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Why it is important to share
and act on information
about



Injury Prevention

Every year, 750,000 children die from injuries. Another 400 million are seriously hurt. Many injuries lead to permanent disability and brain damage. Injuries are a major cause of death and disability among young children.

The most common injuries are falls, burns, drowning and road accidents. Most of these injuries happen in or near the home. Almost all can be prevented. Many would be less serious if parents knew what to do when an injury happens.



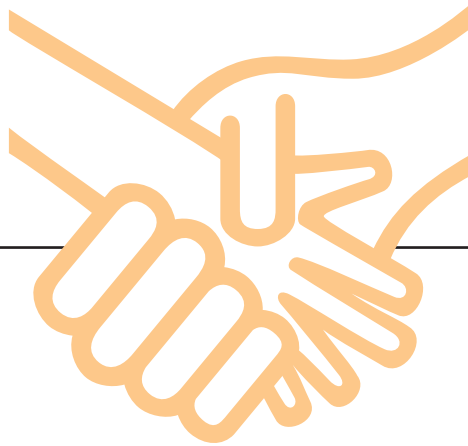
Key Messages:

What every family and community has a right to know about

Injury Prevention

1. Many serious injuries can be prevented if parents and caretakers watch young children carefully and keep their environment safe.
2. Children should be kept away from fires, cooking stoves, lamps, matches and electrical appliances.
3. Young children like to climb. Stairs, balconies, roofs, windows and play areas should be made secure to protect children from falling.
4. Knives, scissors, sharp or pointed objects and broken glass can cause serious injuries. These objects should be kept out of children's reach.





5. Young children like to put things in their mouths. Small objects should be kept out of their reach to prevent choking.
6. Poisons, medicines, bleach, acid, and liquid fuels such as paraffin (kerosene) should never be stored in drinking bottles. All such liquids and poisons should be kept in clearly marked containers out of children's sight and reach.
7. Children can drown in less than two minutes and in a very small amount of water. They should never be left alone when they are in or near water.
8. Children under five years old are particularly at risk on the roads. They should always have someone with them and they should be taught safe road behaviour as soon as they can walk.





Supporting
Information

Injury Prevention

1. Many serious injuries can be prevented if parents and caretakers watch young children carefully and keep their environment safe.

Children between 18 months and four years old are at high risk of death and serious injuries. Most of these injuries happen in the home. Almost all can be prevented.

The main causes of injuries in the home:

- burns from fires, stoves, ovens, cooking pots, hot foods, boiling water, steam, hot fats, paraffin lamps, irons and electrical appliances
- cuts from broken glass, knives, scissors or axes
- falls from cots, windows, tables and stairs
- choking on small objects such as coins, buttons or nuts
- poisoning from paraffin (kerosene), insecticide, bleach and detergents
- electrical shock from touching broken electrical appliances or wires, or poking sticks or knives into electric outlets.

Anything that may be dangerous for active young children should be stored safely away, out of their reach.

Children should never be expected to work long hours or to do work that is hazardous or interferes with

schooling. Children must be protected from heavy labour, dangerous tools and exposure to poisonous chemicals.

2. Children should be kept away from fires, cooking stoves, lamps, matches and electrical appliances.

Burns and scalds are among the most common causes of serious injury among young children. Children need to be prevented from touching cooking stoves, boiling water, hot food and hot irons. Burns often cause serious injury and permanent scarring, and some are fatal. The great majority of these are preventable.

Burns can be prevented by:

- keeping young children away from fires, matches and cigarettes
- keeping stoves on a flat, raised surface out of the reach of children. If an open cooking fire is used, it should be made on a raised mound of clay, not directly on the ground.
- turning the handles of all cooking pots away from the reach of children
- keeping petrol, paraffin, lamps, matches, candles, lighters, hot irons and electric cords out of the reach of young children.

Children can be seriously injured if they put their fingers or other objects into electric sockets. Power sockets should be covered to prevent access.

Electric wires should be kept out of children's reach. Bare electric wires are particularly dangerous.

3. Young children like to climb. Stairs, balconies, roofs, windows and play areas should be made secure to protect children from falling.

Falls are a common cause of bruises, broken bones and serious head injuries. Serious falls can be prevented by:

- discouraging children from climbing onto unsafe places
- using railings to guard stairs, windows or balconies
- keeping the home clean and well lit.

