



# Safe Kids Grand Forks News You Can Use

Winter 2012



## How to Dress for Winter Weather



As the inevitable North Dakota winter approaches, people everywhere are pulling out their warmer clothes and winter gear. What a difference the right clothing can make. The weather may be cold, windy and wet, but you're warm and dry because you're wearing authentic winter apparel.

The best way to dress for winter is to wear layers. This gives you flexibility to add or remove layers, depending on the weather and your activity level. In general, the 3 main layers are wicking, insulating, and weather protection.

**Wicking layer:** This layer is worn next to your skin, usually consisting of long underwear. It should fit snugly next to your skin (not tight) in order to effectively wick moisture.

**Insulating Layer:** This middle layer includes sweaters, sweatshirts, vests and pullovers. The purpose of this layer is to keep heat in and cold out. Fleece or wool are popular insulation materials. Comfort is key for this layer. It should be loose enough to trap air between layers, but not so bulky that it restricts movement.

**Protection Layer:** This is the exterior layer, generally a

shell and pants. It serves as your guard against the elements of winter. It should block wind, repel water from snow, sleet or rain, while also letting perspiration evaporate. Your protection layer should fit comfortably, offering you maximum range of motion.

Another step to remember when dressing for winter weather is to "accessorize."

- Wear a pair of insulated boots with wool or synthetic lining (not cotton).
- Wear winter socks. Wool is best, although good synthetic fleece socks are often quite good. You can layer socks but you should be careful that your feet are comfortable and the circulation isn't shut down.
- Wear a hat. Up to 60% of your body's heat can escape from an uncovered head, so wearing a hat is essential when it is cold. Using scarves to protect your face and neck from the cold is also very important.
- Wear gloves or mittens. Fingers and hands are very vulnerable to the cold, so keep them covered. Look for gloves

and mittens that are waterproof, breathable fabrics. Mittens, in general, are warmer than gloves, but offer less dexterity. Consider the type of activity you'll be doing.

- Wear more than one layer on your legs. Oddly, some people wear 4 layers on their torso and only one layer on the legs. At minimum, have a base layer like long underwear and an outer layer, like snowpants.

Last but not least, is one of the most important tips: **Keep dry!** Being wet causes chill to set in more quickly. Use waterproof or water resistant outer layers.



This article was written and provided by Sonya Lundstrom. Sonya is a Foster Care Case Manager with Grand Forks County Social Services and proud member of Safe Kids Grand Forks. She is also a certified child passenger safety technician.

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**The Safe Kids**

**Star for Winter**

**2012 is Sarah**

**Townsend**

Safe Kids is always open to new membership and while our long-time members are a source of expertise and wisdom, new members bring fresh ideas and a sense of energy to our work. One such member is Sarah Townsend, our Safety Star featured in this Winter Edition of our Safe Kids quarterly newsletter. We met Sarah thanks to a grant we received entitled Start Safe. This grant partners Head Start agencies with Safe Kids organizations. Safe Kids conducts training for the Head Start staff and they in turn train the parents of their center on how to get kids properly to and from school and Head Start. The training includes information on school buses, walking, biking and motor vehicles. Following this training, the parents are encouraged to sign up to attend the car seat check-up

## Safe Kids Star

events held at the Head Start locations.

Sarah was the staff contact person that we were connected with for this grant at the East Grand Forks and Crookston Head Start Centers. She is new to the area and to her position but we were delighted to meet her and have her help. Sarah was able to schedule appointments at both sites and record numbers of parents attended and many seats were checked. Sarah provided that “personal link” between the Head Start parents and Safe Kids Grand Forks. Her efforts were amazing and made for successful events in which many kids are now riding safer.

Sarah has since expressed interest in serving on our coalition and getting involved in other ways. To that, we were delighted and are eager to have Sarah on board. We thank her for her recent efforts with this project and look forward to

working with her and the Head Start agencies in Crookston and East Grand Forks more closely!!



## Carbon Monoxide: An Odorless Danger

In North Dakota we often find creative ways to have fun and keep warm in the wintertime. However, we want to be careful that we are not doing things that are putting our families at risk for carbon monoxide poisoning. As a family medicine doctor, it is not uncommon to see a family affected by carbon monoxide poisoning in the winter and often times these injuries could have been prevented or caught earlier if appropriate precautions were taken.

### What is carbon monoxide?

Carbon monoxide is a poisonous gas. It cannot be seen, smelled, or heard! There are many things in and around your house that produce carbon monoxide such as furnaces, generators, grills, and cars.

### What are symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning?

People living in the same house feel like they all get the flu at the

same time. Symptoms typically consist of headache, dizziness, nausea, and vomiting. We can also see confusion, loss of consciousness, and even death! Sometimes the symptoms are mild or are different among family members. This can delay patients from getting timely health care and make it difficult for physicians to catch this diagnosis.

### What can you do to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning?

It is important to get your furnace checked every single year. We also discourage running your car in a garage, even with the door open, to warm it up in the winter time. Make sure that your fireplace is well vented. Don't heat your house with a gas oven. Generators should never be run inside your garage or in your home – these are best outside and more than 20 feet away from your home and garage.

### If I can't see, hear, or smell carbon monoxide how do I know if there is a problem?

This is why carbon monoxide detectors are so important! Make sure that you have one installed near every sleeping area in your home! Check it regularly to make sure that it is working. You also want to make sure that you have battery back-up so it will even work during a North Dakota blizzard.

