You can explore the world through a book or article. Check out your local library for a summer reading program to encourage your child or create a home summer reading program. Reading throughout the summer will keep skills sharp for the upcoming school year.

Accentuate the Artist Within!

The arts provide children with the opportunity to make meaning of their world and experience joy as they grow in their creativity and self-expression. Empower children to use the arts to learn new ways to solve problems and see the world in a different way. Save the markers, crayons, scissors and glue that come home from school at the end of the year. Art is not expensive and is a great way for children to express themselves. Use recyclables to build and create. Create a box or drawer for art materials that are accessible to the child. Be sure to give ample time for the creative process to work. Remember to encourage the child through the creative process, not focusing on the end result for praise.

Move, Move It!

Children need space and time for large motor activities. Hiking, biking, using a scooter, swimming or playing a sport can keep children's hearts healthy. Plan time for outdoor movement activities. When the weather is keeping you indoors, don't forget to turn on the music and dance. Create games using balls and hoops. Make an obstacle course indoors or outdoors. Encouraging these large motor activities will strengthen your child's physical attributes, as well as get them actively involved in staying fit and healthy in a fun and exciting way.

