

# 6 Years



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### Safety for Your Child

Did you know that injuries are the greatest threat to the life and health of your child? Injuries are the leading cause of death of school-aged children. **Yet you can prevent most major injuries!**

At age 6, your child will become more independent. They will be able to do more things that are dangerous. Your child will try to prove that they are grown up. But children still aren't good at judging sound, distance, or the speed of a moving car at this age. Your child can learn a few simple things to do for protection, but **you must still be in charge of their safety.**

#### Fire Safety

**Make an escape plan** in case of fire in your home. Your fire department can tell you how. Teach your child what to do when the smoke alarm rings. Practice what you and your child would do if you had a fire.

Do not smoke in your home. Many home fires are caused by a lit cigarette that has not been put out completely.

Install smoke alarms on every level in your house, especially in furnace and sleeping areas, and test the alarms every month. It is best to use smoke alarms that use long-life batteries, but if you do not, change the batteries once a year.



#### Firearm Hazards

Children in homes where guns are present are in more danger of being shot by themselves, their friends, or family members than of being injured by an intruder. Even if your child is taught never to touch a gun, if there is a gun in the house a child's curiosity can lead to severe injury or death. It is best to keep all guns out of the home. **Handguns are especially dangerous.** If you keep a gun, keep it unloaded and in a locked place, with the ammunition locked separately. Ask if the homes where your child visits or is cared for have guns and how they are stored.



#### Bike Safety

Protect your child from bad head injuries or even death. **Make sure your child wears a properly fitted, approved helmet every time they ride a bike.** Never let your child ride in the street. Your child is too young to ride in the street safely!



#### Street Safety

Never let your child play near the street. Your child may dart out into traffic without thinking. The park or playground is the best place to play. Begin to teach your child safe street habits. **Teach your child to stop at the curb,** then look to the left, to the right, and back to the left again. Teach your child never to cross the street without a grown-up.



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## Water Safety

Now is the time to teach your child to swim. Even if your child knows how to swim, **never let them swim alone**. Teach your child how to turn upright, float, tread water, and get to safety.

Do not let your child play around any water (lake, stream, pool, or ocean) unless an adult is watching. The adult must be supervising closely and continuously without distractions like reading or using a phone. *Never* let your child swim in canals or any fast-moving water.

Teach your child to never dive into water unless an adult has checked the depth of the water. **And when your child is on any boat, be sure your child is wearing a Coast Guard-approved life jacket.**



## And Remember Car Safety

Your child must use a **car safety seat or booster seat** in the car. Always check to be sure they are correctly buckled up before you start the car. Your child should use a car safety seat until they reach the manufacturer's height or weight limit, then a booster seat until the lap belt can be worn low and flat on the hips and the shoulder belt lies across the middle of the chest and the shoulder rather than the face or neck (usually at about 4 feet 9 inches tall and between 8 and 12 years of age). The safest place for all children, even through school age, is in the back seat of the car. Set a good example.

**Make sure you and other adults buckle up too!**



From Your Doctor

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