### Where can I do some more reading?

My favorite website is [cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov). They have great information on this topic. There are also nice handouts and posters that you can print to educate your family or post at your business.

*This article was submitted by: Dr. Mandi Johnson, MD, MPH Family Medicine Dr. Johnson is a proud member of Safe Kids Grand Forks. We value her partnership in our injury prevention efforts and appreciate her expertise on so many issues.*



## Winter Wear and Car Seat Safety

The weather is getting colder outside and the days of shorts and t-shirts are long gone. As you are pulling out last year's winter gear or shopping for new items this year, here are some things to remember because it's not only important to keep your child warm, but also safe.

**It is unsafe to put a thick blanket, snowsuit or coat on UNDER your child's car seat harness/seatbelt restraint.**

In a crash, these thick items will compress. A harness that is snug against your child's outermost layer isn't actually snug against their body. Opt for thinner articles of clothing and put layers over the TOP of the harnessed child, or put a snowsuit/thick jacket on after you have arrived to your destination. We remind

parents, "strap before you wrap", meaning the harness should be on tightly against the body and then covers can be put on over top.

Fleece jackets/outfits are a great way to keep your child warm in the car. Fleece is lightweight and does not compress in a crash.

If you already have a bulky jacket for your child, you can harness them in their seat and then put the jacket on backwards. This will still keep them warm, but will not affect the tightness of their car seat harness.

There are many after-market products designed for rear-facing infant car seats. Anything that goes between your child and the car seat harness should be avoided! The pictures to the right show a

child in a thick snowsuit and after-market blanket that goes behind the child. Notice the harness *appears* snug. When you remove these layers look at how much extra space there actually is for these items to compress in a crash! A better option would be a lightweight jacket, a blanket over the harness and/or a shower cap-type cover that goes around the entire top of your baby's car seat. These items do not interfere with the car seat's harness and yet they still keep the cold air out.

This article has been submitted by Jasmine Wangen. Jasmine is a car seat technician that works in Pediatrics at Altru Clinic. The baby in the photo is her beautiful new son, Gavin. Don't you agree that he makes a pretty handsome model!!



## Choking Hazard: Watch the Balloons

Balloons are one of the leading causes of asphyxiation in children. Part of the trouble is that these toys are designed to be put in the mouth, at least when they're being inflated.

It's understandable, then, that a small child might put one in his mouth, swallow or breathe in, and get it caught in his windpipe. Packages of balloons are required by law to carry a warning label saying that they are hazardous to children under age 8. The risk is twice as great for kids 3 and under.

If your child is given a

balloon that's already blown up, there's a chance that it will burst, and the pieces will end up in his—or a younger sibling's—mouth. Don't leave a young child alone to play with a balloon, and pick up the pieces right away if the balloon bursts or deflates.

Mylar balloons are safer than the common latex balloons because they won't break into small pieces. If you must use latex balloons, store them out of children's reach and don't allow kids younger than 8 to inflate or play with them.

**Read more on Family Education:**  
<http://life.familyeducation.com/safety/child-care/48080.html#ixzz2AzaRNJbn>



# ESFI's Twelve Days of Holiday Safety

***It's easy to make safety a part of your holiday with these quick tips. Tackle one each day and you're well on your way to a safe New Year!***



- 1** *What's that noise?* Test your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms. Make sure every member of your family knows how to respond to them.
- 2** *What a shocker!* Before each use, inspect all electrical lights, decorations, and extension cords for damage.
- 3** *Two's company, three's a crowd.* Do not overload outlets with too many decorations or devices.

- 4** *Is it working?* Test your ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) and arc-fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs) to make sure they're protecting you.
- 5** *Ouch!* Prevent trips and falls by keeping cords safely along walls and out of doorways and high traffic areas.
- 6** *Kids eat the darnest things!* Avoid putting lights, metal hooks, breakable ornaments, and other small decorations within reach of young children.



- 7** *Thirsty?* Keep your Christmas tree stand full of water. A fresh, green tree is less of a fire hazard than a dry tree.
- 8** *Safe and warm.* Keep space heaters at least three feet away from anything that can burn—decorations, trees, gifts, and curtains.
- 9** *Can't touch this!* Consider installing tamper resistant outlets (TROs) to prevent kids from inserting objects into the outlet slots.

- 10** *Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?* Share your family fire escape plan with your overnight guests.
- 11** *Hot stuff!* Keep children at least three feet away from cooking appliances. Use back burners and turn pot handles inward away from little hands.
- 12** *Make a wish!* Blow out the candles before leaving a room or going to bed.



***There's no greater gift you can give your family than a safe and happy holiday!***

Each year, the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) engages in a national outreach campaign to increase public awareness of winter holiday safety hazards. We invite you to visit our holiday safety website at [www.holidaysafety.org](http://www.holidaysafety.org). Tools are available to help you facilitate a holiday safety awareness program for your family, employees, colleagues, and community groups.



# The Changing Seasons For Water Safety Topics



By Wayne Hempeck  
Public Information Officer, U.  
S. Coast Guard Auxiliary,  
Northern Minnesota

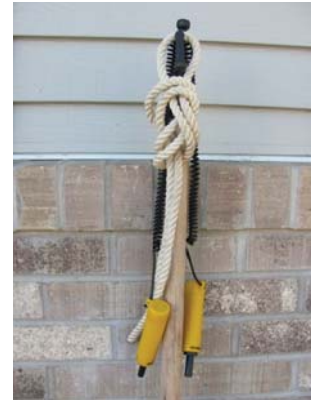
We all had a great summer and fall was fantastic and colorful. Campfires and some activities on the open water are now over. It is time for the fun cold water events to start, including fall fishing, water fowl, and some cruises. These activities are accompanied by cold open water.

