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Contact: Jessica Ritter
State Office Coordinator
jritter@atspa.org

Winter Safety Tips to Help Kids and Families Stay Injury-Free

*Safe Kids Pennsylvania reminds parents to keep an eye out
and avoid preventable injuries during the winter*

Mechanicsburg, PA – Winter weather brings great opportunities for families to enjoy activities together even in these unusual times. As the weather can be unpredictable and holiday traditions might be somewhat adjusted this year, Safe Kids Pennsylvania wants to remind parents of some things to think about when it comes to keeping families safe during the winter.

To learn more information, visit the [Winter Safety Tips Section](#) on the Safe Kids PA website.

Winter is a time when there is a risk of injuries in a variety of areas, from winter sports to home fires. Research shows that young children are particularly vulnerable to injuries from winter sports like skiing, snowboarding and sledding; and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) reminds us that while Thanksgiving is a peak day for home cooking fires, other peaks include Christmas Day and Christmas Eve. Additionally, parents might unintentionally create unsafe environments for children out of concern for keeping their infants and toddlers warm during the colder weather.

Safe Kids PA recommends the following tips for winter safety.

- 1. Car Seats and Winter Coats.** We know you want your little ones to be warm, but please don't buckle your child into a car seat while they are wearing a bulky coat. The puffiness of the coat creates extra space between the harness and your child, which puts your child at a greater risk of injury in the event of a crash. Instead, use a blanket to keep your child warm, or lay the jacket over your children like a blanket once they're safely secured.
- 2. Sleep Safety.** Extra blankets can seem so cozy in a baby's crib but soft bedding can block a baby's airway during sleep. A firm mattress covered with a tight-fitting crib sheet is all you need for your baby to sleep well. If you're worried about keeping your baby warm on those cold winter nights, try using a sleep sack (wearable blanket) and save the blankets for when baby is older. Additionally, remember to always have baby sleep alone, on their backs, in a crib (or similar flat item, like a bassinette or pack 'n play).
- 3. Winter Sports.** Kids love to push the limits when they're skiing or snowboarding. Make sure they wear helmets and other proper gear to keep them safe if they fall. Also, while sledding may seem like a low-risk activity, children can still be seriously injured. Be sure to sled only on hills that are away from roads and clear of objects that could cause harm if struck (like large rocks, trees or stumps), and always have an adult supervising when children are sledding.

4. **Carbon Monoxide.** If you are warming up a vehicle before using it, don't forget to remove it from the garage immediately after starting it. It is extremely dangerous to leave a car, SUV or motorcycle engine running inside a garage. Make sure your home has a carbon monoxide alarm on every level, especially near sleeping areas, and keep them at least 15 feet away from fuel-burning appliances.
5. **Fire Safety.** While cooking fires are the number one cause of home fires and fire-related injuries according to the NFPA, holiday decorations (including trees, lights, and candles) also pose an increased fire risk during the winter months. Be sure to keep any real tree well hydrated and discard it when dry. Keep the area around candles and flames (including the stovetop) clear of anything flammable, don't wear baggy or loose clothing while cooking and blow out candles when leaving a room. Finally, remember to keep space heaters at least three feet away from anything that can burn.

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Safe Kids Pennsylvania is dedicated to the prevention of and education around unintentional childhood injuries, which are the number one killer of children throughout the USA. These injuries range from accidental falls, poisonings, car crashes and child passenger safety, drowning, and many more. Safe Kids Pennsylvania is one of many statewide coalitions under Safe Kids Worldwide, and is led by the American Trauma Society, PA Division. For more information on Safe Kids PA, visit our website at <https://www.pasafekids.org/> or on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/safekidspa/>.