



Bicycle safety tips for young children
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the GPS

girl & parent "stuff"



Charting the direction you want her to go!

Concern for our children's safety is the cause of many a sleepless night and countless hours spent staring at the phone.

For parents and caregivers, their children's personal and physical safety is of utmost concern from the moment they get up in the morning until they are tucked safely in bed at night. And it's not just the bumps and bruises that today's parents worry about, but also the emotional injuries from bullying and cybercrimes that can affect today's children. You can't

put them in bubble wrap or block them from social interaction, but you can follow the Girl Scout motto and "Be Prepared."

Inside this issue of GPS, you will find resources to help keep your family safer at home, whether they're riding a bike, playing sports or surfing online. While we can't protect our children every moment, we can help teach them to protect themselves!



Safety Rules for Every Family

Condensed from Aha!Parenting.com
www.ahaparenting.com/parenting-tools/safety/top_safety_tips_kids

It's a big world out there. When your child was a baby or toddler, you were always there, or you left your child in the care of a trusted, nurturing adult. But as your child gets older, you'll be holding his or her hand less and less. You're bound to worry a bit about safety. And when kids begin to navigate the sidewalks or even public transit themselves, it can be positively nerve-wracking.

Every parent fears that phone call with the news that something has happened to her child. Rest assured that despite the prominent publicity that accompanies tragedies, they are very rare. And even more encouraging, experts say that most abuse cases, abductions, and even accidents involving children can be prevented if parents and children know what to do to prevent them.

So here's a baker's dozen list of Family Safety Rules that can really help you keep your child safe as you let go of her hand!

1. Prioritize your child. The best way to keep your kids from being abused or bullied, or use drugs or engage in other risky behaviors is to maintain close relationships with them. Eat dinner together as many nights as you can. Make sure you have unstructured one on one time - just to see what bubbles up (and determine how you can help) - with each child every day. Children who feel valued, heard, and taken seriously are much more likely to stick up for themselves, to fight back, and to ask for help.

2. Every child should know how to SWIM. Teach your child to never swim alone, and be sure your child knows NEVER to dive into water that she has not already personally established to be deep and safe.

3. Teach your child to cross the street.

When your child is young enough to hold your hand, stop every single

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Safety first! Click the links below to download an informative home safety checklist and current recommended immunization schedule (from SafeKids.org).

http://bit.ly/gshs_GPSimmunizations http://bit.ly/gshs_GPSHomeSafetyCheck



Anatomy of a First Aid Kit From the American Red Cross

A well-stocked first aid kit is a handy thing to have. To be prepared for emergencies:

- Keep a first aid kit in your home and in your car.
- Carry a first aid kit with you or know where you can find one.
- Find out the location of first aid kits where you work.

Whether you buy a first aid kit or put one together, make sure it has all the items you may need:

- Include any personal items such as medications and emergency phone numbers or other items your health-care provider may suggest.
- Check the kit regularly.
- Make sure the flashlight batteries work.
- Check expiration dates and replace any used or out-of-date contents.

The Red Cross recommends that all first aid kits for a family of four include the following:

- 2 absorbent compress dressings (5 x 9 inches)
- 25 adhesive bandages (assorted sizes)
- 1 adhesive cloth tape (10 yards x 1 inch)
- 5 antibiotic ointment packets (approximately 1 gram)
- 5 antiseptic wipe packets
- 2 packets of aspirin (81 mg each)
- 1 blanket (space blanket)
- 1 breathing barrier (with one-way valve)
- 1 instant cold compress
- 2 pair of nonlatex gloves (size: large)
- 2 hydrocortisone ointment packets (approximately 1 gram each)
- Scissors
- 1 roller bandage (3 inches wide)
- 1 roller bandage (4 inches wide)
- 5 sterile gauze pads (3 x 3 inches)
- 5 sterile gauze pads (4 x 4 inches)
- Oral thermometer (non-mercury/nonglass)
- 2 triangular bandages
- Tweezers
- First aid instruction booklet

(continued from p.1) time and say, "Let's cross safely! Look left, then right, then left again. Any cars? Okay, now we can cross!" As your child gets a bit older, ask her to take charge of the ritual. By the time she can cross by herself, safe habits will be ingrained.