What can come with cold open water is hyperthermia, drowning, water extracts and improper use of life jackets. Any one of these influences can cause a long stay in the hospital or even completely missing the hunting and holiday season and all the ones in the future. Water temperatures are starting to fall below the 50 degree mark. Developing hyperthermia when exposed to freezing water temperatures can take only 10 to 15 minutes. Then you may become

unconscious, roll over on your face and drown. A life jacket is needed to extend the time and it must be the proper kind. Just like the sweatshirt or jacket for summer isn't much use in the fall or winter, the life jacket you wear in the summer isn't much help now. Any life jacket is some help, but the best one for winter activities is the single, un-cool type 2-3 horse collar. It will turn you face up, allowing rescuers a few more minutes, to get you out of the water. The horse collar also is an easier fit over heavy winter clothes.

The next "must have" item for extracting yourself out of the water are ice picks (See photo on right). These relatively cheap devices can be the difference of life or death. They are easily stowed and readily deployable in case you take the unplanned dunk. Wear them like stringed mittens in your fishing or hunting jacket and you will always have the means to drag yourself out of the

freezing water up onto the ice. There you will at least have a chance to make it to safety. In the water at 33 degrees you have no chance. Total cost of safety on the ice, about \$17. Are you and your family worth it? It's still your call! Be prepared and have fun.



For more information on cold water and ice safety, contact the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary of Northern Minnesota at [uscgaux9130@live.com](mailto:uscgaux9130@live.com)

## 100 Best Communities for Young People Award:

### Grand Forks Receives Recognition For the 5th Consecutive Year!!!



This past October, Grand Forks received a huge recognition award and Safe Kids Grand Forks is proud to be a part of this effort. Grand Forks received national recognition as one of America's Promise Alliance's 100 Best Communities for Young People presented by ING for its initiatives to help young people. The competition recognizes communities across the country that focus on reducing high school drop out rates and providing services and support to their youth.

A five-time winner of the 100 Best Communities for Young People competition, Grand Forks has shown its commitment to enhancing youth education by offering programs that provide safe places, pairing educators with students in need and providing community service opportunities for young people.

"We are proud of Grand Forks for being named one of the America's Promise Alliance's 10 Best," said Grand Forks Mayor Michael R. Brown. "This award recognizes the hard work of many community members that have dedicated their time to making a difference in the lives of our young people."

Grand Forks will receive a \$2,500 grant, signage identifying the community as one of the nation's 100 Best Communities for Young People, and access to America's Alliance's community development resources.

Safe Kids Grand Forks and Altru Health System are proud members of the Youth Commission and Cabinet on Young People. We are proud of the recognition that our city has once again achieved and are proud to be working with others in the community to make this a great place for kids to live, grow, learn and play!!! Check out the map showing other communities that received the 2012 award.



# Text & Drive.... You May Not Arrive

Have you seen the following billboard in Grand Forks?

Q: What does idk, g2g, ttyl mean?

A: I don't know, got to go, talk to you later!

Q: Ok! Talk to you later!

As funny as text messages, autocorrect, and texting lingo may be, doing it while driving has serious implications. On December 27<sup>th</sup>, 2011, Nicolette Wolf Leader, a UND Nursing Student with a promising career in her future, was in a fatal car accident. She was texting while driving, ran into the median of the interstate, flipped her vehicle, was ejected, and was killed. Her two children were buckled up in the backseat and were not injured. One "little" distraction took her life and robbed her children of their mother. Josephine (6) and Jamison (11) now have to grow up without their mom. Can you imagine how your children or your friend's children would handle this?

On September 22<sup>nd</sup> of this past fall, a walk was done in memory of Nicolette and to help raise money for a college fund for her two young children, as education was highly valued in Nicolette's life. Future events are in the

making, so keep an eye out for what is happening in the community. If you wish to donate to this college fund, send an email to [laura.sele@my.und.edu](mailto:laura.sele@my.und.edu) for more information. Nicolette's nursing classmates were pleased to partner with Safe Kids Grand Forks to provide education on the dangers of texting and driving during this event. The hope was to raise awareness and prevent future incidents such as this.

You are 23 times more likely to be in an accident if you are texting and driving. There are many common misconceptions regarding texting. If you know where the letters are on the keypad, and you don't have to look while texting, you can't get into an accident. False. Are you able to watch television and carry on a conversation with another person and understand everything that happened? Simple messages, even "yeah" or "ok" are long enough to cause an accident. Would you close your eyes for several seconds while driving? I would guarantee that you would always say no, especially if children are in the car. A short text message can be done in several seconds, which may seem like nothing, but it is plenty of time to result in an

accident, one that could be fatal.

AT&T has put out an amazing documentary on texting and driving. It is named AT&T Don't Text While Driving Documentary if you wish to watch it on Youtube.

In ND, texting while driving is illegal; the fine is currently a minimum of \$100 per violation. If you are under 18, you are not allowed to use an electronic device at all while driving, including making phone calls. In MN, the exact same rules are in place; a violation of the no texting law can cost up to \$300 in this state.

To obtain a copy of the Safe Kids texting dangers brochure, email [safekids@altru.org](mailto:safekids@altru.org). Safe Kids also has an effective "multi-tasking" interactive game that draws attention to the dangers of texting and driving. This can be borrowed for further education on this topic.

