



*Safety Guide  
For Necco Foster  
Parents*

*2010*

*“Did you know that children will be rushed to the emergency room nearly 3 million times this summer during May-August?”*

### *Everyone needs to think summer safety*

Summertime is exciting for any youth. It also can present challenges for foster parents who are juggling work schedules as well as the challenges of activities that could potentially cause additional risks. This handbook is a guide to help you prepare for typical summer activities. Common summer activities are covered in this handbook but the handbook is not all inclusive of every situation that may arise. This does not replace advice/direction from your Necco case manager and team or the safety and supervision plan. If ever you have questions, please feel free to consult with Necco staff that will be happy to guide you. We want every youth to have a happy and SAFE summer!

## **FUN IN THE SUN**

*The most important thing you can do for your foster child outdoors is protect him/ her from sunburn. It's not hard, but requires diligence. Many foster parents are conscientious about skin protection when they take their foster kids to the beach or the swimming pool but neglect it when the children are playing in the backyard or on a sports team. Sun protection is needed all the time.*

*We all know how painful a sunburn can be. And children are more likely to suffer because their skin is more sensitive than adults' and burns more easily. Another consideration is foster children who may be taking medication that may make them more susceptible to sunburn.*

*More important is the potential long-term effect. Adults who get skin cancer typically got too much sun when they were kids. Just one or two blistering sunburns in childhood can greatly increase the risk of developing skin cancer in adulthood. Skin cancer is the most common kind of cancer in the United States.*

### **Special Notes for Babies under 6 months:**

- Avoiding sun exposure and dressing infants in lightweight long pants, long-sleeved shirts, and brimmed hats that shade the neck are still the top recommendations from the AAP to prevent sunburn.
- Until babies are 6 months old, pediatricians usually don't recommend using sunscreens because the risks of these chemicals on infants are not known. Covering up an infant and keeping him/her out of direct sun for the first six months are much preferred.
- Please consult with the baby's pediatrician on the use of sunscreen and ensure that any sunscreen you are using is safe and non-toxic for babies.
- Keep your baby in the shade of a tree, under an umbrella, or in a stroller with a canopy. Even on cloudy days, harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays can

- cause sunburn. If you're on sand, water, snow, or concrete, be especially careful because UV rays can bounce back from these surfaces.
- When you're outdoors, dress your baby in light, loose-fitting clothing that covers his body. Clothes with a tighter weave offer more protection. You can check this by holding the garment up to the light and noticing how much passes through. Always have him wear a hat with a brim because that will shade his face and also protect the ears.
  - A baby or young child can get a sunburn while riding in the car. Juvenile products stores carry a variety of sunshades for car windows. Using one not only protects your foster child from the sun's rays and shades out some of the hot sun, but also increases the likelihood of him napping comfortably, making your car ride a lot more pleasant.

### **For Older Children:**

- The first, and best, line of defense against the sun is covering up. Wear a hat with a three-inch brim or a bill facing forward, sunglasses (look for sunglasses that block 99-100% of ultraviolet rays), and cotton clothing with a tight weave.
- Apply sunscreen at least 30 minutes before going outside, and use sunscreen even on cloudy days.
- Stay in the shade whenever possible, and limit sun exposure during the peak intensity hours - between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Use a sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or greater. Be sure to apply enough sunscreen - about one ounce per sitting for a young adult.
- Reapply sunscreen every two hours, or after swimming or sweating.
- Use extra caution near water, snow, and sand as they reflect UV rays and may result in sunburn more quickly.

### **Heat Stress in Exercising Children**

- The intensity of activities that last 15 minutes or more should be reduced whenever high heat and humidity reach critical levels.
- At the beginning of a strenuous exercise program or after traveling to a warmer climate, the intensity and duration of exercise should be limited initially and then gradually increased during a period of 10 to 14 days to accomplish acclimatization to the heat.
- Before prolonged physical activity, the child should be well-hydrated. During the activity, periodic drinking should be enforced, for example, each 20 minutes, 5 oz of cold tap water or a flavored sports drink for a child weighing 90 lbs, and 9 oz for an adolescent weighing 130 lbs, even if the child does not feel thirsty.
- Clothing should be light-colored and lightweight and limited to one layer of absorbent material to facilitate evaporation of sweat. Sweat-saturated garments should be replaced by dry garments.