4. Knives, scissors, sharp or pointed objects and broken glass can cause serious injuries. These objects should be kept out of children's reach.

Broken glass can cause serious cuts, loss of blood and infected wounds. Glass bottles should be kept out of the reach of young children, and the house and play area should be kept free of broken glass. Young children should be taught not to touch broken glass; older children should be taught to dispose of any broken glass safely.

Knives, razors and scissors should be kept out of the reach of young children. Older children should be trained to handle them safely.

Sharp metal objects, machinery and rusty cans can cause badly infected wounds. Children's play areas should be kept clear of these objects. Household refuse, including broken bottles and old cans, should be disposed of safely.

Other injuries around the home can be prevented by teaching children the dangers of throwing stones or other sharp objects and playing with knives or scissors.

5. Young children like to put things in their mouths. Small objects should be kept out of their reach to prevent choking.

Play and sleeping areas should be kept free of small objects such as buttons, beads, coins, seeds and nuts.

Very young children should not be given groundnuts (peanuts), hard sweets, or food with small bones or seeds.

Young children should always be supervised during meals. Cut or tear children's food into small pieces.

Coughing, gagging and high-pitched, noisy breathing or the inability to make any sound at all indicate breathing difficulty and possible choking. Choking is a life-threatening emergency. Caregivers should suspect an infant is choking when he or she suddenly has trouble breathing, even if no one has seen the child put something into the mouth. (*See First Aid for Choking, page 140.*)

6. Poisons, medicines, bleach, acid, and liquid fuels such as paraffin (kerosene) should never be stored in drinking bottles. All such liquids and poisons should be kept in clearly marked containers out of children's sight and reach.

Poisoning is a serious danger to small children. Bleach, insect and rat poison, paraffin (kerosene) and household detergents can kill or permanently injure a child.

Many poisons do not need to be swallowed to be dangerous. They can kill, cause brain damage, blind or permanently injure if they:

- are inhaled
- get onto the child's skin or into the eyes
- get onto the child's clothes.

If poisons are put in soft drink or beer bottles, jars or cups, children may drink them by mistake. All medicines, chemicals and poisons should be stored in their original containers, tightly sealed.



Detergents, bleaches, chemicals and medicines should never be left where children can reach them. They should be tightly sealed and labelled. They should also be locked in a cupboard or trunk or put on a high shelf where children cannot see or reach them.

Medicines meant for adults can kill small children. Medicine should only be given to a child if it was prescribed for that child and never be given to a child if it was prescribed for an adult or some other child.

Overuse or misuse of antibiotics can cause deafness in small children. Medication should only be used as prescribed by the health worker.

Aspirin is a common cause of accidental poisoning. It should be kept out of the reach and sight of children.

7. Children can drown in less than two minutes and in a very small amount of water. They should never be left alone when they are in or near water.

Wells, tubs and buckets of water should be covered.

Children should be taught to swim when they are young as they will then be less likely to drown.

Children should be taught never to swim in fast-flowing streams and never to swim alone.

8. Children under five years old are particularly at risk on the roads. They should always have someone with them and they should be taught safe road behaviour as soon as they can walk.

Young children do not think before they run onto the road. Families need to watch them carefully.

Children should not play near the road, particularly if they are playing with balls.

Children should be taught to walk on the side of the road, facing traffic.


When crossing the road, young children should be taught to:

- stop at the side of the road
- look both ways
- listen for cars or other vehicles before crossing
- hold the hand of another person
- walk, not run.

Older children should be encouraged to look after younger children and to set a good example.

Bicycle accidents are a frequent cause of injury and death among older children. Families can prevent bicycle accidents if they make sure that children with bicycles are trained in road safety. Children should wear helmets or protective headgear when biking.

Children are at high risk of serious injury if they travel in the front seat of a car or unsupervised on the bed of a truck.