This article was submitted by Laura Sele, UND Nursing Student and classmate of Nicolette.

Safe Kids Grand Forks thanks the students in charge of this event and others who have helped us spread the message of texting dangers.



In addition to the walk organized in memory of Nicolette, these two UND Nursing Students provided a booth display on texting dangers at the Annual Rydell Car Show in September.



# C.A.R.S (Child & Restraint Systems) Class 2013 Training Schedule

2013

If you are a child care provider or foster parent, safe transportation of the children in your care is important. Come find out how to keep kids safe while in the car. The **C.A.R.S. (Child and Restraint Systems)** class is designed to meet the MN CPS course requirements for licensure & foster parenting and for law enforcement requirements. It has been approved for credit hours in MN. (\* Applied for in ND, pending notification.)

Certificate will be provided at the completion of the class.

To register, call 701-780-1639  
at least 2 weeks prior to the class.

January 19, 2013 (Saturday) 9 am—12:30 pm

February 21, 2013 (Thursday) 6 pm—9:30 pm

March 19, 2013 (Tuesday) 6 pm—9:30 pm

April 20, 2013 (Saturday) 9 am—12:30 pm

May 14, 2013 (Tuesday) 6 pm—9:30 pm

June 6, 2013 (Thursday) 6 pm—9:30 pm

July 16, 2013 (Tuesday) 6 pm—9:30 pm

August 15, 2013 (Thursday) 6 pm—9:30 pm

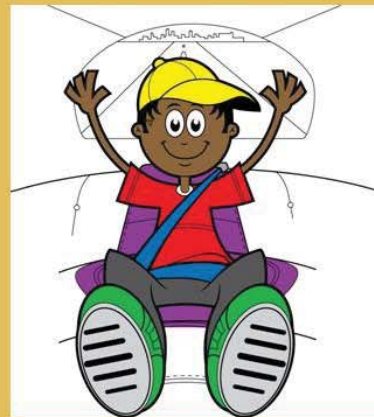
September 14, 2013 (Saturday) 9 am—12:30 pm

October 8, 2013 (Tuesday) 6 pm—9:30 pm

November 9, 2013 (Saturday) 9 am—12:30 pm

December 5, 2013 (Thursday) 6 pm—9:30 pm

All classes are held at Altru Health System



We reserve the right to cancel any classes with less than 6 participants. Participants will be notified 1 week before class if it is cancelled.

Registration cost is \$30 per person. Registration forms can be obtained by calling 701-780-1639 or visiting our Safe Kids web site at [www.safekidsgf.com](http://www.safekidsgf.com) (Click on Events/Classes).



## Don't "Thump Your Melon" This Winter!!

Protect yourself and children from a serious head injury this season! Wear a helmet when you and your family are skiing, sledding, ice skating or snowboarding. There are special helmets made just for these sports. They are made of a harder plastic, contain extra padding for protection and warmth and have a strap to affix ski goggles.

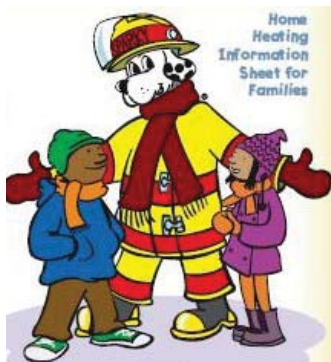
Safe Kids Grand Forks is now taking orders for winter sports helmets for adults and children available at a greatly reduced price.



Winter sports helmets are available in four colors and cost \$22-25 depending on size.

We do have some helmets in stock and will be placing an order in early December with arrival before Christmas. Please contact Patty Olsen at phone: 780-1856 or E-mail: [polson@altru.org](mailto:polson@altru.org)

Please include your head circumference (measure just above the level of the eyebrows) and color choice. If ordering for a child, please include their age.



### Sparky® Says: Stay Safe and Warm This Winter

Dear Family,

**It's winter!** The days are shorter, the outside temperature is lower, and in some places it's cold, icy, and snowy. No matter where you live, winter brings a change in season and a **time to think about home-heating safety.**

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has developed the following **safety tips** and **fun family activity** to help you stay safe this winter.

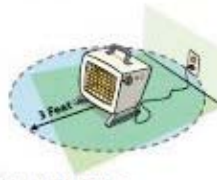
Best wishes for a warm and safe winter season!

## Sparky's Home-Heating Safety Tips

Hang this checklist on your refrigerator to remember to stay safe and warm this (and every!) winter.

### Safety tips:

- Keep anything that can burn at least three feet from heating equipment (furnace, woodstove, or portable heater).
- Do not use your oven to heat your home.
- Portable space heaters should be turned off every time you leave the room and before going to bed.
- Make sure your fireplace has a sturdy screen to prevent sparks from flying into the room.
- Allow fireplace and woodstove ashes to cool before disposing in a metal container.
- Have heating equipment and chimneys inspected and cleaned every year.
- Install smoke alarms in every bedroom, outside each sleeping area, and on every level of the home. Test smoke alarms monthly.
- Install and maintain carbon monoxide alarms to avoid the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.
- For fuel assistance contact the Energy Assistance Referral line at 866-674-6327.





# Fire Safety



One may say it's that time of year again. What time? It's hunting season, football season, Halloween has come and gone and Thanksgiving and Christmas are fast approaching. With all this being mentioned, there is one season that we need to pay special attention to. It's **HEATING**

**SEASON!** Did you know that roughly half of home heating fires are reported during the months of December, January and February?