- Practices and games played in the heat should be shortened and more frequent water/hydration breaks should be instituted.

## **Pool Safety**

Source: <http://www.aap.org/family/tippool.htm>

- Install a fence at least four-feet high around all four sides of the pool. The fence should not have openings or protrusions that a young child could use to get over, under, or through.
- Make sure pool gates open out from the pool, and self-close and self-latch at a height children can't reach.
- Never leave children alone in or near the pool, even for a moment.
- Keep rescue equipment (a shepherd's hook - a long pole with a hook on the end - and life preserver) and a portable telephone near the pool. Choose a shepherd's hook and other rescue equipment made of fiberglass or other materials that do not conduct electricity.
- Avoid inflatable swimming aids such as "floaties." They are not a substitute for approved life vests and can give children a false sense of security.
- Children may not be developmentally ready for swim lessons until after their fourth birthday. Swim programs for children under 4 should not be seen as a way to decrease the risk of drowning.
- Whenever infants or toddlers are in or around water, an adult should be within arm's length, providing "touch supervision."

## Beach Safety

- Protect your skin: Sunlight contains two kinds of UV rays -- UVA increases the risk of skin cancer, skin aging, and other skin diseases. UVB causes sunburn and can lead to skin cancer. Limit the amount of direct sunlight you receive between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. and wear a sunscreen with a sun protection factor containing a high rating such as 15.
- Drink plenty of water regularly and often even if you do not feel thirsty. Your body needs water to keep cool. Avoid drinks with alcohol or caffeine in them. They can make you feel good briefly but make the heat's effects on your body worse. This is especially true with beer, which dehydrates the body.
- Watch for signs of heat stroke: Heat stroke is life-threatening. The victim's temperature control system, which produces sweating to cool the body, stops working. The body temperature can rise so high that brain damage and death may result if the body is not cooled quickly. Signals include hot, red, and dry skin; changes in consciousness, rapid, weak pulse, and rapid, shallow breathing. Call 9-1-1 or your local EMS number. Move the person

- to a cooler place. Quickly cool the body by wrapping wet sheets around the body and fan it. If you have ice packs or cold packs, place them on each of the victim's wrists and ankles, in the armpits and on the neck to cool the large blood vessels. Watch for signals of breathing problems and make sure the airway is clear. Keep the person lying down.
- Wear eye protection: Sunglasses are like sunscreen for your eyes and protect against damage that can occur from UV rays. Be sure to wear sunglasses with labels that indicate that they absorb at least 90 percent of UV sunlight.
  - Wear foot protection: Many times, people's feet can get burned from the sand or cut from glass in the sand.

### Boating

- Learn to swim. The best thing anyone can do to stay safe in and around the water is to learn to swim. This includes anyone participating in any boating activity. The American Red Cross has swimming courses for people of any age and swimming ability. To enroll in a swim course, contact your local Red Cross chapter. .
- Look for the label: Use Coast Guard-approved life jackets for yourself and your passengers when boating and fishing.
- Develop a float plan. Anytime you go out in a boat, give a responsible person details about where you will be and how long you will be gone. This is important because if the boat is delayed because of an emergency, becomes lost, or encounters other problems, you want help to be able to reach you.
- Find a boating course in your area (Red Cross, U.S. Power Squadron, the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, US Sailing, etc). These courses teach about navigation rules, emergency procedures and the effects of wind, water conditions, and weather.
- Watch the weather: Know local weather conditions and prepare for electrical storms. Watch local news programs. Stop boating as soon as you see or hear a storm.

### Home Pools

- Learn to swim. The best thing anyone can do to stay safe in and around the water is to learn to swim--this includes adults and children. The American Red Cross has swimming courses for people of any age and swimming ability. To enroll in a course to learn or improve your ability to swim, contact your local Red Cross chapter.
- Never leave a child unobserved around water. Your eyes must be on the child at all times. Adult supervision is a must.
- Install a phone by the pool or keep a cordless phone nearby so that you can call 9-1-1 in an emergency.

