



Summer Safety: Product Injury Patterns for Children under Six

Report by:

Kids In Danger
August 2008



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Executive Summary

Summertime provides young children the opportunity to play and interact with the outdoors; however, unintentional injuries can occur during this time of year. In fact, CPSC warns that summer is the time of year most associated with injuries,¹ and young children are especially at risk. The nostalgia and thrill of summertime can be overwhelming, and families with infants, toddlers, and pre-school aged children may be unaware of the hidden hazards associated with outdoor toys, equipment, and tools. The message is not that children need to stay inside and avoid activity during the summer months, but that awareness is vital. **Summer can be FUN and SAFE for young children when parents are cognizant of the potential risks some summertime products pose.**

Findings in this report include:

- In 2007, children five years old and younger sustained 17,212 bicycle-related injuries and 1,799 tricycle-related injuries during the summer months alone. Combined, these summer injuries account for over half of all cycle-related injuries for this age last year.
- Riding-toy incidents cause more emergency treated injuries than any other toy category and last summer 3,397 children five years old and younger sustained a riding-toy related injury.
- For children five years old and younger, playgrounds and other related equipment accounted for 10,912 injuries last summer with over 90 percent on public equipment. Swing set-related injuries totaled 6,470 for the same age group and about half of them occurred on private swing sets.
- In 2007, children under the age of six sustained 16,596 trampoline-related injuries in total. Forty-eight percent of these injuries occurred from June to August 2007.
- Pools and swimming continue to cause injury amongst children five years old and younger and in the summer of 2007, 11,117 children five years old or younger suffered a related injury.
- Other summer products, such as home and garden equipment, pose risks for young children. Last year, lawn and garden equipment accounted for 4,313 injuries sustained by children under the age of five.

Through introducing the most recent data available from last summer, this report highlights summertime products that can be hazardous for infants, toddlers, and pre-school age children and informs readers of opportunities to make their young child's play safer during the warm season.

KID concludes these finding with suggestions for parents and caregivers including: checking www.cpsc.gov for recall reports, spreading the work to family and friends, and keeping updated with www.KidsInDanger.org.

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Introduction

Summer is a time for children to explore the outdoors and enjoy seasonal toys and activities. While the intent of children's products is to provide a fun experience that contributes to their development, some have hidden hazards and can pose risks for infants and toddlers. Similarly, tools and equipment for the home and/or garden commonly used during the summer months can cause unintentional injury for the young children if protective measures are not taken.

Data from 2007 shows that from June 1, 2007 to August 31, 2007 473,417 children five years old or younger sustained product-related injuries, which is more than any other season.

Table 1: Total Injuries for children under 6 in 2007

| Season: | # of Injuries: |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Winter (Dec., Jan., and Feb.) | 381,004 |
| Spring (March, April, and May) | 448,519 |
| Summer (June, July, and Aug.) | 474,417 |
| Fall (Sept., Oct., and Nov.) | 417,174 |

For the purpose of this report, injury data from last summer, specifically June 1, 2007 to August 31, 2007, was collected from CPSC's NEISS database. The report only examines injuries treated in emergency rooms sustained by children up through 5 years old, covering young children from infancy to pre-school years. There are many other sources for information on outdoor and toy-related injuries for school age and older children. In terms of the data, historical estimates are used in the report. The estimates are based off the sample product-related injuries treated in U.S. hospital emergency departments.

Through highlighting summer injury data from 2007, the report provides evidence of young children's unequivocal risk of injury, supporting the need for safer products and close supervision. The report also suggests prevention measures and strategies to help reduce injuries and looks at some recent recalled products associated with injuries. The purpose of the report is to alert families that may be unaware of these potential dangers and provide them with information that can help make their child's summer both fun and safe.

Table 2: Estimated injuries for children under 6 injured from June through August 2007

| Product: | # of Injuries: |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Wheeled Vehicles and Toys | 19,858 |
| Playgrounds and equipment | 17,382 |
| Water activities and pools | 11,117 |
| Trampoline | 7,946 |

Wheeled Vehicles and Toys

Riding toys are very exciting for young children as they become mobile. Surprisingly, even at a young age, toddlers and preschool aged children can move on riding toys relatively fast while they are simultaneously caught in the excitement of their newfound mode of transportation. While these toys are generally safe for young children, this combination can lead to potential injury for this age group. In fact, CPSC states that riding toys account for more toy-related death and injuries for children than any other toy category. Many fatalities and injuries, about 75 percent, involve motor vehicles.² Further, falls and collisions with surroundings often contribute to riding toy-related injuries such as lacerations, contusions, fractures and other internal injuries.

