



# for Parents

NO. 11 • SUMMER 2002

A PROGRAM OF CONNECTICUT CHILDREN'S MEDICAL CENTER

## Because Every Second Counts



NATIONAL SAFE KIDS CAMPAIGN

Summer fun and recreation often means swimming and shoreline visits. However, there are important steps caregivers need to take to prevent tragedy around water. Drowning is the second leading cause of unintentional injury-related death for children 14 and under.

The majority of drownings and near-drownings occur in residential swimming pools and in open water sites. However, children can drown in as little as one inch of water and are therefore at risk of drowning in wading pools, bathtubs, buckets, diaper pails, toilets, spas and hot tubs.

Drowning usually occurs quickly and silently. Childhood drownings and near-drownings can happen in a matter of seconds and typically occur when a child is left unattended or during a brief lapse in supervision.

Follow these safety precautions to keep your children safe this summer:

### SWIMMING

- Never leave children alone near water.
- Tell children never to run, push or jump on others around water.
- Learn CPR.
- Have your child wear a US Coast Guard-approved personal flotation device on a boat, near open bodies of water, or when participating in water sports.
- Remember that air-filled swimming aids such as "water wings" are not safety devices and are not substitutes for personal flotation devices.
- Teach children to swim after about age four, when they are developmentally ready to learn to swim.
- Make sure children swim only within designated safe areas of rivers, lakes and oceans.

### IN THE HOME

- Keep toilet lids down.
- Keep doors to bathrooms and laundry rooms closed.
- Watch children in baby bath seats and rings every second.

## FOURTH OF JULY

# Light up the sky safely

Many Fourth of July celebrations, though intended to be exciting and fun, can quickly turn into a nightmare.

**Homemade or illegal fireworks are extremely dangerous and should never be used by your family.**

If using legal fireworks, remember to follow fireworks laws and remember these vital safety guidelines:

### Do's

- **Be sure that only adults handle fireworks.** Tell children to leave the area if their friends are using fireworks.
- **Discuss safety procedure with your children.** Teach children "stop, drop and roll" if their clothes catch fire. Make sure they know how to call 9-1-1. Show them how to put out fireworks by using water or a fire extinguisher.
- **Read labels and carefully follow directions.** All fireworks must carry a warning label describing necessary safety precautions. Keep a bucket of water nearby.
- **Be sure spectators are out of range before lighting fireworks.**
- **Light fireworks only on a smooth, flat surface away from the house, dry leaves and flammable materials.**

### Don'ts

- **Never use fireworks indoors.**
- **Never aim or throw fireworks at another person.**
- **Never place your face or any other body part over fireworks.**
- **Never try to re-ignite fireworks that malfunction.**
- **Never carry fireworks in your pocket.**

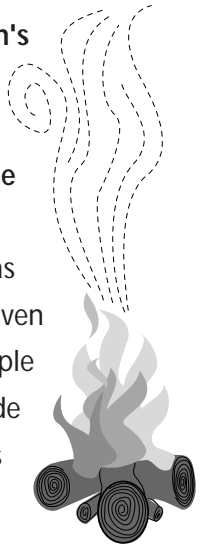
## Better yet...

To celebrate safely, skip the risk of amateur fireworks. Instead, enjoy fireworks at community-sanctioned, licensed events sponsored by fire departments and other safety agencies.

# Safe campers make happy campers

Whether while cooking or staying warm, do not put safety on the back burner when camping.

- **Always supervise children near a campfire or portable stove.** Teach them to stay away from campfires and stoves, even when not in use.
- **When making a campfire pit, be sure it is large enough to keep a fire from spreading.** Avoid building fires on windy days.
- **Always check the fire danger levels posted at the entrance of wilderness parks and camping areas.** Each day, the park or forest ranger reports on the level of danger from fire.
- **Keep a bucket of water and a shovel beside the fire at all times.**
- **Keep matches and lighters out of children's reach.** Never use either inside a tent.
- **Never burn charcoal or use portable camping heaters, lanterns or stoves inside of tents, campers or vehicles.** Carbon monoxide is an odorless and tasteless gas which can cause flu-like symptoms and even death. Each year, approximately 30 people of all ages are killed from carbon monoxide poisoning due to the use of these devices inside tents, campers and vehicles.



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