- Post CPR instructions and 9-1-1 or your local emergency number in the pool area.
- Enclose the pool completely with a self-locking, self-closing fence with vertical bars. Openings in the fence should be no more than four inches wide. If the house is part of the barrier, the doors leading from the house to the pool should remain locked and be protected with an alarm that produces sounds when the door is unexpectedly opened.
- Never leave furniture near the fence that would enable a child to climb over the fence.
- Always keep basic lifesaving equipment by the pool and know how to use it. Pole, rope, and personal flotation devices (PFDs) are recommended.
- Keep toys away from the pool when it is not in use. Toys can attract young children into the pool.
- Pool covers should always be completely removed prior to pool use.
- To learn more about home pool safety, you can purchase the video "It Only Takes a Minute" from your local Red Cross chapter.
- If a child is missing, check the pool first. Go to the edge of the pool and scan the entire pool, bottom and surface, as well as the surrounding pool area.

#### Keeping Children Safe In, On and Around the Water

- Maintain constant supervision. Watch children around any water environment (pool, stream, lake, tub, toilet, bucket of water), no matter what skills your child has acquired and no matter how shallow the water.
- Don't rely on substitutes. The use of flotation devices and inflatable toys cannot replace parental supervision. Such devices could suddenly shift position, lose air, or slip out from underneath, leaving the child in a dangerous situation.
- Enroll children in a water safety course or Learn to Swim program. Your decision to provide your child with an early aquatic experience is a gift that will have infinite rewards. These courses encourage safe practices. You can also purchase a Community Water Safety manual at your local Red Cross. .
- Learn to swim. The best thing anyone can do to stay safe in and around the water is to learn to swim--this includes adults and children. The American Red Cross has swimming courses for people of any age and swimming ability. To enroll in swim course, contact your local Red Cross chapter.
- Select a supervised area. A trained lifeguard who can help in an emergency is the best safety factor. Even good swimmers can have an unexpected medical emergency in the water. Never swim alone.
- Select an area that is clean and well maintained. A clean bathhouse, clean restrooms, and a litter-free environment show the management's concern for your health and safety.

- Select an area that has good water quality and safe natural conditions. Murky water, hidden underwater objects, unexpected drop-offs, and aquatic plant life are hazards. Water pollution can cause health problems for swimmers. Strong tides, big waves, and currents can turn an event that began as fun into a tragedy.
- Make sure the water is deep enough before entering headfirst. Too many swimmers are seriously injured every year by entering headfirst into water that is too shallow. A feetfirst entry is much safer than diving.
- Be sure rafts and docks are in good condition. A well-run open-water facility maintains its rafts and docks in good condition, with no loose boards or exposed nails. Never swim under a raft or dock. Always look before jumping off a dock or raft to be sure no one is in the way.
- Avoid drainage ditches and arroyos. Drainage ditches and arroyos for water runoff are not good places for swimming or playing in the water. After heavy rains, they can quickly change into raging rivers that can easily take a human life. Even the strongest swimmers are no match for the power of the water. Fast water and debris in the current make ditches and arroyos very dangerous.

### Ocean Safety

- Learn to swim. The best thing anyone can do to stay safe in and around the water is to learn to swim--this includes adults and children. The American Red Cross has swimming courses for people of any age and swimming ability. Contact your local Red Cross chapter for information on courses.
- Stay within the designated swimming area, ideally within the visibility of a lifeguard.
- Never swim alone.
- Check the surf conditions before you enter the water. Check to see if a warning flag is up or check with a lifeguard for water conditions, beach conditions, or any potential hazards.
- Stay away from piers, pilings, and diving platforms when in the water.
- Keep a lookout for aquatic life. Water plants and animals may be dangerous. Avoid patches of plants. Leave animals alone.
- Make sure you always have enough energy to swim back to shore.
- Don't try to swim against a current if caught in one. Swim gradually out of the current, by swimming across it.

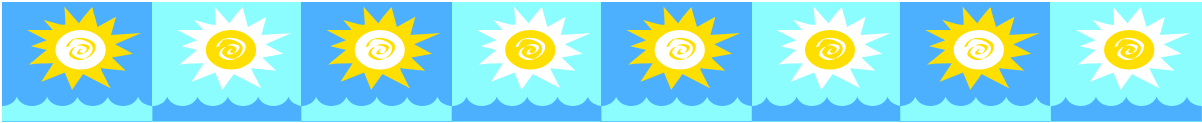
### Personal Watercraft (Jet Skis)

Foster Children must have special permission to participate in this activity. Please do not let your foster child operate any type of watercraft without the permission of their guardian.