Bicycles, Tricycles, and Carriers

Other than automobile related incidents, bicycles cause more children's injuries than any other product and are the leading cause for emergency room visits. In 2006, bicycling reportedly caused the most injuries for children, sending approximately 240,000 to emergency rooms.³ Safe Kids USA states that each year nearly 140 children ages 0 to 14 are killed from bicycle related injuries, while an estimated 275,000 endure non-fatal injuries.^{4,5} The majority of deaths, 74 percent, are motor vehicle-related bicycle crashes at non-intersection locations, and 69 percent of all bicycle related deaths for children occur from May to October.⁴

Young children riding passenger in carriers on adult bicycles can be at risk of injury as well. Children's carriers often cause adult bikes to be less stable and increases the break time, thereby posing risks for unaware bicyclists. Loose carriers can also detach from adult bicycles, causing children to fall. In 2006, PTI Sports recalled 14,000 bicycle child carriers as the seats loosened and posed a fall hazard for young passengers. Bicycle incidents that result in injury are usually from children crashing and subsequently making contact with a bicycle's handlebar, falling off or onto a bicycle, or handling a bicycle not in use (i.e. getting a finger pinched between bicycle chains). Recalls and faulty parts are responsible for the failure of some bicycles and their related injuries.



Recalled Schwinn Deluxe Bicycle Child Carrier

For children five years of age and younger, NEISS estimates show that there were 17,212 bicycle and 1,799 tricycle injuries from June 1, 2007 through August 31, 2007.

Table 3: Estimates of Bicycle and Tricycle injuries from summer 2007

| Product: | # of Injuries: | Laceration | Contusion | Fracture | Internal Organ |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Bicycle | 17,212 | 6,625 | 3,943 | 2,572 | 1,232 |
| Tricycle | 1,799 | * | * | * | * |

Safety Measures and Recommendations:

Several safety measures exist to help keep young children safe on bicycles and tricycles. First, using a bicycle helmet at all times is imperative and can reduce the risk of head injury by 85 percent.⁴ Helmets, however, are most effective when they are the right size for the child and worn the correct way. Bicycles should be the appropriate size for the child and have front and rear reflectors. Carefully maintaining the child’s bike is critical and helps avoid incidents associated with bike failures. Further, identifying safe routes and areas for children to ride and providing adult supervision at all times is a good way to protect young children against injury.⁶

A child riding in a child’s seat on an adult bike or in a bike trailer should be at least 12 months old, younger infants should never ride passenger on a bicycle. Children riding passenger should be carefully strapped into the carrier by a sturdy harness. Carriers should be equipped with spoke guards and high back supports to protect the child and be securely attached to the adult bicycle. Checking carriers and trailers against recalls helps ensure children’s safety as well.

Scooters and Riding Toys (non-motorized)

Scooters and other non-motorized riding toys have become increasingly popular amongst children. Along with their popularity, there has also been a rise in related incidents. According to CPSC, 2006 data shows that there were 59,000 injuries related to non-motorized scooters and riding toys for all ages treated in emergency rooms, which is more than any other toy category. Alone, non-motorized scooters were associated with 37,600, or 23 percent, of toy-related injuries for children under the age of 15.²



Tek Nek Toys International recalled 70,000 of these riding toys in 2004

In the past, recalled riding toys have lead to the injury of young children. Both Little Tikes and Tek Nek Toys recalled riding toys intended for young child due to the hazards that they pose. While the Little Tike riding toy was responsible for injuring 10 children who fell over the toy's handlebars, the Tek Nek riding toy lead to the death of an 18-month-old child who aspirated a screw.

Children who experience scooter-related injuries commonly sustain forearm fractures as well as body and facial lacerations. Other injuries are skull fractures and head injuries. In addition, CPSC suggests more devastating or fatal incidents involved motor vehicles, drowning, or strangulation due to clothing articles caught on a riding toy.⁷ The NEISS reports for 2007 indicate that an estimated 3,397 children five years old and younger sustained an injury associated with a non-motorized scooter, while a sample-count shows that 30 children sustained injuries related to non-motorized riding toys.