4. When your child goes to someone's house on a playdate, be sure you know the family, and watch your child for cues about what's happened. Get to know the parents at households where your child spends time. Talk to her about what goes on at her friends' houses and make sure that you know that she knows how to recognize and handle inappropriate behaviors or situations when they arise.

5. Kids with high self-esteem and strong relationships - both at home and with peers - are less likely to be bullied. Bullies prey on children whom they perceive to be vulnerable, insecure, or emotionally needy. Kids need to be confident and feel reassured that there is no shame in being frightened by a bully or in walking away, telling an adult, and asking for help.

6. Teach your child that every part of her body covered with a swimsuit is private, belonging only to her. One-third of girls will suffer some unwanted sexual touching by the time they turn sixteen. And the stats for boys are almost as bad - one out of six. Teach your child that no one - no adult, no child, NO ONE - should ever touch him or her in ways that make them uncomfortable.

7. Teach your child that there are no "secrets" among family members. Molesters usually seduce kids into complicity by starting with mild secrets like, "Don't tell your mom I gave you candy." Your child needs to know that anytime anyone asks her to keep a secret she is to tell you immediately. Make sure your child knows she can tell you anything, and that you will love her no matter what.

8. Teach your child that while most people are good, there are some out there who aren't. She needs to be told explicitly that it is more important to stay safe and to trust herself than to be polite. It is okay for her to question, disobey, and even run away from someone whose behavior is making her acutely uncomfortable.

9. Do not leave your child with anyone you do not completely trust. The truth about abuse is that most of it, statistically, is not perpetrated by strangers. It happens at the hands of family members, or the mother's boyfriend, or by trusted intimates such as coaches, religious leaders, or teachers. Yes, these are people your child trusts, but it's a risk you can usually avoid, if you trust your instincts and pay attention.

10. Cars are dangerous. Train yourself to double-check before you get out to ensure you haven't left your child behind. It seems inconceivable, but every year, babies and toddlers die in cars because normal, everyday, sleep-deprived parents go on "autopilot." Train your child to buckle up and make sure that she knows she can always call you for a ride regardless of the situation. Once she starts driving, make sure she hears stories about kids who've died in car accidents; those stories could keep her alive. **Car accidents are the leading cause of death among teens.**

11. When your child begins using public transit, ease into it. First, travel with her. Then, stay near her but let her travel "alone." Then, let her travel with a friend. Role play like crazy: What happens if she and her friend get separated? What if someone pulls a knife and asks for her money? (Yes, this happens.) What if her cell phone falls on the subway tracks? What if some guy stares at her and it gives her the creeps? Be sure she doesn't use her phone or other electronics en route; they make her a target.

12. Help your child develop good judgment. There is no substitute for supervision and knowing what's going on in your child's life, but as your child grows, she'll need to be aware of her own instincts about what's safe, and follow them. Unfortunately, the brain of a teen is primed to be influenced by peers, so she can easily override that "still, small voice within" if all the other girls are doing something risky. Daredevil behavior is bad enough in a six year-old, but in a sixteen year-old it can be deadly. Help your child develop good judgment and self-confidence, so she can resist the lure of social pressure when she needs to.

13. Talk with your kids constantly -- and listen more than you talk.

Listening keeps you connected and helps your child feel safe. But it also helps your child talk to you more, and when you get kids talking about something, they're thinking about it. So introduce topics that will help your child think, reflect, and develop good judgment. Ask questions, like:

- What do you worry about the most?
- If you got into really big trouble, how do you think I would respond?
- What are the different kinds of courage? How do you define bravery?

Building girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.

girl scouts heart of the south

Be Cyber-Safe!

GSUSA has partnered with the U. S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and joined the **Stop.Think.Connect.** campaign, a national public awareness effort among government, industry, and non-profits designed to guide the nation to a higher level of Internet security by educating and empowering the American public to be more vigilant about practicing safe online habits.

Stop.Think.Connect. provides tools and resources to help raise awareness among kids, teens, and young adults about emerging online threats and the importance of cybersecurity. Some of the information from the campaign is provided below for you to share with your family.

HEADS UP: STOP. THINK. CONNECT. You text; you play games; you share photos and video. You update your status; you post comments; and you probably spend some time in a virtual world. Being online—connected through some sort of device—is how you live your life. But the truth is there are some risks involved in socializing, playing, and communicating online. Regardless of how fast your fingers fly on a keyboard or cell phone, the best tool you have to help avoid online risks is your brain. When you're ready to post or send a message or a photo, download a file, game or program, or shop for something—stop for a second and think about things like:

- Do you know and trust who you're dealing with—or what you're sharing or downloading?
- How will you feel if your information ends up somewhere you didn't intend or is seen by someone you would not want to see it?