- Learn to swim. The best thing anyone can do to stay safe in and around the water is to learn to swim. This includes anyone participating in any water sport or boating activity. The American Red Cross has swimming courses for people of any age and swimming ability. To enroll in a swim course, contact your local Red Cross chapter.
- Know your local laws and regulations. Some states have special laws governing the use of personal water craft (PWC) which address operations, registration and licensing requirements, education, required safety equipment and minimum ages.
- Operate your PWC with courtesy and common sense. Follow the traffic pattern of the waterway. Obey no-wake and speed zones.
- Use extreme caution around swimmers and surfers. Run your PWC at a slow speed until the craft is away from shore, swimming areas, and docks. Avoid passing close to other boats and jumping wakes. This behavior is dangerous and often illegal.
- Coast Guard-approved life jackets should be worn by the operator of the PWC as well as any riders.
- Ride with a buddy. PWCs should always travel in groups of two or three. You never know when an emergency might occur.
- Alcohol and operating a PWC doesn't mix. Alcohol impairs your judgment, balance, and coordination. For the same reasons it is dangerous to operate an automobile, people should not operate a boat or PWC while drinking alcohol.

## **Water Areas**

- Ponds, swamps, streams, and rivers are prone to flooding in the spring from melting snow, and the icy water poses a significant threat to the health and safety of kids who aren't "water wise." The risk of drowning or hypothermia can be greatly reduced by following these simple safety rules:
  1. Stay away from rivers and streams during spring floods. Swiftly moving water, even a few inches deep, can easily knock children off their feet and quickly carry them beyond the reach of safety.
  2. Banks of rivers and streams are very unstable and prone to collapse during periods of high water. Stay away.
  3. Do not trust spring ice on ponds and lakes. Warm days and cold nights result in weak and mushy ice. Stay off the ice.



## Summertime and Bug Bites

- Insects (mosquitoes, gnats, chiggers, ticks, etc...) commonly bite children and can make them miserable. There are many safe and effective insect repellents that you can use to protect your child, including those that use **DEET, picaridin, citronella, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or soybean oil.**
- Remember to only use products that are approved for children, follow the manufacturer's instructions and wash off the insect repellents when you return indoors.
- Insect repellents with deet are probably the best and most commonly used. Although it is absorbed through your child's skin, it is generally safe as long as the product has less than **10-30% DEET**. You should apply the deet product to all exposed skin, except near the eyes, mouth, open cuts or hands of small children (who may rub their eyes or put their fingers in their mouth). DEET is absorbed through the skin, so you may want to limit how much you put on younger children, wash it off as soon as possible, and apply it more to clothing than skin.
- Although it used to be generally recommended that you only use insect repellents with less than 10% DEET, the American Academy of Pediatrics now says that insect repellents 'with a concentration of 10% appear to be as safe as products with a concentration of 30% when used according to the directions on the product labels'. Always consult the with foster child's primary physician for what is the safest to use for the child

*What is the difference between insect repellents with 5%, 10%, 30% or 100% DEET? It is mainly how long the protection against repelling insects lasts. 10% DEET provides about 2 hours of protection, while 24% provides about 5 hours of protection, with the effect peaking at a concentration of about 30% DEET. Remember that DEET is not recommended for infants under 2 months of age. Although deet insect repellents are effective for several hours, they do wash off with water and sweat, and you may have to reapply them to be most effective (follow the product's instructions to be safe), although many experts recommend that DEET should not be applied more than once a day.*

Insect repellents made with **picaridin** offer an alternative to DEET that also provide long lasting protection and are available as:

- Off! Skintastic Clean Feel
- Cutter Advanced Insect Repellent

- Avon Skin So Soft Bug Guard Plus Picaridin

Other non-DEET insect repellents that are generally safe in children include those made with **Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus, Citronella, soybean oil** and other plant based materials, such as:

- Avon Skin So Soft Bug Guard Insect Repellent (Citronella Oil)
- Bite Blocker All Natural, "Deet Free" Insect Repellent (Soybean Oil)
- Bull Frog Mosquito Coast
- Burt's Bees Herbal Insect Repellent (Lemongrass Oil, Citronella Oil, and Rosemary Oil)
- Buzz Away Extreme, Natural Insect Repellent (Soybean Oil, Citronella Oil)
- California Baby Bug Repellent with Citronella
- OFF! Botanicals Plant Based Insect Repellent (oil of lemon eucalyptus)
- Repel Plant Based Lemon Eucalyptus Insect Repellent

Remember that insect repellents do not protect against most stinging insects, including wasps, bees and fire ants.

