



# Winter Travel Guidelines

How to keep your child safe while traveling by vehicle or foot this winter.

## Car Seat Safety

While layers, big warm coats and snow pants are appropriate for playing outdoors in the winter, riding in a vehicle has a different set of rules if your child is in a car seat. Children need to stay warm while traveling in a vehicle, but there are ways to do so safely.

- As a general rule, winter coats should not be worn underneath the harness of a car seat. A bulky coat under a car seat harness can result in the harness being too loose to be effective in a crash.
- Ways to keep your child warm and safe in the car:
  - After securing the child in the car seat without a coat, turn the coat around and put it on backwards with their arms through the arm holes and the back of the coat acting like a blanket.
  - Lay a blanket over your child to keep them warm.
  - Unzip the coat and harness the child first, then rezip.
  - Warm up your car head of time to avoid the need for heavy coats.
- If you do use a coat, don't buy an excessively bulky one with thick, down padding.
- Always remember, "Strap Before You Wrap"; Strap your child into their car seat before adding layers to keep them warm.



## Winter Pedestrians – Steps to Safety

- Keep driveways and sidewalks clear of snow and ice. Apply rock salt or sand materials to improve traction.
- Do not allow children less than 10 years of age to cross the street alone.
- Never let children play in the street or on snowbanks near the street.
- Make sure children are wearing appropriate shoes and clothing with reflective material to make others aware of their presence when light conditions are poor.
- Remind your children about the rules of pedestrian safety:
  - Use sidewalks.
  - Walk on the left side of the street against the flow of traffic if sidewalk is not available.
  - Stop at the curb or road's edge before crossing. Have them look left, right and left again to check for traffic.
  - Continue to look and listen while crossing the road.



## Frostbite Safety

### Dress Your Kids for the Cold

- Set reasonable time limits for your children to be playing outside. Keep tabs on how long your children have been outdoors. Have them come in periodically to warm up with a cup of hot chocolate, hot apple cider or other warm drink.
- Since infants lose body heat quickly, do your best to avoid taking them outdoors for extended periods of time.
- The key to keeping kids dry and warm is to dress them in multiple thin layers.
  - Thermal base layer: thermal long johns and warm socks (wool ideally).
  - Insulating middle layer: one or two shirts, a sweater and a pair of pants.
  - Water resistant outer layer: winter coat, snow boots, gloves or mittens and a hat that covers the earlobes.



### The Levels of Frostbite Severity

- First degree: Skin becomes red in color, stings and has a burning sensation.
- Second degree: Skin has a yellow or gray hue and feels tender. The individual may have a “pins and needles” feeling.
- Third degree: Skin has a waxy white appearance and feels numb.

### Take Action to Prevent Frostbite

- Take child inside
- Call a doctor
- Tell the child to wiggle the affected body part(s) to increase blood supply to that area.



- **Do not** massage the affected area(s) as it causes damage to the tissue and severe pain.
- Warm the frozen area(s) against other parts of the body. Hold fingers to the chest for example.

## General Winter Driving Safety

The safest place to be during adverse weather conditions is indoors but that's not always possible. It is imperative that motorists prepare themselves and their vehicles before heading out onto winter roads.

- Have a full tank of gas.
- Check road conditions before you leave.
- Make people aware of where you are going and when you plan to arrive.
- Decrease your speed and leave plenty of room to stop.
- Don't use cruise control on icy or wet roads.
- Have a winter survival kit available in your car.
- If the car becomes stalled, stay in the vehicle and wait for help to arrive.

## Winter Vehicle Safety – Survival Kit Checklist

- **Warm gear:** Several blankets and warm clothing
- **Signaling Gear:** Bright orange or red cloth, a whistle and radio
- **Cooking gear:** Heat source, such as a heater or candle, matches (not lighters), metal container to cook in and a cup to eat/drink from
- **Food and beverage:** Bottled water, hard candy, nuts, raisins, granola bars, jerky and dried fruit
- **Miscellaneous:** Rope, toilet paper, reading material and flashlight with additional batteries

