Dear New York City Families,

Welcome to the Fall/Winter 2015-2016 edition of Think Safety, a newsletter created by Safe Kids New York City. Safe Kids NYC is a coalition of educators, health care professionals, and child advocates that is devoted to helping you keep the children you care about healthy and free from unintentional injuries. Unintentional injuries are a leading cause of death and hospitalization to children, but they are preventable if we are aware of the many safety tools available to us and know how to use them correctly.

The articles in this newsletter, written by experts in the injury prevention field – health and safety educators, child protection attorneys, and trauma coordinators from major hospitals in NYC, provide practical advice for cold weather safety as you drive, walk and have fun at home and on the road.

We’ll be back next spring with our Spring/Summer edition, with more handy tips for safety to keep in mind as the weather gets warmer.

Enjoy the fall and winter, and think safety!

Best,

Marjorie Marciano
Director, Safe Kids New York City

In this issue:

- Stay Safe When You Walk Outside
- Dangers of Button Batteries
- A message from the FDNY Fire Safety Unit
- Winter Car Seat Safety
- Choosing Safe Toys
- The Book Corner
- Heat Up Cold Days with Slow Cooking
- Prevent Winter Burns and Scalds
- You Can Prevent Sleep-Related Infant Death
- Partner Highlight: FedEx
- Keeping Children Safe on the Internet
- Laundry Packet Safety

Above left and above: Participants and demonstrations at the 2015 Safe Kids NYC Conference.
Stay Safe When You Walk Outside

By Marjorie Marciano, NYC Department of Transportation Safety Education and Outreach

New York City Mayor Bill DeBlasio’s Vision Zero traffic safety initiative is working to keep everyone who uses the city streets—drivers, passengers, pedestrians and cyclists—safer. What can you do to keep your children safer while walking?

In New York City, we have to expect the unexpected. Drivers and cyclists don’t always obey the signals or give pedestrians the right of way. As a parent, you need to set a good example by being a safe, aware pedestrian yourself. When you bike or drive, model courteous behavior that prioritizes pedestrian safety.

Be Alert at Intersections

Three-quarters of all crashes happen at intersections. Some corners are more complicated than others, so it’s important to stop and wait on the sidewalk until the way is clear. Look in all directions and listen for traffic, even if the signal is in your favor. Be especially alert for vehicles turning left. Remind your children to always keep looking for turning vehicles as they cross.

Keep your stroller on the sidewalk next to you, not out in front of you on the street, while you check to see if it’s safe to cross. Drivers may not be able to see the stroller if it is out in the roadway, below their line of vision.

Don’t Be Distracted

Don’t have your head in your phone while crossing – even if the signal is in your favor. Be very careful when walking near driveways and in parking lots. Drivers may not be looking out for pedestrians.

Teach your kids to look and think when they are out on the streets.

Be Careful Mid-Block

Stop at the edge of parked cars and look both ways, even on a one-way street. Cars or trucks may be backing up, or emergency vehicles may be driving the wrong way down the street. Be sure that parked cars are staying parked before you begin to cross. Wait to cross if you see a car coming down the block. It can be difficult to judge the speed of an oncoming car, especially for young children.

Do What You Can to Be Seen

Wear something brightly colored during the day to help drivers see you; dress your children in bright colors, too. At night, it’s good to wear white or light colors and add a retro-reflective item to your child’s jacket, shoes, sneakers, bag or backpack – and to yours, too!

During the shorter days of winter, be sure your children wear in bright clothing. Attach something reflective like a reflective zipper pull or tape to their backpacks or jackets.

OUR ACTIVITIES

- Programs and fairs at schools, afterschool centers, community centers, camps, libraries and museums where children learn how to prevent injuries at home, at play and on the road
- Car safety seat inspection stations teach parents to correctly install car seats
- Workshops for pregnant and new parents help young families learn how to be safe from the start
- Professional training conferences for educators and others interested in learning more about injury prevention

About Safe Kids New York City

led by

SAFE KIDS NEW YORK CITY

Walk like a penguin when it’s cold outside!

1. Walk flat footed and take short steps
2. Wear footwear that provides traction
3. Step down, not out from curbs
4. Use your arms for balance
5. Carry only what you can
Small in Size, BIG in Risk: Dangers of Button Batteries

By Alexie Cruz Puran, MD, Harlem Hospital Center

Across the United States, children are brought into emergency departments as frequently as once every three hours for a battery-related emergency. Button batteries are the small, round batteries found in small electronics. They are shiny and appealing to children. However, there is a big risk involved – swallowing them can result in major injuries and even death, and more than 3,000 are ingested by children every year.