To keep your foster children safe from insect bites, you can also:

- Make sure to keep as much of her skin covered with clothing as possible, including long sleeve shirt, long pants, socks, and a hat.
- Wear light colored clothing, so as not to attract bugs.
- Avoid using any scented soaps or other products on your foster child, since the fragrances can also attract insects.
- Consider applying insect repellents to clothing instead of to skin so that it won't be absorbed.
- Wash off insect repellents as soon as possible.
- Avoid areas with insects nest.
- Follow the instructions, including age restrictions on any insect repellent you are considering using and **consult with the foster child's primary care physician.**

## **BICYCLE SAFETY**

Source: <http://www.aap.org/family/bicycle.htm>

Source: <http://www.aap.org/family/tbikmyth.htm>

Bike helmets have saved many children -- and adults -- from serious injury or death. Indeed, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) says helmets are 85 percent effective in reducing head injuries and 88 percent effective in reducing brain injuries.

Helmet usage continues to climb as a result of better-fitting and better-looking helmets, public education, and state helmet laws.

They're also a real bargain, selling for as little as \$15 in discount stores. And unlike clothes, kids don't outgrow them every year. Helmets usually come with two or three sets of foam fitting pads so you can change to thinner padding and make more room in the helmet as your child's head grows.

### **What to Buy**

Today's helmets are more comfortable, thanks to lightweight materials and ventilation holes that allow for better air flow to keep heads cool. Some even have openings that a ponytail can fit through. Today's helmets are also safer. The Consumer Product Safety Commission's mandatory helmet standards took effect in March 1999. Any helmet made after that date must meet that standard and should carry a label saying it is CPSC-compliant.

### **Watch Out!**

Anytime a helmet has been in a serious fall or crash, it should be replaced, even if you can't see actual damage. The stress on the materials from the impact could make the helmet less effective the next time.

Bike helmets also should be worn by children on tricycles and are recommended for such other sports as [inline skating](#) and skateboarding. If your child engages in aggressive skateboarding or skating maneuvers, consider buying a multi-sport helmet sold specifically for those activities. The multi-sport helmet covers more of the back of the head for protection during backward falls. These are not designed for biking, however, and shouldn't be used as a substitute for a bike helmet.

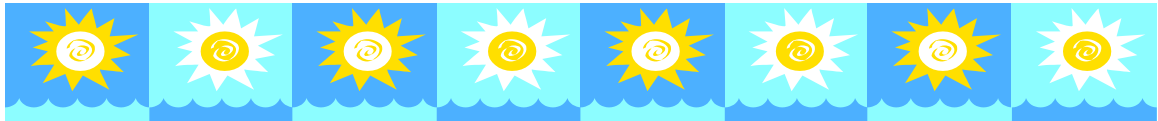
Other things to remember:

- Do not push foster your child to ride a 2-wheeled bike until he or she is ready, at about age 5 or 6. Consider the child's coordination and desire to learn to ride. Stick with coaster (foot) brakes until your foster child is older and more experienced for hand brakes.
- It is important that the child uses a bicycle that is the appropriate size for him/her. For more information on finding the proper fit, go to <http://www.aap.org/family/bicycle.htm>
- Oversized bikes are especially dangerous.
- Your foster child needs to wear a helmet on every bike ride, no matter how short or how close to home. Many accidents happen in driveways, on sidewalks, and on bike paths, not just on streets. Children learn best by observing you. Whenever you ride, put on your helmet.
- A helmet protects your foster child from serious injury, and should always be worn. And remember, wearing a helmet at all times helps children develop the helmet habit.

- A helmet should be worn so that it is level on the head, not tipped forwards or backwards. The strap should be securely fastened, and you should not be able to move the helmet in any direction. If needed, the helmet's sizing pads can help improve the fit.