Table 4: Estimates of Scooter and Riding Toy injuries from summer 2007

| Product: | # of Injuries: | Laceration |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Non-motorized Scooter and Riding Toys | 3,847 | 1,957 |

Safety Measures and Recommendations:

While injuries related to scooters and non-motorized riding toys are on the rise, there are safety measures to help eliminate their associated dangers. As with bicycles, children riding on these toys should always wear safety gear such as a helmet, elbow pads, and knee pads and be supervised by an adult. Children should also ride only in designated smooth surface areas, avoiding sand, gravel, and dirt.⁸

ATVs

ATV-related incidents have increased over time and even young children are at risk. CPSC suggests that children sustain nearly 35 percent of the total number of ATV-related injuries.⁹ While children five years old and younger should never be on or around an ATV, NEISS sample counts indicate that children five years old and younger sustained 37 four-wheel ATV and 8 unspecified ATV injuries last summer. The incidents involved young children crashing, rolling, or falling from an ATV. Common injuries were fractures, lacerations, contusions, other internal injuries. There were also three reports of children burned by an ATV.

Safety Measures and Recommendations:

To avoid possible serious injury and death do not allow children under the age of 16 to ride adult ATVs or children five years old or younger to ride any ATV. Children should also never ride as a passenger on an ATV. Passengers that ride tandem on a two person ATV should be at least 12 years old.¹⁰

Recent Riding Toy Recalls

| Bicycle Recalls: | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|--|-----------------------|----------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Recall Date | Product Recall | Manufacturer/Importer/Distributor | Units Recalled | Defect | Hazard | Failure/Incident | Injuries |
| 2/7/08 | Girls Bicycle | Trek Bicycle Co. | 49,000 | Frame breaks | Fall | 13 | 4 |
| 1/8/08 | Child Trailer Bicycle | Pacific Cycle Inc. | 7,000 | Child's trailer can detach | Fall | 1 | 1 |
| 9/18/07 | Child Trailer Bicycle | REI | 5,000 | Child's trailer can detach | Fall | 1 | 0 |
| 10/16/07 | Child Bicycle | Huffy Corp. | 22,000 | Crank can detach | Fall | 2 | 1 |
| 5/9/06 | Bicycle Child Carrier | PTI Sports Inc. | 14,000 | Carrier can detach | Fall | 5 | 3 |

| Scooter and Riding Toy Recalls: | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|--|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Recall Date | Product Recall | Manufacturer/Importer/Distributor | Units Recalled | Defect | Hazard | Failure Incident | Injuries |
| 1/3/08 | Metal Wagon | Tricam Industries Inc. | 15,000 | Lead paint | Lead paint | 0 | 0 |
| 11/7/07 | “Big Red” Wagon | Northern Tool and Equipment Co. | 7,200 | Lead paint | Lead paint | 0 | 0 |
| 10/5/07 | Razor Scooter | Razor USA | 20,000 | Handle-bar can detach | Fall | 25 | 3 |
| 4/14/04 | Riding Toy | Tek Nek Toys | 70,000 | Screws and nuts loosen | Choke, Aspire | 6 | 1 death |
| 6/12/02 | Riding Toy | Little Tikes | 21,400 | Handle-bar | Fall | 10 | 7 |
| ATV Recalls: | | | | | | | |
| Recall Date | Product Recall | Manufacturer/Importer/Distributor | Units Recalled | Defect | Hazard | Failure Incidents | Injuries |
| 6/26/08 | Youth ATV | KYMCO | 1,700 | Throttle | Injury or death | 0 | 0 |
| 6/26/08 | Youth ATV | Kawasaki Motors Corp. USA | 6,000 | No idle, lose control | Injury or death | 0 | 0 |
| 6/24/08 | Youth ATV | Artic Cat Inc. | 6,000 | Speed control failure, lose control | Injury or death | 0 | 0 |

Around and On the Playground

Playgrounds are often a preferred place of play for children during the warmer season. In recent years, playgrounds and other outdoor play equipment have become safer; however, young children still fall victim to playground-related injuries. Falls, strangulation, and entrapments on playgrounds continue to pose hazards. Young children who play on or around playground equipment at home, school, or public parks may be at risk of injury. Being aware of these risks can keep these places of play safe and popular amongst children.

