



# The 100 Deadliest Days of Summer!

## Summertime Risks to Children

Nearly half (41 percent) of unintentional injuries to children occur from May through August.

### Summer

Childhood memories are flavored with fun summertime activities including trips to the beach, walks to the ice cream shop and rides around the neighborhood. But you and your kids enjoy the seemingly carefree elements of summer, emergency room doctors know it as "trauma season." This summer children ages 14 and under will be rushed to emergency rooms nearly 3 million times for serious injuries resulting from motor vehicle crashes, drownings, bike crashes, pedestrian incidents, falls and other hazards. More than 2,500 of these children will die.

Tragedies peak during the summer months (May to August) because children are supervised less, have more free time and engage in more outdoor activities. Don't take a vacation from safety. Close supervision, proper protective gear, and other simple prevention steps will help your child avoid danger.

### Why Kids Are at Risk:

Nearly half (42 percent) of all unintentional injury-related deaths occur from May to August. The greatest summertime risks include drownings, bike crashes, falls, pedestrian incidents and motor vehicle crashes. July is the deadliest time for childhood unintentional injury; 12 percent of unintentional injury-related deaths occur during this month alone.

Older children experience the greatest increase in unintentional injury-related death during the summer months. This is primarily because children ages 10 to 14 tend to engage in more risky behavior and are presumably given more freedom from their parents. Young school-age children ages 5 to 9 are also at high risk because they lack the skills to make clear judgements necessary to bike, walk, swim and play safely without adult supervision. Many parents of children this age also fail to restrain them properly in booster seats in motor vehicles, which can lead to severe injuries or even death in the event of a car crash.

Summer injury peaks are less pronounced in mild-weather regions of the country. Temperate climates enable children to spend more time outdoors; therefore, injuries in these regions tend to be distributed more evenly throughout the entire year.

### Drowning

- From 1991 to 1996, 6,237 children ages 14 and under died from drowning. Of these deaths, two-thirds occurred in the summer. Drowning occurs more often during July than any other month. The increase in deaths may be attributed to the number of children out of school during July, as well as the likelihood of warm, long days.

### Protecting Your Family:

Your kids love summer! They don't have to go to school, they can stay up late and best of all ? they have all day to play. Follow the safety tips below to make sure their happy memories are also safe ones.

### Ride Safe!

- Make sure your kids are secured in the appropriate child safety seat or safety belt for their age and size.
- Kids should always be secured in the back seat.
- Study both your vehicle owner and child safety seat manuals carefully.

- Read more SAFE KIDS car safety tips, find a child safety seat that's just right for your child, or attend one of the SAFE KIDS BUCKLE UP Car Seat Check Up events in your area!  
[www.safekidstate.com](http://www.safekidstate.com).

### **Swim Safe!**

- Always supervise young children near water, including pools, spas, toilets, bathtubs and buckets.
- Insist your children wear personal flotation devices when out on boats, near open bodies of water or participating in water sports.
- Read more SAFE KIDS water safety tips!

### **Wheel Safe!**

- Make sure your kids wear properly fitting helmets and other protective gear every time they ride their bikes, scooters, in-line skates or skateboards.
- Teach your children the rules of the road and practice obeying traffic laws with them.
- Read more SAFE KIDS wheel safety tips!

### **Walk Safe!**

- Never let your child under age 10 cross the street alone. Teach children to obey traffic rules as a pedestrian.
- Make sure your kids wear retroreflective materials and don't let them walk alone at night. If they must walk when it is getting dark, at dawn or at dusk, make sure they carry a flashlight.
- Read more SAFE KIDS pedestrian safety tips!

### **Play Safe!**

- Always supervise your children at playgrounds or in the backyard. Make sure they are playing on a safe surface, such as mulch, rubber or fine sand.
- Make sure your kids wear the right, properly fitted protective gear when they practice and play team sports!

### **Protecting Communities:**

Injury to kids during the summer affects not only individual families, but entire communities. Share the knowledge you've learned about protecting kids with other family, neighbors and friends. This summer, be on guard for protecting your children, as well as other children you know. Explore specific ways you can help prevent injuries to children when they are child passengers, bicyclists or skaters, swimmers, walkers or athletes. Kids will be kids -- but with your help, they can be SAFE KIDS!