So what can we do to prevent a home heating fire from happening? The first thing is to "Put a Freeze on Winter Fires: stop them before they start". Start with the following tips.

- Keep anything that can burn at least 3 feet away from heating equipment, like the furnace, fireplace, wood stove and space heaters
- Never use your oven to

heat your home.

- Have a qualified professional install and service all stationary heating equipment.
- Have your heating equipment cleaned and inspected yearly by a professional.
- Remember to turn portable heaters off when leaving the room or going to bed.
- Test your smoke alarms monthly.
- Always have a home escape plan.

We also know that there are several other items that start fires during the cold months in North Dakota. Overlooked item in some homes, are candles. So should we use them or not? Coming from a Fire Marshals perspective, I would like to see all candles become flameless (Maybe even outlawed). Is that ever going to happen? Probably not, but we can do a few things to prevent candle fires in the home just like preventing heating fires.

- Blow out all candles when you leave the room or go to bed. Avoid the use of candles in the bedroom and other areas where

people may fall asleep.

- Keep candles at least 12 inches away from anything that can burn.
- Think about using flameless candles in your home. They look and smell like real candles.

Speaking of flameless candles, Safe Kids Grand Forks offers them. What a great holiday gift idea. You can get your shopping done and send a safety message while doing it. I could write pages and pages on fire hazards that are associated with the cold winter months, but I think I will just leave you with a thought. "Fire Prevention starts with you". So curl up with a good book, use common sense and practice "Staying Fire Safe".

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at 701-740-6689.

Brandon J. Boespflug M.B.A.  
Fire Marshal  
Grand Forks Fire Department

**"SERVING THE COMMUNITY THROUGH EDUCATION, ENFORCEMENT AND ENGINEERING"**



**KEEP SPACE HEATERS AT LEAST 3 FEET FROM ANYTHING THAT CAN BURN ...INCLUDING PEOPLE!**

Did you remember to "Change your clocks, change your batteries?" with the change in daylight savings time. Batteries in your smoke alarms should be changed two times a year. When you change them, make sure to get any dust out of the detector as well. Monthly, test your batteries to make sure they are still working well. For a monthly reminder sheet and tracking log, visit [www.safekidsgf.com](http://www.safekidsgf.com) and click "FIRE" under programs.



# Choosing Appropriate Toys for Children

How many times have you thought “I have no idea what to get (fill in child’s name) for the upcoming holidays?” Here are some helpful hints for your gift-buying this season!

The main thing to be aware of when purchasing toys for children is SAFETY! Be aware of choking hazards. **The general rule of thumb is if a toy (or any part of a toy that can be removed or broken off) is small enough to fit through an empty toilet paper tube, it is a choking hazard for any child under the age of 3 (or any older child that still puts non-food objects in their mouth).** If you are buying a toy from a retail store, be aware of the suggested age range printed on the box. Also make sure that the toys don’t have sharp edges, unsecured batteries (you should need a screwdriver to open the battery compartment), toxic paint, balloons or small magnets that may be swallowed by younger children in the house. Toys with strings longer than 12 inches could be a strangulation hazard for younger children. If purchasing toy jewelry, make sure that it doesn’t contain lead or cadmium, which is toxic if placed in a child’s mouth.

Toys don’t have to be expensive. If you ask any parent, all kids go through the stage of being more interested in the box than the toy that was packaged in it. Boxes, empty cardboard paper towel rolls, and plastic measuring cups (to play with in the bath tub), can all make fun toys for small children. A lot of people are tempted to buy all of the toys with lots of lights, bells, and whistles, but sometimes the simple toys really are better. Consider buying toys such as blocks, nesting cups, ring stackers, and balls. They are simple, but will last a long time and are great for enhancing the child’s creativity and overall development!

When looking at toys, ask yourself the following questions:

- Is it safe and appropriate for the child’s age?
- Is it durable?
- Can it be played with in more than one way?
- Does it appeal to a child’s different senses (sight, touch, sound, smell, etc.)?

- Can it be used in more than one place?
- Can it be used in more than one position (sitting, standing, kneeling, etc.)?
- Does it involve the use of both hands?
- Does it have moving parts?
- Does it encourage activity and movement?
- Does it encourage thinking and problem solving?
- Does it promote communication and interaction?
- Is the toy appealing?
- Is the toy worth the cost?

Consider the age range of the child that you are shopping for; toy suggestions are very different depending on the child’s age and level of development.

**Newborn to age 1:** Soft blankets and squishy stuffed animals (be sure to keep them out of the crib!), infant swaddle wraps, soft blocks, thin rattles and balls that are easy to grasp, plastic inter-locking rings, padded (non-glass) mirrors, soft cloth books, squeaky toys, overhead toys, activity quilts and tummy time mats are all great for this age range!

**Age 1-2:** Consider purchasing container toys (simple shape sorters or containers that can be dumped out and child can replace items), push toys, ring stackers, large blocks for stacking, nesting cups, floating tub toys, hard cardboard books, magnetic doodle pads, wooden puzzles with large knobs to grasp, “ride-on” toys that children can propel with their feet, and balls to roll back and forth.

**Age 2-3:** Toys such as crayons and paper, non-toxic finger paints, wooden inset puzzles, books with simple pictures and words that rhyme, tricycles or toys that are pedal-propelled, simple musical instruments (watch out for small parts!) simple dress-up toys, cars or trucks to push, sandbox toys, pretend food or kitchen toys, wooden or large inter-locking blocks.

