

Playing Safely Outside



BRAIN BUILDER

Find safe places outside where your child can play. Exploring the outdoors, playing on playgrounds and being around other children will help them build their imagination and learn new physical and social skills.

In the Heat and Sun

Safer sun

- ✓ If your child is 12 months or younger, keep them out of direct sun.
- ✓ Once they're older, keep them out of the sun in the middle of the day, when rays are the strongest.
- ✓ Offer them plenty of water to drink.
- ✓ Remember that snow, water and sand all reflect sun, even in the winter.

What to wear

- ✓ loose clothes with close weave for protection, and that are breathable for comfort
- ✓ sunglasses
- ✓ hat with a large brim, a neck cover and no ties
- ✓ sunscreen, even on cloudy days



DANGER

Never leave your child alone in a car. The inside of a car heats up quickly, even on a day that's not very hot. Children overheat more easily than adults. They can be seriously hurt or even die.



DID YOU KNOW?

Children burn more easily than adults, and sunburns put your child at risk for skin cancer later in life. Even children with darker skin need sunscreen. Don't wait until your child is red to get them out of the sun. Burns don't usually show up until hours later.



HOW TO

Apply sunscreen

1. Use water-resistant sunscreen approved by the Canadian Dermatology Association with SPF 30 or higher.



2. Use 1 tablespoon (15 ml) or more.
3. Apply to all uncovered skin.
4. Use lip balm with sunscreen.
5. Repeat every 2 hours.



MEDICAL EMERGENCY

Heat Exhaustion

If your toddler is fatigued, weak, confused, nauseous or has a headache, muscle cramps or cool, damp, pale skin, they may have heat exhaustion. Bring them indoors or into the shade. Take off their clothes and give them a cool bath and a drink of water. If they don't improve or if they vomit, contact your health care provider.

In the Cold

Safer cold

- ✓ Let your child warm up every 30 minutes.
- ✓ Spend less time outdoors when the temperature falls to -15°C (5°F).
- ✓ Keep your child indoors if the temperature or the wind chill is below -27°C (-16°F).
- ✓ If you take your toddler sledding, tobogganing, skating or skiing, be sure that they wear the right helmet for the sport (not a bike helmet) and that they wear it correctly (see [Safer Cycling](#)). Always have an adult go down the hill with your toddler.

What to wear

- ✓ layers of loose clothes
- ✓ warm coat that will stay dry, with sleeves that are snug at the wrist
- ✓ warm, non-slip shoes or boots that will stay dry, with room for extra socks
- ✓ mittens
- ✓ warm hat that covers the ears (but doesn't have ties)
- ✓ the right helmet for the sport



BE AWARE

If your toddler's cheeks, nose, ears, fingers or toes are white or numb, they may have frostbite. Bring them indoors right away. Take off any wet clothes, then put their frostbitten areas into warm water until feeling returns. Or use your hands to slowly warm up the areas, but don't rub or massage them. Call your health care provider or 8-1-1 if your child's skin is still waxy, white or numb.

On the Playground

Safer playgrounds

- ✓ Ensure equipment, surfaces and sandpits are free of garbage, needles and broken glass and plastic.
- ✓ Ensure equipment has guardrails and barriers, is in good condition and well-anchored, and has no sharp edges.
- ✓ Make sure the surface under the equipment is sand, wood chips, rubber or pea gravel (instead of dirt or grass), and that the fill is deep enough.



TRY THIS

Offer your child challenges and activities that fit their ability while allowing them to push their boundaries and be adventurous. Remember – playing outside in all kinds of weather will build their confidence and resilience.

What not to wear

Avoid any clothing that can get caught on playground equipment and choke your child, like:

- ✗ very loose or clothing that is too big
- ✗ drawstrings
- ✗ dangling scarves or bike helmet straps



BE AWARE

Always ensure that a trusted adult stays with your child and watches while they play. They can fall or get caught – or even strangled – in playground equipment.

