

# SUMMER SAFETY

## SAFETY PREVENTION TIPS



With the school year coming to a close, children and teens are spending more time at home, at summer camps, and with their friends. It is vital that parents have conversations about the different safety risks that exist in the home, online, and anywhere else children will spend their time.

### DID YOU KNOW?

- **Leaving your child unattended in a car is a crime** punishable under Texas law (dfps.state.tx). It only takes **20 minutes for the inside of a car to reach 114°** when it's 85° outside and only 10 minutes when it's 95°. (avma.org)
- **Texas law does not specify an age that you can safely leave your child at home alone.** (dfps.state.tx)
- **It is illegal** for a parent to allow **a child under 14 years to ride a bike without a helmet** – they can reduce the risk of head injury by 85% in a crash. (safekids.org)

### PREVENTION .....



#### Home Alone:

- **Set rules** for going outside, using the computer, having friends over, screen time, etc.
- Create a **schedule** for your child so they know what to expect, including times to check in.
- Leave a list of **emergency contacts** and guidelines of who is welcome in the home.

#### Hiring a Sitter:

- There is no legal babysitting age in Texas. The Red Cross recommends a minimum babysitting age of 11 to 15 years old and offers babysitting classes for kids starting at the age of 11.
- Before hiring, check databases including the National Sex Offender registry for criminal history.
- Listen to your child if they disclose **disapproval of the sitter or feel uncomfortable** with the sitter

#### Summer Camps:

- Possible Questions to Consider When Choosing a Summer Camp: Are employees checked for **criminal history** including the National Sex Offender registry? What type of **training** is required by staff? Any pertaining to bullying and abuse prevention? What is their **discipline policy** for staff misconduct as well as campers? Are they **licensed by the state and accredited** by the ACA (American Camp Association)?
- If you find a camp that you feel comfortable with, talk to your kids about personal safety, boundaries, acceptable & unacceptable behaviors, discuss possible scenarios and how to respond.

#### Water Safety:

- Always **supervise children** when in or around water and consider becoming **CPR certified** if you own a pool. If you step away, designate a responsible adult to supervise. Drowning can occur in just a few inches of water so even bath time should be supervised. When boating, all ages should wear approved **life jackets**.

### TRAVEL SAFETY .....



#### Keeping Kids Safe While Traveling:

- Talk to your children about **what to do if they become separated** from you
- Consider marking your name and number on their hand. Marking your child's name on their luggage and/or backpack alerts others to what their name is and children can become confused when someone uses their name.
- **When on the road:**
  - Always have yourself and children buckled and in appropriate seating.
- **When camping or staying in a hotel:**
  - Keep valuables with you at all times or locked away out of sight.
  - Mitigate any potential dangers around the space and childproof where needed.

#### Keeping Your Home Safe While You Are Away:

- **Enable police watch** in your precinct during the days you will be gone.
- **Postpone your social media travel updates** until you return. Updating in real-time, alerts of your empty house.
- **Postpone any package deliveries** until you return from your trip. Unattended packages can attract burglars.

### COOKING SAFETY .....



- **Remain in the kitchen** while cooking.
- **Test smoke alarms** regularly.
- **Do not try to extinguish grease fires with water.** If possible, smother the flames with the pot lid or a flat baking sheet.
- Turn pot or pan handles **toward the back of the stove** so it is not accidentally knocked over.



## PARTNERS & RESOURCES



- **American Camp Association:** works to preserve, promote, and improve the camp experience by providing resources and camp accreditation. [acacamps.org](http://acacamps.org)
- **American Red Cross:** Provides resources for parents on child care, water safety, and First Aid. [redcross.org](http://redcross.org)
- **Aquatics Safety Group:** Spreads education and awareness of water safety for parents and families. [aquaticsafetygroup.com](http://aquaticsafetygroup.com)
- **Boys and Girls Club of Greater Houston:** provides enrichment experiences, academic tutoring and child care for the Houston area. [bgcgh.org](http://bgcgh.org)
- **Houston Parks and Recreation Department:** offers youth sports leagues, enrichment programs, meal programs and more. [houston.tx.gov](http://houston.tx.gov)

## LOCAL OFFICIALS



It is important to be aware of what role each entity plays in summer safety. From detainment to conviction, everyone has a role to play.



**Officer**

Detains individual and contacts DA to see if they will accept charges. If charges are accepted, arrest is made and officer books individual.



**District Attorney (DA)**

Analyze and gather evidence to determine whether or not there are grounds for prosecution. Gives approval for arrest.



**Judge**

Oversees court proceedings.



**Magistrate**

Determines if the individual will be released on bond or detained in jail.



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