**Age 3-4:** Simple board games to develop turn-taking skills, craft supplies (such as paper, safety scissors, glue, stickers and washable markers/paints, and non-toxic moldable dough), stringing beads or other stringing activities, dress-up clothes and costumes, balls, non-electric trains, large balls, dolls with simple clothes,

and plastic inter-locking blocks.

**Age 4-5:** Building blocks, easy-to-read books, small sports equipment, simple musical instruments, modeling clay, simple building blocks and construction sets, non-electric trains, finger paint, simple board and card games.

**Age 5-8:** Construction sets, simple camera, printing and stamp sets, paints and colored pencils, sketch pads, jigsaw puzzles, board games, dolls and action figures, dominoes, books

**Age 8-12:** Musical instruments, sports equipment, hobby and craft materials, construction sets, young reader chapter books, and safety-approved (UL approved) electronic toys. **Keep in mind:**

**the AAP recommends that children over age 2 have no more than 2 hours of “screen time” per day.** (It is also recommended that children have no screen time for an hour prior to bedtime.)

A helpful tip for parents of younger children: sometimes it is helpful to rotate your child’s toys, especially during holidays, birthdays, etc. when they often receive a lot of toys in a short period of time. Find a closet or out of the way storage place to keep some of your child’s toys. When they have too many toys to choose from, children can get overwhelmed and not know what to play with first. By rotating them every few weeks or months, they always have something “new” to play with and they don’t get bored by playing with the same toys all of the time.

**Remember, the toys that you purchase are not nearly as important as the time that you spend with the children interacting and playing with them!**

## Sources:

Iowa Cooperative Extension Service, *Understanding Children: Toys AAP News: Parent Plus* Vol. 21, Number 12, December 2010. [www.aapnews.org](http://www.aapnews.org)  
Safe Kids Worldwide, *Pocket Guide to Safe and Age Appropriate Toys*  
American Occupational Therapy Association, Living Life to Its Full-est, *How to Pick a Toy: Checklist for Toy Shopping*  
State Point Media, Inc. *Toy Safety Tips For The Holiday Season* (from the AAP website-[www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org))



By: Michelle Dudgeon, MOTR/L  
Anne Carlsen Center NE KIDS  
Program

Michelle is a member of Safe Kids Grand Forks and we thank her for sharing her expertise with our newsletter readers in this edition of our Safe Kids newsletter.

# Winter Pedestrian Safety

Cold weather, snow, and ice are a normal part of life in the upper Midwest. Soon sidewalks and streets will be slippery, the wind will be blowing and we will all be trying to stay warm. Safe Kids wants to remind parents and caregivers that there are increased safety concerns for pedestrians as the days get colder and shorter.

Tips for pedestrians:

- The days are shorter. Make sure you and your child can be seen. Consider adding reflective material to coats and backpacks. Reflective tape can be found at your local hardware store. Safe Kids also has retro-reflective zipper pulls available for jackets and backpacks.
- Sidewalks are slippery. Walk with caution, especially as you approach an intersection as curb cuts can be especially hazardous.
- Make sure hats and coat

hoods do not restrict your children's line of sight. A hat pulled down too low or large hood can restrict peripheral vision. Remind children to look left-right-left and make eye contact with drivers before crossing an intersection or street.

- Keep children off of snow banks along the road. Children can easily slip off snow banks into on-coming traffic. Also, road maintenance crews removing snow may not see children playing on snow banks.

Tips for drivers:

- When it's cold out, children are in a hurry to get home or to school. They may be more impulsive when crossing streets. Approach school and park zones with extra caution.
- Roads are slippery and stopping distances increase in inclement

weather. Give yourself plenty of time to stop when approaching crosswalks and intersections.

- Remember that hoods, hats, snow and car exhaust can impede a pedestrian's line of sight. They may not be able to see an approaching vehicle.
- Snow can get piled quite high at corners and crosswalks. Look for children who may be blocked from your view by a snow bank.

If you have any questions regarding winter pedestrian safety, contact Patty Olsen at [polsen@altru.org](mailto:polsen@altru.org). Stay safe and warm this winter.



## Upcoming Car Seat Check-Up Events

### Grand Forks

January 10  
February 14  
March 14  
April 11

### Grafton

February 7  
April 4

### Crookston

March 19  
June 25

4 out of 5 car seats are used incorrectly. Could one of them be yours? Is your child's safety seat on the recall list? Come and we'll check. Did you know that children up to 4'9" should be riding in a booster seat for the safest ride?

Grand Forks events are held from 4-7pm at Rydell GM Auto Center  
Grafton events are held from 4-6pm at Hanson's Auto & Implement  
Crookston Events are held 4:30-6pm at Crookston Pontiac Buick GMC

**For more information, contact Safe Kids Grand Forks at [safekids@altru.org](mailto:safekids@altru.org) or view event details at [www.safekidsgf.com](http://www.safekidsgf.com)**



# SKGF Supports Stephen Fire Department Fire Safety Efforts

Stephen Fire Department recently participated in Fire Prevention Week educational awareness. Fire Prevention Week was established to commemorate the Great Chicago Fire on October 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, 1871. For over 80 years, the National Fire Protection Agency has focused on delivering fire safety education to children and adults during the month of October.

As part of Fire Prevention Week, the Stephen Fire Department conducted fire safety education at child care centers and schools throughout the community. Safe Kids Grand Forks was able to support their work through a grant received following the tragic fire in Stephen in April 2012. The grant, in the amount of \$500, was provided to the Stephen Fire Department and will be used to purchase additional life-saving fire and rescue equipment and supplies.