Button batteries can be found in remote controls, thermometers, games, toys, hearing aids, calculators, bathroom scales, key fobs, electronic jewelry, cameras, holiday ornaments and many others. With the increased use of small electronics, the risk of these batteries getting into the hands and mouths of curious and crawling infants and young children increases.

When a child ingests a button battery, their symptoms could virtually be absent or similar to those of a common infection. This makes it challenging for health care professionals who are evaluating the child. When a button battery is placed in the nose or the ears, drainage or pain may be noted, which is not unique to button batteries. Non-specific symptoms combined with an unwitnessed placement can lead to a delay in diagnosis and even greater injury. When a button battery is swallowed and lodged in the body, the electric currents can cause significant tissue injury even within two hours. Death can result from significant bleeding.

If a parent or caregiver suspects their child ingested a button battery, the child needs to be taken immediately to an emergency room. The diagnosis of button battery ingestion can be confirmed on x-ray images. The treatment for a button battery stuck within the body is urgent removal in order to minimize local tissue damage.

Parents and caregivers need to be aware of the risk posed by button batteries in their home. In many products, the battery is easily accessible or can fall out when the product is dropped. Make sure that the battery compartments of all electronic items are taped shut and loose batteries are always stored out of children’s reach.

As of April 1, 2014, New York City owners of multi-family buildings must install a 10-year, sealed battery smoke or combination smoke/CO alarms when replacing outdated, missing or damaged units.

According to a survey conducted on behalf of Kidde Fire Safety, low-battery chirps rank as the top smoke alarm annoyance. However, although working smoke alarms are critical to getting out alive in the case of a house fire, 40 percent of people surveyed said they would choose to either disconnect the alarm or wait a day or more to replace the battery if it starts to chirp. A long-life battery sealed inside an alarm makes it virtually tamper proof and eliminates the risk of anyone disabling the alarm. The New York City Fire Department reports that more than three-quarters of fire-related fatalities occur in residences without working smoke alarms.

“A working smoke alarm is critical to surviving a fire in the home. By alerting residents when a fire is present, smoke alarms provide the early alert and time needed to escape,” said Lieutenant Anthony Mancuso, Director of Fire Safety Education for FDNY.

Smoke Alarms Save Lives!

If you don’t have a 10-year sealed battery smoke alarm yet, be sure you:

➢ Change your battery when you change your clock!
➢ Protect yourself!
➢ Protect your family!
➢ Protect your neighbors!

Call 718-281-3870 and have the FDNY Fire Safety Unit do a free Fire Safety Education presentation at your school, PTA, and community group.
Baby, IT'S COLD OUTSIDE!

Winter Car Seat Safety
By Sylvia Fallas, Child Passenger Safety Technician

Short sleeves and sandals are heading back into the closets, and winter gear is finding its way to the front. With so many cute, fun, and funky, outerwear choices, it's hard to make a decision for our children! Before putting it on your child, ask yourself: is it safe for a car seat?

Wait! How could coats in the car be unsafe?

Car seats and booster seats are not just another piece of fun baby gear— they're potentially lifesaving devices. Choosing the right type of bunting and outerwear can make a huge difference in car seat performance during a collision. Puffy jackets and bulky coats require the harness to be loosened to accommodate the extra fabric. In a crash, the coat or jacket will compress, causing excess slack in the harness or seatbelt. This extra slack puts too much space between the child and the harness, which can be potentially life threatening. A child will be jostled, can be thrown from the seat, or not properly protected. The chance of injury is considerably greater since the child is not being properly secured by the harness.

What about a bunting or bundle cover?

On an infant seat, covers are popular choices. They go over and around the child to keep him warm. While it seems like a great idea, in reality, these covers are very dangerous. They go behind the child's back, which can interfere with the harness positioning. The excess bulk causes extra slack in the harness, which forces the child to be buckled in incorrectly. Keep in mind that there are no crash test standards, so even if an item claims to be “crash tested”, the claim is meaningless.

So what are my options? Keeping a child warm and safe is not an impossible task!

"Shower Cap" Covers
For infant seats, “shower cap” style covers are a great invention. They go over the top of the seat and the baby, so there is no additional fabric behind the child. They can be easily used and removed.

Car Seat Ponchos
Rear and forward facing children can make use of car seat ponchos, which are big ponchos made of fleece worn over the buckled harness. Ponchos are simple enough for a toddler to put on alone.

