

Preparing for School: Safety for Your 5 Year Old



Your Child Depends On You

At this point in your child's life, your child looks to you as her role model. Prepare yourself and your child for the school years ahead. Teach her behaviors to help her to be safe to and from school, and in school. Model appropriate ways to treat and talk to others.

- Practice positive and open ways to talk with your child.
- Teach your child respect for adults and other children and show by your example.
- Make sure your child knows what to do in an emergency, including calling 9-1-1.
- Call 2-1-1 for advice when needed. In addition to other community information, 2-1-1 connects callers to information about quality childcare, after-school programs, Head Start, family resource centers, summer camps and recreation programs, mentoring, tutoring, and protective services.

Keeping Your Child Safe

The safety tips inside this brochure address the most common causes of injury your child faces when starting school. Talk to your child about the simple rules you expect him to follow so he'll have fun at school and stay safe.

Your child is active, creative and curious. He's learning so quickly and is interested in trying new things, especially real-life tasks and activities. He enjoys being active, playing games by the rules, and playing with friends. Your child is ready for school! This is a turning point in your child's life. It is important to continue to make safety a priority as your child goes to school.

OFF TO SCHOOL!

This is an exciting step in your child's life. He will learn new routines and get to know new places and faces. The beginning of school is a good time to make sure that your child's safety equipment, including his bike helmet and booster seat, is in good shape and fits him properly.

Make sure that all caregivers in your family learn child CPR and first aid. Contact your local hospital or American Red Cross office for class information.

GETTING T

WALKING TO SCHOOL



Walking is a healthy way to get to and from school, but your child is not ready to walk alone. He does not understand the danger of cars and streets. Walking your child to and from school is the best way to keep him safe. It is important for you to model correct behaviors when crossing streets.

- When crossing streets, hold your child's hand and always observe traffic safety laws.
 - Observe all traffic signals and let the school crossing guard help you.
 - Be sure to look all ways before crossing the street.
- Invite families in your neighborhood to walk children to school together as a group. Take turns walking a group of children to school each day. Make sure each child knows the adults in the walking group.
 - Always walk with your child to and from school. If someone unknown to your child offers to walk with him, or offers him a ride home from school, teach your child to say "no."

THE SCHOOL BUS

School bus transportation is safe. But injuries can occur in the bus or getting on or off the bus. Your child should always be supervised by an adult at the bus stop. Teach your child safety tips for riding the bus.

- Always get to the bus 5 minutes before it is to arrive. Find a safe place to wait for the bus away from traffic.
- Stand at least 3 giant steps away from the side of the bus until it comes to a complete stop.
- Always use the handrails to board the bus.
- If your child's school bus includes lap/shoulder belts, make sure he uses them every time.
- If your child is not ready for the lap/shoulder belt, he should ride in a booster seat secured to the school bus seat.
- After getting off the bus, do not walk behind the bus. If you have to cross the street, first walk on the sidewalk to a point that is 5 giant steps ahead of the bus.
- When you are driving, and a school bus is stopped with flashing red lights, **you must stop before reaching the bus.** Children may be getting on or off the bus.



O S C H O O L

CAR SAFETY

Safety Around a Car

School parking and drop-off areas can be very busy. A driver backing up in a car may not see your child, and your child could be run over. Make sure you hold your child's hand in a parking lot.

- Check behind your own car every time you back up, especially in driveways.

Safety in a Car: The Right Seat

If you or someone else will be driving your child to school, don't forget the basics! Every time your child is in a car, he needs to be in the back seat properly buckled in a child car safety seat or booster seat that is right for his weight, height, and age.

- **Never** put your child in the front seat of the car if there's a passenger-side air bag. The air bag in the front seat can seriously hurt or even kill him.
- Don't leave your child alone in the car, even for a minute. It's very dangerous and against the law in California.

Forward Facing Seat:

- Up to 40-65 or 80 pounds.
- Use a 5-point harness to upper weight or height limit of seat.

Booster Seat:

- Until 4' 9" and 8-12 years.
- Always use with lap/shoulder seat belt.
- Never put shoulder belt behind back or under arm.
- Use highback booster for vehicle seat without headrest.

Always read car seat and vehicle manuals for specific directions.



5-Point
Harness



Forward
Facing Seat



Booster
Seat



BICYCLES, SCOOTERS, AND OTHER WHEELED TOYS

A bicycle or scooter is your child's first vehicle! Make sure your child wears a properly fitted helmet each and every time she rides a bicycle, scooter, skateboard or other wheeled toy, and closely watch her while she rides.

- Helmets should meet the standards of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). Look for their sticker on the inside of the helmet.
- Helmets should fit snugly around the head and extend no more than two fingers width above the eyebrow. Only one finger should fit between your child's closed jaw and chin strap.
- Helmets, elbow pads, and kneepads should be worn every time your child rides a scooter. Wrist guards should also be worn with skates and skateboards.
- Children younger than 8 years old should not ride scooters without close adult supervision.
- If your child is riding on a sidewalk, always follow alongside her. Place yourself between the street and your child. Always watch your child while she's riding. Your child should never ride in the street.

SAFE AT PLAY!

PLAYGROUND



Most childhood falls occur on the playground. Make sure that children are supervised at your child's school playground. Talk with school administrators and ask them to inspect the playground to make sure it is safe for children. Visually check the playground yourself for:

- Rubber-like mats or at least 12 inches of wood chips, mulch, sand or pea gravel underneath play equipment, extending 6 feet in all directions.
- Unsafe hardware like open "S" hooks or bolt ends sticking out and/or sharp points or edges.

- Sharp objects that may have fallen or are left in the sand or wood chips.

Note that necklaces, scarves, or clothing with drawstrings should not be worn while on playgrounds because these items can easily become tangled around your child's neck and strangle him.

BULLYING

Bullying is when one child constantly picks on another child who is weaker, smaller or defenseless. Keeping your child safe means knowing what bullying is and how to react to it. Whether your child is playing at school or near home, she can be the target of bullying. Your child is never too young to learn safe ways to respond to bullies and treat others with respect.

- Tell your child how to act if she is a witness to bullying. Advise your child to tell an adult about the bullying. Tell your child not to cheer on or even quietly watch a conflict.
- Show your child the proper way to treat others by the way you act. Remember, you are your child's role model.

If you suspect your child is being bullied:

- Teach your child how to seek help from adults when she feels threatened.
- Talk with your child's teacher or principal. Bullying may not stop without the help of adults. Let one of them talk to the bully or her parents.
- Help your child make close friends with other students. Bullies like to pick on kids who are by themselves.
- Help your child develop self-confidence through activities that she enjoys.

