



for Parents

NO. 4 • FALL 2000

A PROGRAM OF CONNECTICUT CHILDREN'S MEDICAL CENTER

Teaching child pedestrians the rules of the road









In October, when the clock rolls back, dusk makes an early arrival. But that doesn't stop kids from enjoying the fall weather with their neighborhood pals.

Yet the early evening is a dangerous time for children who roam around their driveways or in the street. Nearly half of child pedestrian deaths occur between 4 and 8 p.m.

Indeed, pedestrian injuries are the second leading

cause of unintentional injury-related deaths among children ages 5 to 14. In 1997, more than 830 children ages 14 and under died from pedestrian injuries. And an estimated 20,000 children ages 14 and under were injured in pedestrian motor vehicle-related incidents in 1998.

Connecticut SAFE KIDS recommends these safety guidelines:

-  **Never let children under 10 years old cross the street alone.**
-  **Teach children to recognize and obey all traffic signals and markings.**
-  **Teach children to stop and cross the street at a corner or crosswalk.**
-  **Teach children *not* to enter the street from between parked cars, or from behind bushes or shrubs.** Darting into the street accounts for the majority of child pedestrian fatalities.
-  **Make sure children know the safest route to their destination.** Look for the most direct route with the fewest street crossings. Walk the route with children until they demonstrate traffic safety awareness. They should take the same route every time and avoid shortcuts.
-  **Demonstrate proper pedestrian safety by being a good role model.** Parents, caregivers and older peers should set good examples for younger children. Children need you to not only tell them, but also show them how to be safe pedestrians. If there are older children in your home or neighborhood, express to them how important it is to be good role models.
-  **Make sure children look in all directions before crossing the street.** Teach them to look left, right, and left again for traffic before and while crossing the street.
-  **Children should always wear retro-reflective materials and carry a flashlight if walking at dawn and dusk.** Remember, nearly half of child pedestrian deaths occur between 4 and 8 p.m.

Scooter sales/injuries soar

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has found that emergency room-treated injuries related to popular lightweight scooters increased 700% from May to August. Nearly 90% of the injuries are to children under 15 years of age. Children of all ages riding scooters should follow the following safety precautions:

- Wear a helmet that meets CPSC's standards, along with

knee and elbow pads.

- Ride the scooters on smooth, paved surfaces without any traffic. Avoid streets or surfaces with water, sand, gravel or dirt.

- Do not ride the scooter at night.



Trick-or-treat checklist.



COSTUME

- My costume is short and snug.
- My shoes fit.
- My costume props are flexible.
- The eyeholes in my mask are wide enough.

STREETS

- Drivers can see my costume in the dark.
- I'm trick-or-treating in a group.
- I cross streets only at crosswalks and intersections.

TREATS

- I make sure my parents check my treats before I eat them.

Fireproof your home

No child should die in a fire. Yet each year, nearly 1,000 children ages 14 and under die in home fires. Of these, 90% lived in homes without working smoke alarms. Protect your family by making your home safer.

- ⊘ Test smoke alarms once a month and change the batteries when you change the clocks.

- ⊘ Keep matches, lighters

and gasoline locked and out of children's reach.

- ⊘ Keep children away from cooking and heating appliances.

- ⊘ Turn off cooking and heating appliances after use.

- ⊘ Put out cigarettes before leaving home or going to sleep.

- ⊘ Do not overload electrical outlets and replace old, worn-out electrical cords.



Install smoke alarms in every sleeping area and on every level of your home. The chances of dying in a fire can be cut in half by the presence of working smoke alarms.

Connecticut SAFE KIDS
Connecticut Children's Medical Center
282 Washington Street
Hartford, CT 06106
(860) 545-9988 TEL
(860) 545-9975 FAX
www.ccmckids.org



Eileen Henzy, MPH
Coordinator



PLEASE COPY ME!

You're welcome to photocopy this newsletter and send its important message to others.