Backwards Winter Coat
For the cost conscious parent, have the child secured and buckled into the car seat, and have him wear his coat backwards OVER the harness. No extra items to purchase, nothing to forget, and the child can drape the coat over his lap if he is warm.

Layer Up
An undershirt, long sleeve shirt, and thin fleece hoodie is a great uniform for cold days. The fleece is light and thin, but very warm and cozy. Many popular companies make fleece suits and zip-ups that are safe and comfortable. For small infants, swaddling over the buckled harness is a safe way to keep body heat in. Add a thick warm blanket over the swaddle, and your baby will be warm and safe!

Please join us in our efforts to keep New York City children safer.

Current Safe Kids New York City members include:

- AAA New York
- Bellevue Hospital Center
- Bike New York
- Brookdale Hospital Medical Center
- Dominic A. Murray 21 Memorial Foundation
- Elmhurst Hospital Center
- Empire Blue Cross Blue Shield HealthPlus
- FedEx
- Fidelis Care New York
- Jacobi Medical Center
- Jamaica Hospital Medical Center
- Kings County Hospital Center
- Lincoln Hospital Center
- Millennium Development Corporation
- Morris Heights Health Center
- New York Public Library
- New York-Presbyterian Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital
- New York-Presbyterian William Randolph Hearst Burn Center
- New York-Presbyterian/Queens
- New York-Presbyterian Weill Cornell Medical Center
- NYC Administration for Children's Services
- NYC Department for the Aging
- NYC Department of Education
- NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene
- NYC Department of Transportation
- NYC Fire Department
- NYC Health and Hospitals Corporation
- NYC Poison Control Center
- NYC Police Department
- NYS Safe Kids Coalition
- NYU Langone Medical Center Parent Education Program
- NYU Langone Medical Center Concussion Center
- NYU Lutheran Medical Center
- North Shore/lij Health System - Lenox Hill Hospital
- North Shore/lij Health System - Staten Island University Hospital
- Public Health Solutions/Sudden Infant and Child Death Resource Center
- Richmond University Medical Center
- St. Barnabas Hospital

Call 212-839-4750 for more information
More than 250,000 toy-related injuries were treated nationwide in hospital emergency rooms.

Choosing Safe Toys
By Alexie Cruz Puran, MD, Harlem Hospital Center

It is holiday season again, and parents are buying toys as gifts for their children. Children love playing with toys. They’re fun and are an important part of a child’s development. But each year, thousands of children are treated in hospital emergency departments for toy-related injuries. According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), more than 250,000 toy-related injuries were treated nationwide in hospital emergency rooms in 2010. Of those, about one-third involved children under 5.

When selecting a toy for a child, it is vital to read the warning labels. These labels give important information about how to use a toy and what ages the toy is appropriate for. You may think that a child who seems advanced in comparison to peers can handle toys meant for older children. But the age levels for toys are determined by safety factors, not intelligence or maturity.

Choking is a particular risk for children ages 3 or younger, because they tend to put objects in their mouth. Make sure all toys and parts are larger than your child’s mouth to prevent blocking the airway. Use a toilet paper tube to test if a toy is a choking hazard. If it can fit inside the tube, it is a choking risk. Children can also choke or suffocate on deflated or broken balloons. Keep deflated balloons away from children younger than eight years old. Discard broken balloons at once.

Choose toys with good design and quality construction. Watch out for toys that have sharp edges, small parts, or sharp points. Avoid toys that produce extremely loud noises that can damage hearing and or propel objects that can injure eyes. Check to see that plush (stuffed) toys have age-appropriate features such as embroidered or secured eyes and noses for younger children, and seams that are reinforced to withstand an older child’s play.

Is he old enough?
When selecting a toy for a child, it is vital to read the warning labels. These labels give important information about how to use a toy and what ages the toy is appropriate for. You may think that a child who seems advanced in comparison to peers can handle toys meant for older children. But the age levels for toys are determined by safety factors, not intelligence or maturity.

Can she choke?
Choking is a particular risk for children ages 3 or younger, because they tend to put objects in their mouth. Make sure all toys and parts are larger than your child’s mouth to prevent blocking the airway. Use a toilet paper tube to test if a toy is a choking hazard. If it can fit inside the tube, it is a choking risk. Children can also choke or suffocate on deflated or broken balloons. Keep deflated balloons away from children younger than eight years old. Discard broken balloons at once.

Keep it Tidy
Once the gifts are opened, immediately discard plastic wrappings or other packaging before they become dangerous play things. Remove strings and ribbons from toys before giving them to young children. Watch for pull toys with strings that are more than 12 inches in length. They could be a strangulation hazard for babies. Keep toys appropriate for older children away from younger siblings in a designated location, such as on a shelf or in a toy chest.

