

## We're all going on a summer holiday.

Summertime usually means more time outdoors for children of all ages. However accidents and tragedies tend to peak during the summer months because children are supervised less, have more free time and engage in more outdoor activities. Hazards to children in the summer which can pose a risk for serious injury and death include drowning, fractures, cuts and bruises and sunburn. Here are some tips to keep your child safe this summer.

### Garden safety

**Garden ponds/water features:** A child can drown in as little as 2in or 5cm of water, so even shallow water is dangerous. Ideally, garden ponds should be drained. They could be filled with sand to make a sand pit until the child is older. If draining or filling the pond is not possible then a cover can be made using heavy-duty trellis and wire mesh to fill the gaps in the trellis. Alternatively, a strong, solid fence can prevent drowning incidents.



**Paddling pools:** Always supervise - if the phone rings, take the child with you. Turn paddling pools upside down when not in use.



**Garden Tools:** Tools and children don't mix. Tidy all tools away, unplug electrical equipment and make sure children are indoors when you mow the lawn.

**Sheds and play equipment:** Sheds are not good dens. Keep chemicals out of reach, their caps are child-resistant but not completely child-proof. Swings and climbing frames should be securely fixed and checked regularly for safety. Don't place play equipment on hard surfaces or near ponds or greenhouses.

**Paths:** Broken or uneven pathways cause thousands of accidents each year. Keep them well maintained and clean. Also, make sure that there are no garden stakes or sharp objects to fall onto.

## Swimming

The first steps in keeping your children safe when swimming are adult supervision and an age appropriate flotation device. To ensure that your children are safe, never leave them unsupervised around water. Teach your child to **swim**, but remember that younger children shouldn't be left unsupervised around water even if they know how to swim.

## Sun Safety

Limit the child's exposure to the sun when it is at its strongest. Protective clothing, including a hat and long sleeve shirt should be worn. Sun screens can help to protect



your child from damage from sun exposure and reduce the risk of skin cancer. Learn to pick a sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher and which offers UVA and UVB protection. Apply the sunscreen in a thick coat at least 30-45 minutes before going outside and reapply every two hours (or more often in they are swimming or perspiring heavily).

We all want our children to enjoy their free time without having to worry, but it's worth making sure that they'll be safe - even if it's just for your peace of mind.