



Gulf County  
School Health  
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## Summer Safety Tips

### Lawn Mower Safety

- Try to use a mower with a control that stops the mower from moving forward if the handle is let go.
- Children younger than 16 years should not be allowed to use ride-on mowers. Children younger than 12 years should not use walk-behind mowers.
- Make sure that sturdy shoes (not sandals or sneakers) are worn while mowing.
- Prevent injuries from flying objects, such as stones or toys, by picking up objects from the lawn before mowing begins. Have anyone who uses a mower wear hearing and eye protection.
- Do not pull the mower backward or mow in reverse unless absolutely necessary, and carefully look for children behind you when you mow in reverse.
- Always turn off the mower and wait for the blades to stop completely before removing the grass catcher, unclogging the discharge chute, or crossing gravel paths, roads, or other areas.
- Do not allow children to ride as passengers on ride-on mowers.



### Bug Safety



- Don't use scented soaps, perfumes or hair sprays on your child.
- Avoid areas where insects nest or congregate, such as stagnant pools of water, uncovered foods and gardens where flowers are in bloom.
- Avoid dressing your child in clothing with bright colors or flowery prints.
- To remove a visible stinger from skin, gently scrape it off horizontally with a credit card or your fingernail.
- Combination sunscreen/insect repellent products should be avoided because sunscreen needs to be reapplied every two hours, but the insect repellent should not be reapplied.
- Insect repellents containing DEET are most effective against ticks, which can transmit Lyme Disease, and mosquitoes, which can transmit West Nile Virus and other viruses.
- The current CDC and AAP recommendation for children over 2 months of age is to use 30 percent DEET. DEET should not be used on children under 2 months of age.
- The concentration of DEET in products may range from less than 10 percent to over 30 percent. Ten percent DEET only protects for about 30 minutes – inadequate for most outings.
- The concentration of DEET varies significantly from product to product, so read the label of any product you purchase. Children should wash off repellents when back indoors.

## Pool Safety

- Install a fence at least four-feet high around all four sides of the pool. The fence should not have openings or protrusions that a young child could use to get over, under, or through.
- Make sure pool gates open out from the pool, and self-close and self-latch at a height children can't reach.
- Never leave children alone in or near the pool, even for a moment.
- Keep rescue equipment (a shepherd's hook - a long pole with a hook on the end - and life preserver) and a portable telephone near the pool. Choose a shepherd's hook and other rescue equipment made of fiberglass or other materials that do not conduct electricity.
- Avoid inflatable swimming aids such as "floaties." They are not a substitute for approved life vests and can give children a false sense of security.
- Children may not be developmentally ready for swim lessons until after their fourth birthday. Swim programs for children under 4 should not be seen as a way to decrease the risk of drowning.
- Whenever infants or toddlers are in or around water, an adult should be within arm's length, providing "touch supervision."



## Bicycle Safety

- Do not push your child to ride a 2-wheeled bike until he or she is ready, at about age 5 or 6. Consider the child's coordination and desire to learn to ride. Stick with coaster (foot) brakes until your child is older and more experienced for hand brakes.
- Take your child with you when you shop for the bike, so that he or she can try it out. The value of a properly fitting bike far outweighs the value of surprising your child with a new one. For more information on finding the proper fit, go to <http://www.aap.org/family/bicycle.htm#choosing>
- Buy a bike that is the right size, not one your child has to "grow into." Oversized bikes are especially dangerous.
- Your child needs to wear a helmet on every bike ride, no matter how short or how close to home. Many accidents happen in driveways, on sidewalks, and on bike paths, not just on streets. Children learn best by observing you. Whenever you ride, put on your helmet.
- When purchasing a helmet, look for a label or sticker that says the helmet meets the CPSC safety standard.
- A helmet protects your child from serious injury, and should always be worn. And remember, wearing a helmet at all times helps children develop the helmet habit.
- A helmet should be worn so that it is level on the head, not tipped forwards or backwards. The strap should be securely fastened, and you should not be able to move the helmet in any direction. If needed, the helmet's sizing pads can help improve the fit.

### References

<http://www.aap.org/family/tiplawn.htm>

<http://www.aap.org/family/tippool.htm>

<http://www.aap.org/family/bicycle.htm>

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