Knowing what makes a toy safe will help you and your family remain safe and healthy—and especially have fun—during the holiday season!

Check the Consumer Product Safety Commission website (www.cpsc.gov/en/Safety-Education/Safety-Guides/Toys/) for the latest information about toy recalls or call their hotline at (800) 638-CPSC to report a toy you think is unsafe.

The Book Corner
Did you grow up with the stories of Cinderella, Brer Rabbit and Tikki Tikki Tembo? Folk and fairy tales are a great way to take children to faraway places or to times long ago without leaving the comfort of your home. Help a child’s imagination soar.

Christopher, Neil.
On the Shoulder of a Giant: an Inuit Folktale.

Lumbard, Alexis York.
Pine and the Winter Sparrow.

Naidoo, Beverly and Piet Grobler.
Who is King?: Ten Magical Stories from Africa.

Pinkney, Jerry.
The Grasshopper & the Ants.

Shaw, Stephanie.
The Legend of the Beaver’s Tail.

Yee, Paul.
Heat up Cold Days with Slow Cooking

by Robin Kilmer, NYC DOT Safety Education and Outreach

Everyone knows that the best way to a loved one’s heart is through their stomach. People spend hours hovering over a hot stove, whether they’re concocting chicken soup or macaroni and cheese with this in mind. But while cooking a good way of showing your love to friends and family, it may also a good way to harm them.

According to the United States Fire Administration almost half of residential fires are caused by cooking. But what to do if you want to make a nice soup? Or braised Moroccan beef? Or beef brisket? Or cake or macaroni and cheese?

There are actually myriad options, and they do not require newfangled technology—in fact, they utilize some of the oldest cooking methods known to man.

Cooking in many places of the world is hampered by blackouts, inadequate access to electricity, and the time and stamina needed to gather firewood. In the United States, we enjoy seemingly unlimited fuel and electricity. However that wasn’t always the case. As recently as World War II, cooking fuel was rationed. But that did not mean that families could not have soup.

A knowledgeable cook would set their soup to a boil, then briefly set it to a simmer, turn off the stove and then swaddle the pot in blankets, towels, scarves and whatever else might have been available. Removing the food from the heat does not take away the heat—instead, it only lowers it over time—and though your food will take a long time to cook, this method will liberate you from constantly having to hover over a stove or tend the fire. It also means you will be using less fuel. Essentially, using this method allows you to take multitasking to the next level, allowing you to cook while you sleep or sit in your office. No outlets or fire required.

The Wonderbag

The wonderbag is a product from South Africa. It is a fabric bag insulated with repurposed foam chips. South Africa has many power outages, and rural citizens spend hours a day gathering food for the cooking fire. The wonderbag saves time, fuel, and trees.

The Hay Box

This is exactly what it sounds like: a box of hay in which you nestle your food. Wood chips and other farm-related organic refuse will work, too.

Hole in the Ground

Do you have a yard? Dig a hole in the ground! Ancient people brought their food to boil in ceramic pots that were then transferred to a hole in the ground insulated with moss, dry leaves, and other materials. The pot and hole would then be covered until dinner time.

While you certainly can’t cook everything in a thermal cooker, take a look at these Taste of Home recipes here that are sure to keep your loved ones’ stomachs full, and your heart warm and fuzzy: http://www.tasteofhome.com/recipes/cooking-style/slow-cooker-recipes/slow-cooked-sunday-dinners

Scalds from hot liquids or steam are the most common burns among children. Many are caused by hot food/drinks and bathing. Here are ways to prevent them:

- Never bathe a child in the sink or under running water that can get too hot too quickly.
- Bathe children with their backs to the faucet to prevent them from touching the faucet handles.
- Avoid using tablecloths and placemats that can easily be pulled.

Accidents can sometimes happen, but remember most burns ARE preventable. If a burn does occur, act fast:

Stop the burn. Cool the burn with COOL water. Cover the burn with a clean dry cloth. Seek medical care immediately.

For more information about burn safety, contact the New York Presbyterian Burn Center at http://nyp.org/services/burn-center.html
You Can Prevent Sleep-Related Infant Death

By Jill Katz, Sudden Infant and Child Death Resource Center

Infants from 1-6 months old are vulnerable and those from 2-4 months old are most at risk for sleep-related death. In NYC, primarily in the Bronx and Brooklyn, these preventable deaths are occurring at the rate of approximately one death per week. Most involve suffocation combined with an unsafe sleep condition. There are ways parents can reduce the risk.