	<h1>First Aid Advice</h1>
	<p><i>These first aid measures should be taken to prevent worsening of the situation if medical help is not immediately available.</i></p>
<p><i>First aid for burns:</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ If the child's clothing catches fire, quickly wrap the child in a blanket or clothing or roll her or him on the ground to put out the fire. ▶ Cool the burned area immediately. Use plenty of cold, clean water. If the burn is extensive, put the child in a bath or basin of cold water. It may take up to half an hour to cool the burned area. ▶ Keep the burned area clean and dry and protect it with a loose bandage. If the burn is bigger than a large coin or it begins to blister, take the child to a health worker. Do not break the blisters, as they protect the injured area. ▶ Do not remove anything that is sticking to the burn. Do not put anything except cold water on the burn. ▶ Give the child fluids such as fruit juice or water with a little sugar and salt.
<p><i>First aid for electric shocks:</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ If the child has had an electric shock or burn, turn off the power before touching the child. If the child is unconscious, keep her or him warm and get medical help immediately. ▶ If the child is having difficulty breathing or is not breathing, lie the child flat on the back and tilt her or his head back slightly. Hold the child's nostrils closed and blow into the mouth. Blow hard enough to make the child's chest rise. Count to three and blow again. Continue until the child begins breathing.

	First Aid Advice
<i>First aid for falls or road injuries:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Injuries to the head and spine, especially the neck, are very dangerous because they can cause lifelong paralysis or be life-threatening. Limit movement of the head and back and avoid any twisting of the spine to prevent further injury. ▶ A child who is unable to move or is in extreme pain may have broken bones. Do not move the injured area. Steady and support it and get medical help immediately. ▶ If the child is unconscious, keep her or him warm and get medical help immediately. ▶ For bad bruises and sprains, immerse the injured area in cold water or put ice on the injury for 15 minutes. Do not put the ice directly on the skin; instead, use a layer of cloth between the ice and the skin. Remove the ice or water, wait 15 minutes and repeat if necessary. The cold should help reduce pain, swelling and bruising.
<i>First aid for cuts and wounds:</i>	<p>For minor cuts and wounds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Wash the wound with very clean (or boiled and cooled) water and soap. ▶ Dry the skin around the wound. ▶ Cover the wound with a clean cloth and place a bandage over it. <p>For serious cuts and wounds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ If a piece of glass or other object is sticking in the wound, do not remove it. It may be preventing further bleeding and removing it could make the injury worse. ▶ If the child is bleeding heavily, raise the injured area above the level of the chest and press firmly against the wound (or near it if something is stuck in it) with a pad made of folded clean cloth. Maintain pressure until the bleeding stops. ▶ Do not put any plant or animal matter on the wound, as this could cause infection.

First Aid Advice	
<p><i>First aid for cuts and wounds (continued):</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Put a bandage on the wound. Allow for swelling by not tying the bandage too tightly. ▶ Take the child to the health centre or get medical help immediately. Ask the health worker if the child should have a tetanus injection.
<p><i>First aid for choking:</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ If an infant or child is coughing, do not interfere – let her or him try to cough up the object. If the object does not release quickly, try to remove the object from the child’s mouth. ▶ If the object is still lodged in the child’s throat: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For infants or small children: Support the head and neck. Turn the baby face down with the head lower than the feet. Deliver five blows to the back between the shoulder blades. Turn the baby face up and press firmly on the breastbone between the nipples five times. Repeat until the object is dislodged. If you cannot dislodge the object, take the child to the nearest health worker immediately. For larger children: Stand behind the child with your arms around the child’s waist. Form a clenched fist with your thumb against the child’s body above the navel and below the rib cage. Put the other hand over the fist and give a sharp inward and upward thrust into the child’s abdomen. Repeat until the object is dislodged. If you cannot dislodge the object, take the child to the nearest health worker immediately.



First Aid Advice	
<i>First aid for breathing problems or drowning:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ If there is any possibility that the head or neck is injured, do not move the child's head. Follow the directions below without moving the head. ▶ If the child is having difficulty breathing or is not breathing, lie the child flat on the back and tilt her or his head back slightly. Hold the child's nostrils closed and blow into the mouth. Blow hard enough to make the child's chest rise. Count to three and blow again. Continue until the child begins breathing. ▶ If the child is breathing but unconscious, roll the child onto her or his side so that the tongue does not block breathing.
<i>First aid for poisoning:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ If a child has swallowed poison, do not try to make the child vomit as this may make the child more ill. ▶ If poison is on the child's skin or clothes, remove the clothing and pour large amounts of water over the skin. Wash the skin thoroughly several times with soap. ▶ If a child gets poison in her or his eyes, splash clean water in the eyes for at least 10 minutes. ▶ Take the child immediately to a health centre or hospital. If possible, bring a sample of the poison or medicine or its container with you. Keep the child as still and quiet as possible.