This year's theme for Fire Prevention Week, "Have 2 Ways Out!", focused on the importance of fire escape planning and practice. It is important to have a home fire escape plan that prepares your family to think fast and get out quickly when the smoke alarm sounds. Should your first

escape route be blocked by smoke or flames, it is important to have two ways out of a building or a room. This should be a key part of your fire escape plan. Here are some important tips from the NFPA and Safe Kids Grand Forks:

## SAFETY TIPS:

- MAKE a home escape plan. Draw a map of your home showing all doors and windows. Discuss the plan with everyone in your house.
- Know at least two ways out of every room, if possible. Make sure all doors and windows leading outside open easily.
- Have an outside meeting place (like a tree, light pole or mailbox) a safe distance from the home where everyone should meet.
- Practice your home fire drill at night and during the day with everyone in your home, twice a year.
- Practice using different ways out.
- Teach children how to escape on their own in case you can't help them.
- Close doors behind you as you leave.

## IF THE ALARM SOUNDS:

- If the smoke alarm sounds, get out and stay out. Never go back inside for people or pets.
- If you have to escape through smoke, get low and go under the smoke to your way out.
- Call the fire department from outside your home.



Safe Kids Grand Forks also reminds readers that each month, smoke alarms should be tested to assure they are in working order. For a copy of a smoke alarm testing log, visit [www.safekidsgf.com](http://www.safekidsgf.com) (Click on Programs and Fire). This helpful tool can be used to document the monthly checks that should be taking place of smoke/fire detectors. Also, remember that when you "change your clocks" with daylight savings time, batteries in your smoke alarms should be changed as well. NEVER disable a smoke alarm that may be beeping due to steam or smoke from cooking as it is easy to forget to reactivate it with the batteries.



## Walk to School Month Ends with Record Participation

Safe Kids Grand Forks participated in International Walk To School Day on October 3<sup>rd</sup>. Six elementary schools in Grand Forks conducted activities that morning. The schools participating were Ben Franklin, Century, Kelly, Lewis & Clark, West and Winship. Over 700 students walked to school as part of the events that day. Several of the schools held competitions with neighboring schools to have the greatest participation rates. Kudos to the principals, physical education teachers and staff at all six schools for their successes!

Walk to School Day activities are conducted around the country and world. Following is a report from the National Safe Routes to School Center about walking activities throughout the country:

From all 50 states and the District of Columbia, 4,281 schools registered Walk to School Day events, setting a new Walk to School Day record.

“Credit for the success of Walk to School Day 2012 is shared widely,” said Lauren

Marchetti, director of the National Center for Safe Routes to School, which serves as the coordinating agency for the event.

“Much of the credit has to go to the parents, school administrators and local officials who have brought Safe Routes to School programs to their communities,” Marchetti continued. “Credit also belongs to the state Safe Routes to School coordinators, who work hard to improve safety and promote students getting to school by foot and bicycle.”

“Walk to School Day continues to build momentum here in the U.S. and around the world,” Marchetti said, “and continues to bring visibility to the benefits of walking and bicycling to school for children, families, schools and communities.”

Walk to School Day began in the US in 1997 as a one-day event aimed at building awareness for the need for walkable communities. In 2000, the event became International Walk to School Day when the UK, Canada and US joined together for the first

time. To accommodate growing interest around the world, organizers began promoting International Walk to School Month for the entire month of October.

Today, thousands of schools across America and in more than 40 countries worldwide celebrate walking to school every October. The officially promoted Walk to School Day this year was Wednesday, October 3, but Walk to School Day events took place throughout the month, even spilling into September and November.

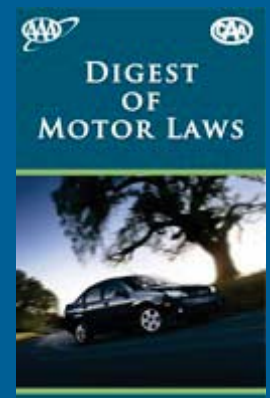
This year’s registration topped 2011’s record total of 4,175. Many more communities celebrated Walk to School Day, but didn’t register their event. Walk to School Day registration has grown every year since the National Center for Safe Routes to School began coordinating the event in 2006.

Safe Kids Grand Forks is proud to be a part of this international program!



## “Digest of Motor Laws” a valuable tool for holiday travelers

Are you planning to travel by automobile over the holidays? If so, AAA has a convenient online tool that provides information on the traffic laws of any state or Canadian province you may travel to or through. This unique resource is available free to the public at [DrivingLaws.AAA.com](http://DrivingLaws.AAA.com). Topics of interest to travelers include state-specific child safety seat and seat belt requirements, laws governing the use of radar detectors, distracted driving laws, move over laws and more. Knowing the laws before you hit the road could help you avoid the expensive of a fine.



**“RIDE SAFE – RIDE SMART”  
Snowmobile Safety Guidelines**

Snowmobile usage in North Dakota is a favorite pastime – safe use of a snowmobile is crucial!

Any person 12 and older, to legally operate a snowmobile on any public lands, must have either a valid driver’s license or a snowmobile safety certification card obtained by passing the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Dept. snowmobile safety course.

**SAFETY TIPS**

**A) Riding Attire –**

**Wear a Helmet** – It should fit correctly and you should always wear the chin strap.

**Use Eye Protection** – Wear protective goggles or a helmet that comes with a protective shield.

**Wear Appropriate Clothing** – Clothes should be worn in 3 layers – 1<sup>st</sup> layer should not retain moisture; 2<sup>nd</sup> layer should be cotton or wool; 3<sup>rd</sup> layer is water and wind resistant material. Riding at night – wear reflective clothing.