Asking a few key questions first can help you protect yourself, your friends and your computer.

SHARE WITH CARE Your online actions can have real-world consequences. The pictures you post and the words you write can affect the people in your life. Think before you post and share. What you post could have a bigger audience than you think. Even if you use privacy settings, it's impossible to completely control who sees your social networking profile, pictures, videos, or texts. Before you click "send," think about how you will feel if your family, teachers, or coaches see it.

Once you post information online, you can't take it back. You may think that you've deleted information from a site, but know that older versions may exist on other people's computers.

Get someone's okay before you share photos or videos they're in. Online photo albums are great for storing and sharing pictures of special events, and camera phones make it easy to capture every moment. Stop and think about your own privacy—and other people's—before you share photos and videos online. It can be embarrassing, unfair, and even unsafe to send or post photos and videos without getting permission from the people featured in them.

Politeness counts. Texting and email are just another way for people to have a conversation, so be polite. Use "please" and "thank you" (or pls and ty), and remember to tone it down. In online conversations, using ALL CAPS, long rows of exclamation points, or large, bolded fonts are the same as shouting. And remember to use "Cc:" and "Reply All:" sparingly. Before you hit send on an email, stop and think about whether everyone needs to see that message.

Avatars are people too. When you're playing a game or exploring an online world where you can create a character and interact with others, remember real people are behind those characters on the screen. Respect their feelings just like you would in person. Remember that your character or avatar is a virtual version of you—what does it tell people about you and your interests?

Don't impersonate. It's wrong and can be hurtful to create sites, pages, or posts that seem to come from someone else, like someone in your class or a teacher.

Speak up. If you see something inappropriate on a social networking site or in a game or chat room, let the website know and tell an adult you trust. Using "Report Abuse" links can help keep sites fun for everyone.

Don't stand for bullying—online or off. Treat others the way you want to be treated—whether you're interacting with them online, on your phone or in person.

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Items for girls ages 5 - 7 (Daisies)

Items for girls ages 7 - 10 (Brownies)

Items for girls ages 10 - 13 (Juniors)

Items for girls ages 12 - 14 (Cadettes)

Items for girls ages 14 - 16 (Seniors)

Items for older girls ages 15 - 18 (Ambassadors)



Take the Girl Scout Internet Safety Pledge: http://bit.ly/gshs_ISPledge



(continued from p.3)

CYBERBULLYING Cyberbullying is bullying that happens online. It can happen in an email, a text message, an online game, or on a social networking site. It might involve rumors or images posted on someone's profile or passed around for other people to see. **Cyberbullying is a lose-lose proposition:** of course it makes the person being harassed feel bad—and it makes the bully look bad. It can also lead to punishment from school authorities or the police.

What do you do if you witness cyberbullying? Tell the bully to stop. Most kids don't bully, and there's no reason for anyone to put up with it. This mean behavior usually stops pretty quickly when somebody stands up for the person being bullied.

Avoid being a cyberbully and practice good cyber ethics. Follow the Golden Rule: Be nice online and in real life. Don't say or do anything online that you wouldn't do in person. Own what you say and do online.

PROTECT YOURSELF Use privacy settings to restrict who can see and post on your profile. Many social networking sites, chat rooms, and blogs have privacy settings. Find out how to turn these settings on, and then do it. Limit your online friends to people you actually know. The people you meet on the Internet may not be who they appear to be.

Learn about social mapping. Many mobile phones have GPS technology, and there are applications that allow you to find your friends—and allow them to find you. Use GPS and social mapping apps only with people you know personally and trust. Take advantage of privacy features in apps and on your phone.

Trust your gut if you feel threatened or uncomfortable because of someone or something you find online. Tell someone who can help you report your concerns to the proper authorities and other people who can help.

PROTECT YOUR INFORMATION Some types of information **should stay private.** Your Social Security Number and family financial information—like your parents' bank account or credit card numbers—should stay in the family. Keep passwords private. The longer and more complex your password, the harder it is to crack. Don't share your passwords with anybody, including your best friends, or your boyfriend or girlfriend.