### **SKATEBOARD, SCOOTER, IN-LINE SKATING AND HEELYS SAFETY**

- Children should never ride skateboards or scooters in or near traffic.
- All skateboarders and scooter-riders should wear a helmet and other protective gear; wrist guards are particularly important.
- While in-line skating or wearing Heelys, be sure to wear appropriate protective equipment.



### **Playground**

*Many of the same safety rules for public playgrounds apply to your home playground, too. You'll need a six-foot buffer zone between the equipment and any obstructions such as garages, fences, trees, utility poles, or wires. Soft surfaces—typically wood chips or sand—should extend several feet out from the equipment.*

*Don't buy play equipment too big for your foster youth. If your play equipment must accommodate older children, too, supervise the younger one carefully. Prices for backyard play sets vary, with metal generally costing less than wood. A higher price doesn't necessarily mean you're getting safer equipment, though. Regardless of what you buy, if you install it yourself, make sure you follow the manufacturer's directions carefully.*

### **Metal Sets**

Manufacturers of metal swing sets recommend that the legs be anchored so they cannot tip over when energetic kids swing on them. Most companies suggest setting the legs in concrete.

### **Plastic Equipment**

Plastic climbing equipment is popular with the preschool set. However, hundreds of children have been hurt, a few fatally, because the climbing gyms were used indoors in homes or day care centers. The CPSC and manufacturers warn that climbing gyms should not be put on wood or cement floors and that even

carpeting doesn't provide adequate injury protection. This equipment should be placed outdoors on sand, mulch, or another shock-absorbing surface.

### **Dark and Dusk**

Rising temperatures and increasing hours of daylight bring with them a corresponding increase in traffic accidents involving kids and cars. The periods of greatest risk are the hours just before and after sunset. During periods of twilight, visibility is limited and a driver's depth perception is reduced by low light levels.

1. All evening play clothes (especially jackets, coats, and wind breakers) should have reflective cloth strips. So should bikes, helmets, and backpacks.
2. Evening strolls should include a flashlight — especially if all or most of the walking is alongside roads and streets without sidewalks.
3. Bike riding should be specifically prohibited, unless the bike has been equipped with reflectors, head lamps, and other night-riding safety features.

### **Playing in the Street**

- City streets and country roads aren't playgrounds, and we don't advise that foster children use them as such.

[Do we need to say anything else here?](#)

### **Charcoal and Gas Grill Safety**

Charcoal produces carbon monoxide (CO) when it is burned. CO is a colorless, odorless gas that can accumulate to toxic levels in closed environments. Each year about 30 people die and 100 are injured as a result of CO fumes from charcoal grills and hibachis used inside. Charcoal grills must be used in a well-ventilated, outdoor area.

A 2010 report issued by the WV State Fire Marshal's office states that, between 2003-2006, United States fire departments responded to an average of 7,900 fires involving grills, hibachis, or barbecues *per year*. Each year, these fires caused an average of 10 civilian deaths, 120 reported injuries, and \$80 million in property damage. Most of these fires

involved gas grills (81%), while 16% involved charcoal or other solid fuel. The leading factor contributing to the gas grill fires were leaks or breaks in the equipment. The main factor in the charcoal grill fires was having something that could burn too close to the grill. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) states that in 2007, 18,600 patients went to emergency rooms with injuries involving grills.

Here are a few tips that can keep you and your family safe this summer:

- Keep your grill at least 10 feet away from your house or other structures. A flaming fire can quickly spread out of control. 33% of home grill structure fires start on an exterior balcony or unenclosed porch (WV State Fire Marshal's office, 2010).
- Never use a grill underneath a roof, awning, or other structure, as well as, overhanging tree branches.
- Never use propane or charcoal-fueled grills of any kind anywhere but outdoors, not only to avoid a fire hazard, but to avoid build-up of carbon monoxide in enclosed spaces.
- Before using your grill for the first time this season, visually inspect the grill itself, as well as, smaller parts of the grill, to make sure it's free of animal or bird nests, insects, dried leaves, etc.
- Check the gas tank hose for any leaks or breaks. Spray light soapy water on the hose and around fixtures. If there's a gas leak, the soap will bubble.
- If there is a gas leak and there is no flame, turn off the gas tank and the grill. If the leak stops, get your grill serviced before using it again. If the leak does not stop, call the fire department for assistance!
- If you smell gas while cooking, get away from the grill immediately. Call the fire department – but NEVER try to move the grill.
- Attend to your grill at all times – and keep children and pets away from the grill area.
- Keep your grill free of grease or fat build-up.
- Keep charcoal fluid away from children and away from heat sources.
- If you use starter fluid, use ONLY charcoal starter fluid. NEVER add the fluid or any other flammable liquids to the fire.
- If you use an electric charcoal starter, make sure you're using an extension cord rated for outdoor use.
- If using a charcoal grill, make sure the coals have cooled COMPLETELY before you dispose of them. Use a metal container only.