**B) Planning Your Ride -**

**Where will I be riding?** Let others know where to look for you.

**How long will I be riding?** Tell someone who isn’t going on the ride with you how long you’ll be gone, in case you don’t come back on time.

**Who will I be riding with?** NEVER ride alone, in case of an accident, someone gets stuck, or a breakdown.

**What should I take with me?** Tool kit, first aid kit, survival kit, nylon rope, extra gloves and cap, spare key, cell phone, radios, and toilet paper.

**PARTNERS IN RESPONSIBLE RIDING:**

Travel responsibly

Respect the rights of others

Educate yourself

Avoid sensitive areas

Do your part



For any questions regarding snowmobile usage, call 701-328-5357 or visit [www.parkrec.nd.gov](http://www.parkrec.nd.gov)

(from “North Dakota SNOWMOBILE Laws & Safety Guidelines 2011-2013)

If you would like to obtain a hard copy of this manual, contact Safe Kids Grand Forks at [safekids@altru.org](mailto:safekids@altru.org).

**Safe Storage of Guns During & After Hunting  
Season**

Hunting season is in full swing and as the guns and ammunition are put away for the year, Safe Kids would like to remind you that guns should be stored separately from the ammunition. Both should be locked up and out of reach of children. Remember, kids don’t always know the difference between a real gun and a pretend one. They are curious and explore. Be sure guns are stored safely, not only in your home but those of friends and relatives that they visit.

To obtain FREE gun locks, contact Safe Kids Grand Forks at 701-780-1489 or e-mail [safekids@altru.org](mailto:safekids@altru.org) We will provide you with as many locks as you would like. You can also visit the Grand Forks Sheriff’s Department in downtown Grand Forks to obtain FREE gun locks as well.



Safe Kids Grand Forks is on Facebook. “LIKE” us there and watch for updates on free safety items, upcoming events, safety tips, activities of the coalition and links to valuable resources. “Share” our helpful links and help us build our followers!!



Thinking ahead to holiday shopping? Consider giving the gift of safety with the items on your gift giving list. Here are some ideas and Safe Kids Grand Forks can help you with some great prices on safety gear!!

- ⇒ Giving a child a new bike? How about a bike helmet to go with it (\$8)!!
- ⇒ Rollerblades or a scooter? A multi-sport helmet (\$12) and elbow/knee pad sets (\$12 per set) make a great addition.
- ⇒ Summer is a ways away, but what about providing a new life jacket with that water ski or wake board (\$12 and \$15)!!!
- ⇒ Flameless candles make a GREAT hostess gift or help to add holiday cheer to a nursing home or dorm where candles with flames are prohibited, or in a home with pets, small children or decorations that may catch on fire (\$12). See photo below.
- ⇒ Car seats are a must-have on every list for an expectant parent. What about gifting a child with the next stage up in their car seat needs?!?! (Costs vary by seat but we help with installation if needed!!)

Nothing says “I love you” more than to think of safety when it comes to gift giving. For more suggestions or to obtain any of these items, contact us at [safekids@altru.org](mailto:safekids@altru.org) Santa would be proud of you for helping out our efforts in injury prevention!!

### **Make Your Holiday Decorating Safer with Candle Impressions and Safe Kids!!**

Safe Kids Grand Forks is now offering *Candle Impressions* battery operated candles at a greatly reduced price! These battery operated candles are available now for a \$12 donation to Safe Kids Grand Forks. No more open flames or messy wax! Use them year round for safe decorating. They are even safe enough to be used by children!

Choose from three styles:

- Votives** – A four pack of unscented votive candles with batteries included. Total battery time is 100 hours!
- Pillar**- A four inch round unscented pillar candle . Two AA batteries last more than 250 hours. (Batteries not included)
- Hurricane**- A four inch carved hurricane candle with a light vanilla scent. It also comes in a organza gift bag. Two C batteries will last more than 350 hours. (Batteries not included)

To get your *Candle Impressions* battery operated candles at this great price in time for the holidays, contact Safe Kids Grand Forks at 701-780-1639 or email [sschuster@altru.org](mailto:sschuster@altru.org).



**Candle** BATTERY-OPERATED  
**IMPRESSIONS®** FLAMELESS CANDLES

**Safe Kids**  
Grand Forks

Reduce Your Risk In

# WINTER DRIVING!

Register for a *SLIPPERY SLOPE* course today.

*Slippery Slope is a 3-hour DRIVER SAFETY COURSE designed to help you make better driving decisions when winter strikes. It makes a great refresher for experienced drivers and is an eye-opener for those who are new to North Dakota's roads.*

## Slippery Slope Covers:

- THE DRIVER** - how to reduce your risk and make better decisions.
- TOP FACTORS** that cause crashes in bad weather.
- TYPES OF ROADS AND CONDITIONS** and how weather affects them.
- VEHICLE TYPES & WINTER PREPARATION** for when bad weather strikes.

## Prepare Yourself for Winter - Register Today!

**Monday, January 14 | 5:30 - 8:30 pm**

Altru Health System | 860 Columbia Road | Grand Forks, ND

NDSC members - \$40, Non-members - \$45, Seniors (55+) - \$30  
Additional family members (same household, same course) - \$20

**Register now at [www.ndsc.org](http://www.ndsc.org)**



Contact Terry Weaver to discuss hosting a private course at your business.

Course developed by



**701-223-6372 or 1-800-932-8890**