Playground, Other Equipment, and Monkey Bars

CPSC states that nearly 200,000 emergency room treated injuries occur annually from playground equipment. About 148,000 of these injuries occur on public playgrounds while 51,000 occur on private playgrounds. Past reports show that playgrounds or playground equipment attribute to the deaths of about 15 children a year. Many deaths have been a result of strangulation from attached rope or string.¹¹

Playground-related injuries are mostly due to falls from equipment to the ground or onto another piece of equipment. Safe Kids USA states concussions, fractures, internal injuries, dislocations,

and amputations are severe injuries commonly associated with playgrounds. They also add that nearly 40 percent of playground related injuries occur from months May to September.¹² The estimates presented by the NEISS report for June 1, 2007 through August 31, 2007 reveal that for children five years of age or younger 1,468 have sustained playground-related injuries, 1,384 sustained injuries related to other playground equipment, and 8,060 children sustained injuries associated with monkey bars.

Table 5: Estimates of Playground injuries from summer 2007

| Product: | # of Injuries: |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Playground | 1,468 |
| Playground (other equipment) | 1,384 |

| Product: | # of Injuries: | Fracture | Contusion |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Monkey Bars | 8,060 | 4,185 | 1,223 |

Safety Measures and Recommendations:

Supervising young children on playgrounds and being cognizant of their associated dangers is a step towards injury prevention. When considering a playground’s safety it is important to inspect the equipment carefully. Because a majority of playground-related injuries result from falls, consider the surface surrounding the unit. Protective surfaces should be softer with loose filling materials such as wood chips or sand. The area should also extend six-feet in all directions from the playground. Looking for potential spaces for head or body entrapments, places for strangulation, and areas where the child can be pinched or crushed is critical as well. Loose rope, string, and helmets should never be used or worn around a playground as they pose serious hazards. In addition, regularly checking playgrounds for safety and maintenance is helpful in reducing playground-related injuries.¹¹

Swings

Swing sets are a common playground component found in many private backyards. Nevertheless, swing sets may pose risks to young children and related injuries often occur on privately owned units. Safe Kids USA estimated that 67 percent of the injuries that occur on private playgrounds involve swings.¹³ Generally, injuries occur from children falling off swings or due to the failure of the swing set. For example, the recalled Lift & Lock Swing, an outdoor swing intended for children 9 months to 3 years, was equipped with a "T"-shaped restraint shield that failed to keep children in the seat. The swing lead to 110 reports of children falling out of the swings, and 38 children suffered injuries related to falls. The more serious injuries included a fractured skull, leg, arm and two collarbones; two concussions; and stitches to the forehead. Other swings that have harness straps that confine young children in swings can pose an entanglement or strangulation hazard.



Fisher-Price recalled 2.5 million Lift & Lock Swings

The NEISS estimates reveal that 6,470 swing set-related injuries occurred for children ages five and under during the summer of 2007.

Table 6: Estimates of Swing set injuries from summer 2007

| Product: | # of Injuries: | Fracture | Laceration | Contusion |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Swing Set | 6,470 | 2,161 | 1,468 | 1,236 |

Safety Measures and Recommendations:

As with playgrounds, the dangers associated with swings can be safeguarded against if risks are noted and precaution is taken. Swing sets should have a soft surface that extends six feet from the structure. It is important to consider the extension of the swing, both front and back, when factoring in the surface zone. CPSC suggests that the zone extend out a minimum distance of twice the height of the swing as measured from the ground to the swing hangers on the support structure. To prevent collisions of neighboring swings or the structure, swings should be spaced 8 inches apart from each other as well as the structure, and the seat should hang about 8 inches from the ground.¹¹ Lastly, all of the swing set parts should be attached securely and checked regularly for loose or protruding parts.