## **LAWN MOWER SAFETY**

Source: <http://www.aap.org/family/tiplawn.htm>

- Try to use a mower with a control that stops the mower from moving forward if the handle is let go.
- Make sure that sturdy shoes (not sandals or sneakers) are worn while mowing.
- Prevent injuries from flying objects, such as stones or toys, by picking up objects from the lawn before mowing begins. Have anyone who uses a mower wear hearing and eye protection.
- Do not pull the mower backward or mow in reverse unless absolutely necessary, and carefully look for children behind you when you mow in reverse.
- Always turn off the mower and wait for the blades to stop completely before removing the grass catcher, unclogging the discharge chute, or crossing gravel paths, roads, or other areas.
- Do not allow children to ride as passengers on ride-on mowers.

**Permission from the foster child's guardian must be obtained before any foster youth can operate lawnmower equipment.**

## **NEVER LEAVE A CHILD UNATTENDED IN A CAR**

**The temperature inside a car can get dangerously hot, even in moderate weather with the windows slightly down. Kids can suffer from heat stroke causing serious injuries and sometimes death.**

Simply leaving the air conditioner on doesn't make your child safe. A child could put the car in drive, get caught in a closing power window or be abducted.

Here are some tips to keep kids safe around cars:

- ⊙ Never leave a child unattended in a car. **Not even for a minute.**
- ⊙ Always lock your car and secure the keys so that your kids can't get to them.
- ⊙ Warn your children about playing in and around cars.
- ⊙ Install a trunk release mechanism so that kids can't get trapped inside the trunk.
- ⊙ Get your kids out of the car first, and then worry about unloading the groceries and items out of the car.

## **Firework Safety**

More than 10,000 Americans are hurt by firecrackers every year. Most of the serious injuries involve children playing with fireworks around the Fourth of July holiday. Burns on the hands and face as well as loss of eyesight and/or hearing are frequently reported.

- Bring your children to public fireworks displays conducted by professionals.
- Even sparklers, which are still legal in some states, burn as hot as 1,000 degrees F. and can burn hands or ignite clothing.
- Clearly communicate the risks of playing with fireworks to your foster children.
- Many products sold for private use have short fuses and defective materials that can result in unpredictable operation.

If fireworks are legal in your area:

- Never permit foster children to light firecrackers.
- Make sure adults are closely supervising the area where fireworks are being used.
- Keep bystanders at a safe distance.
- Only light fireworks outside and keep an emergency supply of water nearby in case of emergency.
- Keep flammable materials well clear of any fireworks.
- If a firecracker does not ignite, don't try to relight it, douse it in water and dispose of it.

### **Treatment Of Bee Stings**

If one is stung, the wound can be treated in the following ways:

- Remove the stinger with all haste, in whatever manner is most convenient. If you see a little black dot in the wound, part of the stinger is still present. I like scraping across the skin with a credit card to try to remove the stinger.
- Apply a solution of one part meat tenderizer to 4 parts water. Papain, the enzyme in meat tenderizer, breaks down the protein in bee venom responsible for the pain and itching. Don't leave this on for more than 30 minutes, or it can irritate the skin. If this isn't available, you might try an antiperspirant. Aluminum chlorohydrate reduces the effect of bee venom, but to a lesser extent.
- Apply cold. Use ice or cool water for 10 to 30 minutes after the sting. This blunts the body's allergic response.

- An antihistamine such as Benadryl, taken by mouth, can give some added relief, and help prevent the reaction from spreading.
- A shake lotion such as calamine can be helpful. A paste made of baking soda and water can have a similar effect.
- Topical hydrocortisone can also provide some symptomatic relief.
- Give acetaminophen or ibuprofen for systemic pain relief.

