



Children's Health
Education Center™

A member of Children's Hospital and Health System.



Safe Kids
Southeast Wisconsin
LEAD AGENCY: CHILDREN'S
HEALTH EDUCATION CENTER

Sledding safety

To learn more about keeping your family safe, contact Safe Kids Southeast Wisconsin:
(414) 390-2178 • BlueKids.org

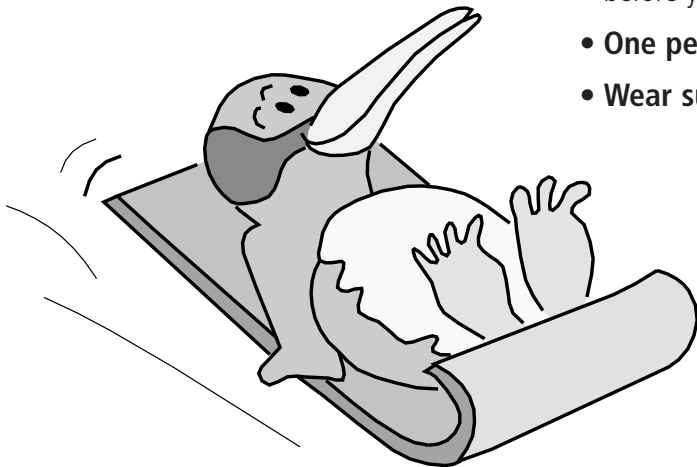
Each winter, 24,500 children are injured in sledding accidents. Three thousand of these children suffer a serious brain injury as a result.

Nothing makes children happier than sledding down a hill blanketed with fresh snow. But this favorite winter pastime can have tragic consequences if safety isn't a top priority.

According to Safe Kids USA, in 2007, an estimated 74,000 children were injured or killed while participating in winter sports in the United States. A few simple precautions can help prevent many of these injuries. Put safety first to ensure a fun and safe sledding season for your child.

Protect your child with tips for safe sledding

- **Always supervise your child** while he or she is sledding.
- **Wear a properly fitted helmet.***
- **Dress your child appropriately.**
Secure loose articles of clothing like scarves so they do not get entangled in the sled.
- **Require your child to sled sitting down**, face forward only.
- **Teach sled control** – how to control the sled, fall off safely and stop.
- **Promote fair play** – no pushing or shoving.
- **Wait your turn** – make sure the hill in front of you is clear of sledders before you go.
- **One person to a sled**, unless specifically designed for more than one rider.
- **Wear sunscreen** with an SPF of 15 or higher.



Safe Kids Southeast Wisconsin is a member of Safe Kids USA.

*Although a helmet has not yet been designed for sledding, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission recommends that wearing a helmet is preferable to wearing no helmet at all. It lists three types of helmets that can be used: bicycle, multi-sport and ski helmets. For more information, go to www.cpsc.gov.

Protect your child with a safe place to sled

Inspect the sledding hill before your child uses it:

- **Ensure the hill and area is free of visible and hidden obstacles** such as trees, stumps, bumps, rocks and fences.
- **Make sure there's an adequate snow base** with no ice covering.
- **Ensure the area is away from traffic** and includes a long run out at the bottom of the hill.
- **Make sure the hill does not lead to a body of water** such as a river or pond. Even when iced over this presents additional dangers.
- **Always sled during the day or in well-lit areas at night.**
- **Choose a hill with designated up and down routes.**

Protect your child with a safe sled

- **Choose a sled constructed with high-quality materials** without sharp edges or ropes that hang outside of the sled.
- **Select a sled that is easy to steer.**
- **Pick a sled with easy to grip handles.**
- **Never ride a sled that is being pulled by a motorized vehicle.**
- **Inspect your sleds regularly** for worn, damaged or loose parts that could break or snag at high speed.

Protect your child from the cold

- **Dress your child in several layers of protective waterproof or water-resistant clothing.** A layer of clothing that wicks away moisture from the body is also recommended.
- **Be sure to cover all exposed areas,** including the head, ears, hands and neck. Secure loose clothing so it does not get caught in play gear.
- **Children can work up a sweat while playing outside,** even in the cold, which can lead to wet clothes and heat loss. Have extra clothing, socks, boots and mittens to change into.
- **Have your children take regular breaks** from the outdoors to warm up and rest. Keep your kids' bodies energized with healthy snacks and avoid dehydration by having them drink plenty of water. Injuries are more likely to occur when children are tired.
- **Set reasonable time limits** for outdoor play. Younger children are more susceptible to the cold.
- **In severe cold weather, keep your children indoors** unless you absolutely must go out. Limit the time spent outside and dress appropriately, be prepared for emergencies.

Color me!