Recent Playground and Equipment Recalls

| Playground Equipment: | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|--|-----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Recall Date | Product Recall | Manufacturer/Importer/Distributor | Units Recalled | Defect | Hazard | Failure Incidents | Injuries |
| 6/24/08 | Tire Swing | Miracle Recreation Equipment Co. | 1,400 | Swing can detach | Fall | 3 | 3 |
| 6/12/08 | Playsafe Merry-Go-Round | Pacific Cycle, Inc. | 15,000 | Seat can fail | Fall | 1 | 1 |
| 6/10/08 | Swing Set/Slider | Backyard Leisure | 11,000 | Hanger chains can break | Fall | 114 | 3 |
| 5/6/08 | Swing Set | Playworld Systems Inc. | 17,300 | Swing can detach | Fall | 0 | 0 |
| 9/25/07 | Swing Set | BCI | 670 | Swing beam can collapse | Fall and beam can fall on user | 4 | 1 |
| 2/5/04 | Swing | Swing and Slide | 1,220 | Swing can detach | Fall | 1 | 0 |
| 8/23/00 | Swing | Fisher-Price | 2.5 million | Child can move restraint | Fall | 110 | 38 |

Trampoline

Trampolines spot the backyards of many homes and are nearly as popular as swing sets and playgrounds, yet they are widely considered unsafe for play among children. According to the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons (AAOS), approximately 15 percent of trampoline injuries are to children six years old or younger, totaling about 37,000 injuries a year.¹⁴ Approximately 90 percent of trampoline incidents occur in the backyards of homes.¹⁵ Children falling onto trampoline frames can cause trampoline related injuries. Other common injuries result from falling off trampolines, collisions between two or more bouncers, and limbs caught or falling through the frame's spring.¹⁴ Most incidents lead to injuries such as fractures, strains or sprains. NEISS estimates show that 7,946 children five years of age or under have suffered from trampoline-related injuries from June 1, 2007 to August 31, 2007.

Table 7: Estimates of trampoline injuries from summer 2007

| Product: | # of Injuries: | Fracture | Strain/Sprain |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Trampoline | 7,946 | 3,247 | 3,247 |

Safety Measures and Recommendations:

Children under the age of six should not use trampolines, and older children should always be supervised. Only one person should be allowed on a trampoline at a time and somersaults and other jumping stunts that may result in head or neck injury should be prohibited. Trampoline structures that have shock-absorbing pads covering its springs, hooks, and frames and enclosures that work to prevent falls off the structure are best in terms of safety. Additionally, strategically placing trampolines away from other structures or trees helps reduce injuries associated with falling off the trampoline onto another object.¹⁶

Recent Trampoline Recalls

| Trampoline: | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|--|-----------------------|------------------|---------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Recall Date | Product Recall | Manufacturer/Importer/Distributor | Units Recalled | Defect | Hazard | Failure Incidents | Injuries |
| 4/6/06 | Mini-trampoline | Stamina Products Inc. | 668,000 | Can snap back | Injury | 13 | 13 |
| 10/22/04 | Trampoline | Hedstrom Corp. | 116,000 | Frames can break | Injury, Fall | 117 | 10 |

Dangers of Young Children In and Around Water

The heat of summer frequently sends families to neighborhood pools, lakes, and other places of water. Cooling down while simultaneously having fun contributes to the popularity of swimming. Awareness of the potential dangers associated with water and pools as well as supervision is key in keeping children's play in and around water safe and enjoyable.

Swimming Pools, Whirlpool, Hot Tub, Spa, and Swimming (activity)

While swimming is a great alternative for summertime fun, the activity of swimming as well as pools themselves can be dangerous, especially for young children. It is estimated that for children five years old and younger, 260 drowning deaths occur each year in swimming pools, and 2,725 children are treated annually in hospital emergency rooms for pool submersion injuries.¹⁷ CPSC found that from 2005 to 2007, an estimated 60 percent of pool-related injuries involved children ages one and two. For children five years of age or younger, 61 percent of pool-related injuries occurred at a private pool. Home swimming pools are also the most common drowning site for children four years old and under, accounting for 80 percent of pool-related drowning.¹⁸

Many devastating and fatal pool injuries include submersion, suction, or circulation entrapment. Whirlpools, hot tubs, and home spas pose these hazards as well. In 2007, submersion injuries for children five years of age or younger totaled to 2,100.¹⁹ Further, underwater drains or suction outlets for both pool and spa filtration systems can be tremendously powerful and have a vacuum effect, entrapping children. In some cases, drains can suction the weight of up to 500 pounds.

The greatest number of pool-related injuries is due to falls from slippery surfaces surrounding pools. Falls may lead to lacerations, concussions, or contusions. Other incident reports related to these categories reveal that skin irritations and injuries to the eyes or ears are common for this age group. NEISS estimates indicate that from June 1, 2007 to August 31, 2007, 7,128 pool-related injuries and 3,989 swimming-related injuries occurred for children five years old or younger.