Never reply to text, email or pop-up messages that ask you to reply with personal information— even if the message looks like it comes from a person, company, or organization you know, or threatens that something bad will happen if you don't reply. These messages may be fakes, sent to steal your information.

PROTECT YOUR COMPUTER Be cautious about opening attachments or clicking on links. They may contain viruses or spyware. Learn about security software and how your home computer, the kids' laptops, and their computer tablets are protected. Maintain up-to-date antivirus software on all your devices that connect to the Internet to increase your devices' security.

Remember that, sometimes, free stuff—like games, ring tones, or screen savers—can hide viruses or spyware. Don't download unless you trust the source and scan the file with security software. Use peer-to-peer (P2P) file-sharing services with caution. Make sure you install file-sharing software properly, and scan downloaded files with security software before you open or play them. Otherwise, you could be sharing information your family expects to keep private, like financial records.



Girl Scouts Heart of the South stands with women and stands with girls!
We invite you to stand beside us the week of October 25- 31, 2015 to propel this national effort to change our current culture so every girl and woman can reach her fullest potential.

Find out more at www.standbesideher.org.





Bike Safety for Kids 5-9

Condensed from SafeKids.org

If they haven't already, your children are just about to lose those training wheels. Here are a few tips to keep them safe as they soak up the adventure.

HELMETS

"Use your head, wear a helmet." It is the single most effective safety device available to reduce head injury and death from bicycle crashes.

Make sure your child has the right size helmet and wears it every time when riding, skating or scooting.

Wear a helmet, even if you didn't when you were a kid. You'd be surprised how much kids learn from watching you, so it's extra important for parents to model proper behavior.

Your child's helmet should meet the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's standards. When it's time to purchase a new helmet, let your children pick out their own; they'll be more likely to wear it for every ride.

BIKES

Ensure proper bike fit by bringing the child along when shopping for a bike. Select one that is the right size for the child, not one he or she will grow into.

Actively supervise children until you're comfortable that they are responsible to ride on their own.

Limit riding to sidewalks (although be careful for vehicles in driveways), parks or bike paths until age 10. Every child is different, but developmentally, it can be hard for kids to judge speed and distance of cars until age 10, but no matter where you ride, teach your child to stay alert and watch for cars and trucks.

Dress young kids appropriately to ensure a safe ride. Long or loose clothing can get caught in bike chains or wheel spokes.

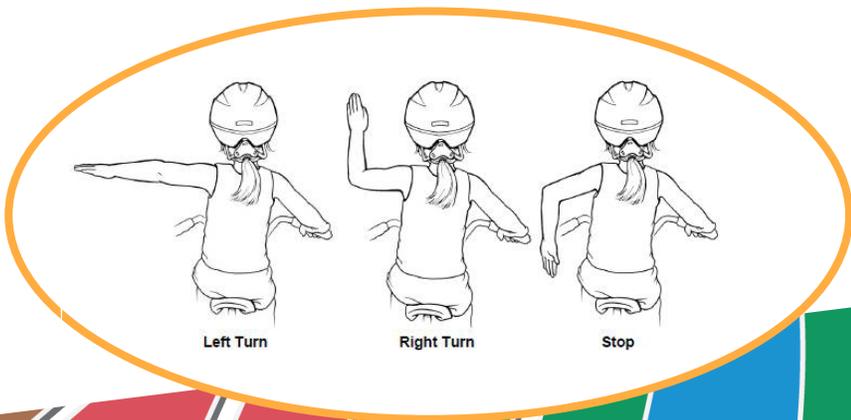
Properly maintain your child's bicycle. Before each ride, make sure the reflectors are secure, brakes work properly, gears shift smoothly, and tires are tightly secured and properly inflated.

Teach your kids to make eye contact with drivers. Bikers should make sure drivers are paying attention and are going to stop before they cross the street.

Tell your kids to ride on the right side of the road, with traffic, not against it. Stay as far to the right as possible. Use appropriate hand signals (see picture below) and respect traffic signals, stopping at all stop signs and stoplights.

Make sure your child is visible to others at all times. When riding at dusk, at dawn or in the evening, be bright and use lights – and make sure your bike has reflectors as well. It's also smart to wear clothes and accessories that have retro-reflective materials to improve biker visibility to motorists.