During the winter months, infants just need to wear a simple onesie or a sleep sack when you put them down for a nap or for the night. These are wonderful alternatives to a blanket. Don’t be tempted to add on comforters or heavy blankets as the temperatures go down. Infants should not be overly heated, so putting on a hat during sleep is also not necessary or recommended. Breastfeeding is a great way to nourish your young baby, but be sure to do it safely during the nightly feedings. Stay upright, alert and awake.

Safe Sleep Sweep is a new free app/game available in English and Spanish on both iOS and Android. Players rescue infants from dangerous sleep environments while learning safe sleep basics. Download it for free to your smart phone and get access to discounts on baby items, too.

For more information, please contact the Sudden Infant and Child Death Resource Center at 212-323-1425

Keeping Children Safe on the internet

Using the internet today is as normal a function as eating. It is part of our lifestyle and more importantly, the lifestyle of our children. Many students today are using smart boards in school with internet access and are even required to be online for academic purposes. Indeed, parents face the daunting task of understanding the risk posed when their children are online and utilizing social media sites whether from a home computer, tablet or their mobile phone. There are few rules governing the internet but that lack should not limit common sense and good parenting.

continued on page 8
Laundry pods are individual packets that dissolve in water and contain concentrated amounts of laundry detergent and cleaners. Calls to Poison Control Centers nationally have increased since the pods were introduced on the market in 2012. According to the American Association of Poison Control Centers, 8,937 calls were received involving children 5 years old and younger between Jan. 1 and September 30, 2015 (www.aapcc.org).

The colorful laundry pods are attractive to children and have been mistaken for candy. If swallowed, they can cause serious health problems including difficulty breathing, vomiting, burns in the eyes and throat, and loss of consciousness. Ingestion of these products may result in hospitalization.

Internet crime has become the fastest growing type of crime and our children are the biggest victim pool to choose from. The biggest concern for most parents used to be only the threat of exposure to inappropriate content containing sexual or violent images. Today, the use of social media on the internet has assisted in expanding the use of cyberbullying and identity theft as a safety concern. The solicitation of personal information and other information when joining certain networks or forums leaves not only your child at risk but the entire family, as it wields the ability to cause financial breaches and unwanted solicitations.

One of the greatest risks to children specifically is posed when children visit online chat rooms or social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and even Snapchat. Items that are posted can be viewed and stored by others and can easily be shared or copied all over the world to help prey on children. “Cyber-molesters” easily use Internet chat rooms and social networks to reach their young prey. By discussing the latest in teen fashion and music, these predators posture to gain your child’s trust, hiding behind an identity manufactured solely to elicit whatever information or images they desire. The predator works quickly, yet patiently, to become your child’s “friend.” While a chat room “friendship” can easily lead to inappropriate private conversations, instant messages and photo exchanges, it can also lead to your child setting up a very dangerous face-to-face meeting or divulging private information. According to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, 1 in 25 youths received an online sexual solicitation where the solicitor tried to make offline contact.

Parents can best work to protect their child by educating themselves about computers, Internet use and social networks, and setting parental controls on the computer and smartphones. More importantly, good parenting warrants staying on the lookout for warning signs of inappropriate use. Be wary if your child:

- Excessively uses the internet, especially at night
- Becomes increasingly secretive (shutting the door and/or hiding what is on the screen when you enter the room), or possessive of the laptop or mobile phone
- Is unable to talk openly about what he/she does online, or the specifics of the identity of a new online “friend”
- Exhibits personality changes that may indicate he/she is being victimized (withdrawal from family, mood swings, outbursts of anger/irritation)

Remember, set realistic rules with any electronics that have web browsing capabilities, use parental controls with passwords and pay close attention to what your child is doing online. Essential tips for internet use include:

- Place any computer in a common area of the house and keep an eye on your child when they are using their tablet or smartphone. Tell them they can go into chat rooms only when you are present
- Set reasonable time and use limits, and actually enforce them
- Do not let your child give out personal information of any kind on the internet or upload or download pictures
- Review the use histories or logs of your computer to see where your child has been
- Learn “chat lingo” so you understand what your child is saying

The best protective weapon parents have in their arsenal is good communication with their children. Speak openly with your children about the dangers they may encounter, and work out an agreement with them with the understanding that you have their health and safety in mind. Ensure they know they can come to you as soon as something uncomfortable happens online. Let them know you won’t “pull the plug” on the internet if mistakes are made.

For more information about safe Internet use, visit: http://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/publications/parent-guide.