Table 8: Estimates of Pool or swimming injuries from summer 2007

| Product: | # of Injuries: | Laceration |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Pools | 7,128 | 2,820 |
| Swimming | 3,989 | * |

Safety Measures and Recommendations:

Adult supervision is vital to keeping children safe while they are in or around water. Enclosing pools with a four-sided fence and a locked gate helps prevent injury associated with falling into water and drowning incidents. Safe Kids USA also suggests using pool alarms and automatic pool covers to help ensure children's safety.²⁰ Other layers of protection include removing ladders from above-ground pools, keeping toys that may attract children out of the water, and checking pools and spas first when a child is missing. Suction entrapment injuries and deaths can also be avoided with the use of an appropriate, updated drain cover for pools or spas. Lastly, for potential emergency purposes, pool and/or spa owners should know CPR and have safety equipment and a phone nearby.

Other Water-Related Equipment and Products

Some water and pool-related products can pose hazards to young children if they are misused or if their potential dangers are unknown. Swimming pool equipment such as diving boards and pool slides are associated with accidents among children. Common accidents involve falling off

the equipment or its ladder, striking the equipment while in use, or slipping on the equipment. Similarly, backyard water slides pose slipping and sliding dangers that can cause children to fall and injure themselves.

Water-related toys such as flotation toys and dive sticks pose dangers for children, too. Through the deflation of flotation toys, or children slipping out of the toy, either submersion or drowning can occur. Lastly, children playing with non-bendable dive sticks can fall or land on them, potentially leading to impalement injuries. NEISS sample counts from June 1, 2007 to August 31, 2007 for children five years old or younger indicate that children suffered from 21 diving board-related injuries, 12 pool-slide injuries, and 21 water slide injuries. Lastly, there were 12 flotation toy-related injuries during that time for the age group. There are no sample counts for dive sticks because they are banned due to the significant degree of injury they pose.

Safety Measures and Recommendations:

Children five years old or younger should avoid using diving boards and pool slides as they pose dangers for this age group. If diving boards and/or waterslides are used, signs should be posted that clearly state the pools depth. As aforementioned, the removal of floatation toys from pools after use is important as well. Toys left in pools or spas may attract children and injury or drowning may occur if they reach for the toy and fall into the water. Lastly, flotation toys do not substitute for life preservers for children and should only be used as toys.

Recent Pool Equipment and Toy Recalls

| Pool: | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|--|-----------------------|-----------------|--------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Recall Date | Product Recall | Manufacturer/Importer/Distributor | Units Recalled | Defect | Hazard | Failure Incidents | Injuries |
| 11/6/07 | Pool toy | Swimways Corp. | 31,000 | Toy can break | Injury, Laceration | 24 | 6 |
| 4/4/07 | Above-ground pool ladder | Intex Recreation Corp. | 466,000 | Steps can break | Fall | 172 | 127 |

Other Hazards around the Home: Outdoor Products

Spending time outdoors, barbecuing, and yard work are common activities that practically coincide with summertime. Along with summers simple pleasures and chores, however, come their associated dangers, and young children can be at risk if certain precautions are not taken.

Grills

Charcoal and gas grills can be extremely dangerous and pose serious hazards for young children who are near them. All grills are hazardous and can burn children as they produce fire and can become very hot. Charcoal grills pose another danger due to the Carbon Monoxide (CO) that it produces when



Lucas Innovation Inc. recalled 24,000 gas grills this year due to fire and burn hazards

burned. CO is an odorless and colorless gas and therefore is a hidden hazard that has dangerous, poisonous consequences. The heat and flames produced by gas grills may burn children if they touch or stand too close to the grill. Gas grills have also been associated with fires and explosions.²¹ The NEISS estimates show that from June 1, 2007 to August 31, 2007, 1,346 children five years old or younger endured injuries related to grills.

Table 9: Estimates of Grill injuries from summer 2007

| Product: | # of Injuries: |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Grills | 1,346 |

Safety Measures and Recommendations:

While grills generally make preparing food a pleasure during the summer months, handling them carefully is important and children should not have any contact with them due to their potential to cause great harm or injury. While instructing children to stay away from all grills is important, it is likely not enough to ensure their safety and to keep them from hot metal or flames. Enclosing grills with a fence and lock works to distance young children away from grills. Further, checking the grill for stability and sharp or loose parts can help prevent the grills potential to injure or tip over on small children.