After a bee sting, different children will have different reactions:

- Bee stings cause immediate, painful red bumps.
- In most cases, the pain has largely disappeared within 2 hours, although swelling may not be apparent until the next day.
- Large local reactions, larger than 3 inches in diameter, will often persist for up to a week. A physician should be consulted if the reaction continues to spread.
- Systemic reactions such as hives, redness, or swelling elsewhere on the body, vomiting, dizziness, hoarseness, thickened speech, or difficulty breathing, should receive prompt medical care from a physician. Also, be sure to see a doctor if there were 10 or more stings, or if one of the stings was inside the nose or mouth, since swelling can interfere with breathing.

A child who has had a systemic reaction to a bee sting should follow special precautions set forth by his or her pediatrician. This will include carrying injectable epinephrine. **If a child has already been given an epi pen by his doctor, please make arrangements to keep this pen on you at all times. For older children, please discuss with your Necco treatment team to ensure the best plan for keeping the foster youth safe is made.**

Although systemic reactions occur in about 3% of children who are stung, and anaphylactic shock can follow as many as 0.8% of bee stings, thankfully only 50 people in the United States are killed by bee stings each year, and only 1 to 2 of these are children

## **Poison Ivy**

Poison ivy is a common cause of a skin irritation called contact dermatitis that may result in a red, itchy rash consisting of small bumps, blisters or swelling.

Most people have some level of sensitivity to poison ivy and similar toxic plants, such as poison oak and poison sumac. The irritating substance is the same for each plant, an oily resin called urushiol (u-ROO she-ol).

Rashes caused by poison ivy and its cousins generally aren't serious, but they certainly can be bothersome. Treatment for poison ivy mostly consists of self-care methods to relieve the itching until the reaction goes away.

Signs and symptoms of a poison ivy rash include:

- Redness
- Itching
- Swelling
- Blisters

Often, the rash has a linear appearance because of the way the plant brushes against your skin. But if you come into contact with a piece of clothing or pet fur that has urushiol on it, the rash may be more spread out.

A child can get a poison ivy reaction if they:

- Directly touch the leaves, stem, roots or berries of the plant, shrub or vine.
- Unknowingly rub the urushiol onto other areas of your skin. For example, if you walk through some poison ivy then later touch your shoes, you may get some urushiol on your hands, which you may then transfer to your face by touching or rubbing.
- Touch urushiol left on an item, such as clothing, firewood or even a pet's fur (animals usually aren't affected by urushiol). Urushiol can remain allergenic for years, especially if kept in a dry environment. So if you put away a contaminated jacket without washing it and take it out a year later, the oil on the jacket may still cause a reaction.
- The plants are burned and they inhale the smoke. Even the smoke from burned poison ivy, poison oak and poison sumac contains the oil and can irritate or injure your eyes or nasal passages.

A poison ivy rash itself isn't contagious. Blister fluid doesn't contain urushiol and won't spread the rash. In addition, you can't get poison ivy from another person unless you've had contact with urushiol on that person.

See your doctor if any of the following occur:

- The reaction is severe or widespread.
- The rash affects sensitive areas of your body, such as your eyes, mouth or genitals.
- Blisters are oozing pus.
- You develop a fever greater than 100 F (37.8 C).
- The rash doesn't get better within a few weeks.

Poison ivy rash typically goes away on its own within one to three weeks. In the meantime, you can use self-care methods and over-the-counter medications to relieve signs and symptoms. If the rash is widespread or results in a large number of blisters, the child's doctor may prescribe an oral corticosteroid, such as prednisone.

### **ATV's and Scooters**

Please consult with your Necco treatment team before a youth is allowed to operate any motorized vehicle, go cart, lawn mower, etc. These are potentially dangerous to a unskilled user and should have full consent or support from the youth's guardian as well as the Necco team.

We hope this summer safety guide is helpful to you. Please remember that this is only a guide and the best advice comes from the youth's doctor. The most important thing to remember in the summer months is safety. Please consult with your doctor if you have questions about medical treatment or Necco treatment team if you have any questions specific to policy or supervision.

Have a great summer. Please remember active kids are healthy and happy kids 😊

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