Protect your brain! Consistently wearing a helmet while biking, roller-blading, skateboarding or other such activities can severely limit your child's risk of concussion. To learn more about concussions and how to recognize them visit http://bit.ly/gshs_GPSConcussion



Additional stats from SafeKids.org

Each month, three out of four children in the U.S. ride a bicycle.

Approximately 55 percent of children don't always wear a helmet while bicycling.

Apart from the automobile, bicycles are tied to more childhood injuries than any other consumer product.

A child who rides with companions wearing helmets or adults in general is more likely to wear a helmet himself.

Compared to older children, younger children are more likely to wear helmets. Helmet use is the single most effective way to reduce bicycle-related fatalities.

A helmet on the head of a younger bicyclist saves society \$580.

Helmets reduce the risk of head injury by at least 45 percent, brain injury by 33 percent, facial injury by 27 percent and fatal injury by 29 percent. One study suggests that helmet use can reduce the risk of head injury by 85 percent and severe brain injury by 88 percent.

There are more injuries associated with non-motorized scooters among children younger than 15 years old than any other toy.



For complete details about all of the exciting
Girl Scouts Heart of the South
events and programs listed below - or to register -
visit: www.girlscoutshs.org/calendar.



Upcoming Events for Girls - Late Oct. 2015 -Jan. 2016

Museums and football; race cars and horses; fitness and fun, Girl Scouts can do it all! Look below for events you and your daughter can enjoy.

For the most current information and to register for an event, go to www.girlscoutshs.org/calendar.

Girls may attend events with their troop, with a friend or on their own. Non-Girl Scouts are welcome to attend and see just how much fun it is to be a Girl Scout!

Delta State Football Scout Night

Where: Delta State University Travis
Parker Field, Cleveland, MS

When: 10/24/2015, 6:00 PM

Who: Everyone

Registration not required.

Stand Beside Her Forum

Where: Hutchison School; Memphis, TN

When: 10/27/2015; 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM

Who: Everyone

Registration not required.

University of Memphis Football Scout Night

Where: Liberty Bowl Memorial Stadium,
Memphis, TN

When: 11/07/2015

Registration required.

Pink Palace Camp-In Extravaganza

Where: Pink Palace Museum, Memphis, TN

When: 11/13/2015 - 11/14/2015

Registration required. Contact the
Pink Palace at 901-636-2362.

International Girl's Day Events with Kappa Delta Sorority Chapters

Where: Starkville, MS; Jackson, TN
and Cleveland, MS

When: 11/15/2015

Who: Everyone

Registration: 10/1/15-11/10/15

Gymnastic Overnight Jackson

Where: Glory Gymnastics Center, Jackson, TN

When: 11/20/2015 - 11/21/2015

Registration: 9/1/15-11/13/14

Start your Engines! Powderpuff Derby

Where: Memphis International Raceway,
Millington, TN

When: 11/21/2015

Registration: 9/1/15-10/31/15

Daisy Day at the Children's Museum

Where: Children's Museum of Memphis,
Memphis, TN

When: 11/21/2015

Registration: 9/1/15- 11/13/15

Gold Award Training

Where: Jackson (location TBA)

When: 12/5/2015

Who: Seniors & Ambassadors

Registration required.

HealthWorks! Badge Workshop

Where: HealthWorks!; Tupelo, MS

When: 1/9/2016

Registration required.

Cookie Rally

Where: Landers Center; Memphis, TN

When: 1/9/2016; 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Registration required.

Cookie Rally

Where: Grenada Middle School; Grenada, MS

When: 1/14/2016; 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM

Registration required.

Cookie Rally

Where: Wesley United Methodist Church;
Tupelo, MS

When: 1/16/2016; 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Registration required.

Cookie Rally

Where: Poplar Heights Baptist Church;
Jackson, TN

When: 1/23/2016

Registration required.

October 2015 GPS Images:

masthead picture, p1: Girl Scouts learn to safely enjoy outdoor adventures like white water rafting!

pictured above right: Cadettes joined the staff at the Woodruff-Fontaine House for a spooky night full of stories of the families that once lived at the mansion!

pictured below right: Jackson, TN area Girl Scouts enjoy Girl Scout Night at Casey Jones Village.

All other images obtained via Shutterstock.com or Google Images.



Looking for advice or
information on a specific
parenting question or
concern?

Contact us to suggest
a topic for an upcoming
issue of *The GPS!*

Email your suggestions
to
news@girlscoutshs.org