Buckets

5-gallon buckets are a common cleaning products found around the home; however, they also serve as a deadly hazard for young children. The tall, straight sides of buckets allow young children to tip over into them, making them dangerous. The size coupled with the instability of buckets makes it easy for top-heavy infants and toddlers to fall into the buckets headfirst. Sample count estimates produced by NEISS reveal 11 injuries sustained by children five years old and younger from June 1, 2007 to August 31, 2007.

Safety Measures and Recommendations:

To avoid the dangers inherent to a 5-gallon bucket, a common household item, empty its contents immediately after use and store them upside down.

Lawn Mowers (powered and riding)

Lawn mowers are useful for maintaining yards, but they are also powerful tools that can be dangerous. Both riding and push lawn mowers pose serious hazards for young children. Injuries from lawn mowers are increasing and children younger than five years old experience over 2,000 emergency treated lawn-mower injuries a year.²² Some common injuries occur from debris, such as rocks or branches, propelled from spinning blades. The NEISS database also indicated that lacerations, contusions, amputations, crushing, and fractures occurred for this age group.

The 2007 summer NEISS sample counts indicate that for children five years old and younger powered lawn mowers were related to 18 injuries, riding lawn mowers were related to six injuries and five of the injuries were unspecified.

Safety Measures and Recommendations:

Many safety measures can be taken to help keep children safe from powerful tools like lawn mowers. First, keep infants and toddlers away from all lawn mowers and convey to school-aged children the dangers associated with lawn mowing equipment and their need to stay away from them, especially while running. Second, young children are not strong enough to operate any lawn mower; therefore, parents should not allow them to. Children should also never ride passenger on riding lawn mowers as they can either fall off the machine and/or be run over. Children who have ridden on machines in the past may approach machines in use and be subsequently run or backed over by the machine. Lastly, lawn mowers should not be left unattended when running.

Recent Grill and Lawn Mower Recalls

| Other Summer Products: | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|--|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Recall Date | Product Recall | Manufacturer/Importer/Distributor | Units Recalled | Defect | Hazard | Failure Incidents | Injuries |
| 8/7/08 | Gas Grill | Lucas Innovation Inc. | 24,000 | Grill can melt or ignite | Fire and burn | 200 | 0 |
| 5/5/08 | Gas Grill | Onward Manufacturing Co. | 4,800 | Burners can melt | Fire and burn | 0 | 0 |
| 7/10/08 | Lawn Mower | American Honda Motor Corp. | 20,500 | Rear shield can break | Laceration | 1 | 0 |

Other Outdoor Summer Hazards

It is important to recognize the dangers associated with many garden and yard products. Common products such as insecticides, pesticides, and weed killers are used to help fight against the flurry of summer pests; however, they are poisonous and pose grave danger if handled by young children. Other gardening products such as weed clippers or trimmers are equally as dangerous as they are sharp and may cut curious children. When clippers are in use they can throw objects, injuring nearby children. Lastly, the fun and excitement of a bon-fire can be easily spoiled if young children come into close contact with them. Like grills, fire pits pose fire and burn hazards, especially to young children left around them unattended. Many summer products pose a very dangerous hazard that may result in serious injury or death. Being mindful of the potential dangers associated with such summer products is a step towards ensuring children's safety during this time of year.

Recent Summer Product Recalls

| Other Summer Products: | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|-----------|------------|-------------------|----------|
| Recall Date | Product Recall | Manufacturer/Importer/Distributor | Units Recalled | Defect | Hazard | Failure Incidents | Injuries |
| 9/26/07 | Play Garden Tools | Starite International Ltd. | 350,000 | Lead | Lead | 0 | 0 |
| 11/21/07 | Sandcastle Kit | Paricon Inc. | 800 | Can break | Laceration | 0 | 0 |

Conclusion

In the past, thousands of young children have sustained unintentional injury from summertime products. The fact that infants, toddlers, and pre-school aged children are at increased risk of injury during the summer months is worrisome; however, precautions and safety measures can be followed. Through knowing the product, such as its intended age for use, purpose, warnings, and recalls, families are equipped to think more critically about products and their hazards. While past injuries cannot be reconciled, families can become more aware and educated on the myriad of dangers associated with summertime products for the future.

Endnotes

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