

# PRE-SCHOOLERS: INDEPENDENT ADVENTURERS

## 3½ – 5 YEARS



### SKILLS YOUR CHILD IS LEARNING

Your child is becoming increasingly independent and adventurous, often exploring and climbing on objects. At this stage, children have little understanding of danger and require constant supervision.

#### AT HOME

- Teach your child about safety around the home.
- Ensure that poisons including cleaning products, pesticides and medications are stored out of reach, preferably in a cupboard with a child resistant lock that is 1.5m above the floor. Be aware that child resistant lids are 'child resistant' not 'child proof'.
- Store button batteries up high out of reach of children and ensure battery compartments on devices (e.g. remote controls) are secure.
- Keep matches and cigarette lighters out of reach.
- Work out a fire escape plan in case of an emergency and practice it with your children regularly. Teach your child that if caught in a fire they should **CRAWL DOWN LOW** and **GO GO GO**. Also teach them how to **STOP, DROP, COVER and ROLL** if their clothes catch on fire.
- Use safety glass or shatter resistant film in low windows and doors and place brightly coloured stickers at the child's head height so they can see there is glass in their path.

#### STREET TIPS

- Always hold your child's hand near the road. Explain pedestrian safety rules and provide a good example when crossing the road by obeying all traffic signals.
- Teach your child to **STOP, LOOK, LISTEN and THINK**.



### COMMON CAUSES OF INJURY

- Falls from play equipment or wheeled devices such as bikes and scooters.
- Dog bites.
- Motor vehicle crashes and driveway run-over incidents.
- Drowning in backyard swimming pools, bath tubs and other sources of water in and around the home.

#### AT PLAY

- Choose play equipment suitable for your child's age and stage of development, including bicycles, skateboards and scooters.
- Install playground equipment and cubbies away from hazards including hard paths, garden edging and stakes. Place impact absorbing material (e.g. tanbark), underneath equipment and in the fall zone.
- The fall height from all play equipment should be less than 1.5 metres.
- Look for a trampoline that complies with Australian Standard AS 4989 and has safety padding and nets.
- Safety barriers are required for all pools and spas with a depth greater than 30cm. Regularly check and maintain your barrier and gate to ensure they are in proper working order.
- Supervise your child closely when they are playing with animals.
- Ensure your child always wears a correctly fitted and fastened helmet when skating or riding a bicycle, skateboard or scooter. Children should also wear wrist guards, elbow and knee pads when skating.
- Supervise all bicycle, scooter and skating activities.
- Do not allow children to ride or skate on the road.
- Prune low branches of trees and shrubs that are at children's eye level.

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### CAR TIPS

- Never leave your child in the car. The temperature inside a car can be 20 – 30° hotter than the outside temperature. When you leave the car, take your child with you- even for small errands.
- Use an approved, properly fastened and adjusted forward facing child restraint with an in built harness, or an approved booster seat.
- Ensure your child stays in their restraint until they have outgrown its size limit.
- Provide plenty of cool fluids during drives to avoid dehydration.
- Ensure children get in and out of the car on the kerb side to minimise their exposure to traffic.

For more detailed information on any of the topics covered in this fact sheet, including on child car restraints and regulations for swimming pool and spa barriers, please visit [www.kidsafevic.com.au](http://www.kidsafevic.com.au)

### GENERAL SAFETY TIPS

1. Ensure you have current CPR/first aid skills.
2. Teach your child basic water awareness and enrol them in professional swimming lessons.
3. Establish rules when in or around your pool and supervise children closely at all times.
4. Fit smoke alarms outside bedroom areas, test them each month by pressing the test button and replace batteries annually. Only working smoke alarms save lives.
5. Keep children away from dogs while the dogs are being fed. Always supervise children around pets.
6. Choose play equipment and toys that are suitable for the age and development of your child.



### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Kidsafe Victoria	9036 2306	Poisons Information Centre	13 11 26
Maternal and Child Health Line 24 hours	13 22 29	Raising Children Network	<a href="http://www.raisingchildren.net.au">www.raisingchildren.net.au</a>
Consumer Affairs Victoria Toy and Nursery Safety Line	1300 364 894	Parenting Hotline Vic	132 289

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