

# Child Death Prevention Newsletter *Summer Safety*

## Why do children have accidents?

Because children are often absorbed in their own immediate interests they can be oblivious to their surroundings. They only have a limited perception of the environment because of their lack of experience or development. They are not aware of the consequences of the many new situations that they encounter daily.

**Small stature** - This may prevent a child from seeing above an obstruction or being seen by an adult.

**Inquisitiveness** - Curiosity and a spirit of adventure may lead a child into danger.

**Bravado and horseplay** - Children are prone to showing off and over reaching their abilities, especially among friends. Many accidents are caused by horseplay involving pushing, shoving and wrestling.

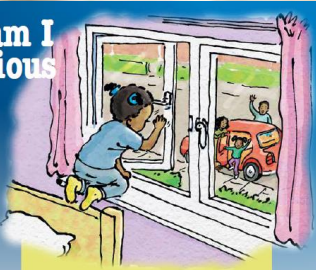
**Stress** - Tensions at home and emotional upsets caused by temper, jealousy and over excitement may cause a child to run blindly into danger. Such action may even be deliberate to seek attention.

**Inexperience** - A child's interpretation of a situation may be inaccurate and adults looking after small children should be aware not to expect too much of them.

**Inadequate supervision** - Children need constant supervision. Medicines, pills and toxic substances should be locked away and fires and stairs should be guarded.

## How safe am I from a serious fall?

We're always falling over our feet. But sometimes, when we fall further and hit something hard, we can be badly hurt. Falling downstairs or out of windows can hurt our brains as well as our bodies.



Every day, 45 children under five, like me, are admitted to hospital because we have fallen and hurt ourselves at home.



## Blind cords and chains can kill children

Looped blind cords and chains are dangerous. They can strangle a child, and have led to the deaths of children.

At home to ensure that all cords and chains are kept safe you should check:

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For further safety advice for your area please contact:

Staffordshire Trading Standards  
on 0300 111 8045 or  
Stoke-on-Trent Trading Standards  
on 01782 232 065

## Loads... of temptation?

Liquitabs may look like sweets, toys or teething products to young children. They are highly toxic and can cause severe problems if swallowed, or if the contents come into contact with skin or eyes.

Store all household cleaning products out of reach. Safety caps and lids slow children down but don't rely on them.

In the event of an accident follow advice on the product pack and seek urgent medical advice.



## Preventing Burns and Scalds

- Never let children play with fireworks of any type. View from a safe distance of at least 8m for garden fireworks, 25m for display fireworks.
- Guard heated areas like radiators and pipes. Do not place beds against radiators.
- Keep matches and lighters out of sight and reach of children.
- Before bathing your baby/child check the water isn't too hot, a good test is your elbow. Put cold water in the bath first before running the hot.
- Turn off electrical equipment you are not using - especially at night.
- Ensure a working smoke alarm and carbon monoxide monitor is fitted.

Hair Straighteners can cause serious burns to children

1. Switch off after use
2. Put in a heat resistant bag



# As the weather hots up remember.....

Around 85 per cent of all accidental drownings occur at open water sites. Many of these drownings occur due to a lack of knowledge and understanding of the hazards.

## Open water swimming

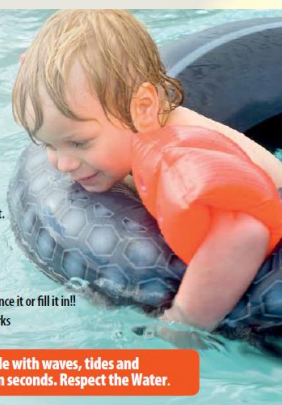
The conditions at open water sites change constantly:

- Only ever enter the water in areas with adequate supervision and rescue cover
- Always look for warning and guidance signs
- Swim parallel with the shore, not away from it
- Avoid drifting in the currents
- Do not enter fast flowing water
- Be aware of underwater hazards
- Get out of the water as soon as you start to feel cold
- Never enter the water after consuming alcohol
- Always wear a buoyancy aid or lifejacket for activities on the water or at the water's edge (such as when boating or fishing)
- If you want to swim wear a wetsuit if you have one.
- Always take someone with you when you go into or near water. If something goes wrong they will be able to get help
- If someone is in difficulty in the water shout reassurance to them and shout for help and call the emergency services (call 999 or 112)
- Without endangering yourself see if you can reach out to them with a stick, pole or item of clothing – lie down to ensure you stay secure. Alternatively throw something buoyant to them such as a ring buoy or anything that will float

While learning how to swim reduces the risk of drowning and near drownings, the parents and carers need to be mindful of the differences between pool and open-water swimming.

### Drowning

Babies can drown in as little as 25mm of water



- ✗ Never leave a baby or child in the bath unsupervised, not even for a minute.
- ✗ Never leave a baby or child alone in a bath seat.
- ✓ Constantly supervise and stay with children in swimming pools.
- ✓ Empty paddling pools and store them away when not in use.
- ✓ If you have a pond always supervise closely, fence it or fill it in!!
- ✓ Be careful when children visit gardens or parks that have ponds or lakes.

The sea and shorelines are unpredictable with waves, tides and hidden currents that can drag you out in seconds. Respect the Water.

## ACTIONS TO PREVENT DROWNING



Teach children to swim and water safety skills



Don't drink and swim



Actively supervise children around water



Train people in safe rescue and resuscitation



Provide guidance on safe swimming for people with epilepsy



Increase public awareness of drowning



Always use the right safety gear



Install barriers controlling access to water

