STUDENT SAFETY SPOTLIGHT

DECEMBER | 2026

December brings holiday travel, winter weather, and festive celebrations. With busy schedules and more time spent indoors, simple safety reminders can help prevent injuries. This month, we're focusing on winter travel, carbon monoxide, safe gifts, and holiday home safety to help families enjoy a safe and happy holiday season!

Rural Roads, Real Risks: Buckle Up Every Trip!

Just because you're close to home doesn't mean you're safe from a crash! Gravel roads, soft shoulders, and rural driving conditions can turn a quick trip into a dangerous one. Keep your family safe with these tips:

- **Back Seat Until 13:** Keep children under 13 in the backseat to avoid airbag injury.
- **Buckle Up Every Trip:** Seat belts are essential, even on short drives and farm roads.
- **Watch for Rollovers:** Trucks and SUVs have a higher rollover risk, especially on soft shoulders.
- **Secure Loose Items:** Keep tools and heavy gear secured to prevent injuries in a crash.



- Children younger than 8 years of age are required to ride in a child restraint (car seat or booster seat). The restraint must be used correctly – following the manufacturer's instructions.
- A correctly-used seat belt may be substituted for children younger than 8 who are at least 4'9" tall.
- Children ages 8 through 17 must be properly secured in a seat belt or child restraint (car seat or booster seat).
- Children younger than 18 must be properly restrained regardless of their location in a vehicle.
- The penalty for violating this law is $25 and one point against the license of the driver. The driver is responsible for ensuring that all occupants are buckled up in the appropriate restraint.

SAFE KIDS GRAND FORKS

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Altru Health System is proud to serve as the lead agency for Safe Kids Grand Forks. For more information on this and other childhood injury prevention topics, visit safekidsgf.com, call us at 701.780.1489 or email safekid@altru.org.

KEEPING KIDS SAFE AT HOME, AT SCHOOL, AT PLAY, AND ON THE WAY!!!

THIS INFORMATION IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY SAFE KIDS GRAND FORKS & OUR PARTNERS AT ND VISION ZERO

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Safe Gift Guide

New toys and gadgets bring excitement during the holidays, but they can also bring hidden dangers. Keep playtime safe with these tips:

- **Secure Batteries:** Make sure button and lithium batteries are safely enclosed.
- **Watch Small Parts:** Keep tiny toys, pieces, and batteries away from younger children.
- **Choose Age-Appropriate Gifts:** Follow age recommendations on toys and games.
- **Toss Packaging:** Quickly remove plastic bags, sharp staples, and other packaging hazards.

Cold Weather Scooter Safety

Frost, ice, and wet surfaces can make even a quick scooter ride dangerous. Stay safe with these tips:

- Wear Proper Shoes: Avoid slippers, slides, or loose boots that can slip off the scooter.
- Check Your Brakes: Wet or icy brakes may not work as well, making it harder to stop.
- Keep Your Footing: Clear snow, ice, and mud from the scooter deck to prevent slipping.

Be a Smart Sitter

Babysitting is a big responsibility! A little preparation can help young caregivers keep kids safe and handle emergencies with confidence.

- **Know Your Contacts:** Keep emergency numbers and the home's address handy.
- **Stay Alert:** Provide age-appropriate supervision and keep young children in sight.
- **Watch Around Water:** Never leave young children alone near bathtubs or standing water.
- **Know First Aid:** Learn basic first aid and when to call 911.
- **Review the Rules:** Discuss routines, screen time, and expectations with parents.

You Can't See It - But You Can Stop It

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless gas that can be deadly. Winter heating increases the risk, so protect your family with these tips:

- **Clear Vents:** Keep snow and debris away from outdoor exhaust vents.
- **Maintain Heating Systems:** Have fuel-burning appliances inspected annually.
- **Keep Engines Outside:** Never run vehicles, grills, or generators in garages or enclosed spaces.
- **Know the Warning Signs:** Headaches, dizziness, and nausea may signal CO poisoning.

Act on Alarms: Teach kids to recognize CO alarms. If one sounds, get outside immediately and call 911.

Is Your Child Ready to be Home Alone?

Safe Kids Grand Forks offers a “Safe At Home Alone” class to help children ages 8–12 prepare for greater independence. Topics include safe cooking, pedestrian safety, following household rules, basic first aid, and emergency preparedness. Classes are offered in Grand Forks and periodically in communities throughout our region. For more information or to register, call Safe Kids Grand Forks at 701.780.1489 or visit safekidsgf.com.

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