

8 Years



A program of the American Academy of Pediatrics



8 YEARS

Safety for Your Child

Did you know that injuries are the greatest threat to the life and health of your child? Injuries are the leading cause of death of school-aged children. **Yet you can prevent most injuries!**

At age 8, children are now taking off on their own. They look to friends for approval. They try to do daring things. They may not want to obey grown-up rules. But your child can learn safety rules with your help and reminders. Your child now goes out more without you and could drown, be hurt on a bike, or be hit by a car. And your child still can be hurt or killed while riding in a car if he or she is not buckled by a seat belt in a belt-positioning booster seat.

Sports Safety

Ask your doctor which sports are right for your child. **Be sure your child wears all the protective equipment made for the sport**, such as shin pads, mouth guards, wrist guards, eye protection, or helmets. Your child's coach also should be able to help you select protective equipment.



Water Safety

No one is safe alone in water, even if he or she knows how to swim. **Do not let your child play around any water (lake, stream, pool, or ocean) unless an adult is watching.** The adult must be supervising closely and continuously without distractions like reading or using a phone. *Never* let your child swim in canals or any fast-moving water. Teach your child to always enter the water feet first. Any child who is not a strong swimmer should wear an approved life jacket when in or near water, and all children and adults should wear life jackets when boating or using personal watercraft.



And Remember Bike Safety

Make sure your child always wears a helmet while riding a bike. Now is the time to teach your child the "rules of the road." Be sure he or she knows the rules and can use them. Watch your child ride. See if he or she is in control of the bike. See if your child uses good judgment. Your 8-year-old is not old enough to ride at dusk or after dark. Make sure your child brings the bike in when the sun starts to set.



Car Safety

NEVER start the car until you've checked to be sure that your child is properly restrained in a booster seat. Your child should use a booster seat until the lap belt can be worn low and flat on the hips and the shoulder belt across the middle of the chest and shoulder rather than the face or neck (usually at about 4 feet 9 inches tall and between 8 and 12 years of age). Be sure that you and all others in the car are buckled up too. Serious injuries can occur with lap belts alone. **The safest place for all children to ride is in the back seat.**



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American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®



Firearm Hazards

Children in homes where guns are present are in more danger of being shot by themselves, their friends, or family members than of being injured by an intruder. Even if your child is taught never to touch a gun, if there is a gun in the house a child's curiosity can lead to severe injury or death. It is best to keep all guns out of your home. If you keep a gun, store it unloaded and in a locked place, with the ammunition locked separately. Ask if the homes where your child visits or is cared for have guns and how they are stored.



Would you be able to help your child in case of an injury? Put emergency numbers by or on your phone today. Learn first aid and CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation). Be prepared...for your child's sake!

From Your Doctor

The information in this publication should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances.