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TAKE THE CHILL OUT OF WINTER FUN

While freezing winter temperatures keep most adults indoors to escape the cold, we know that children may want to play outside all day. The Minnesota Safety Council and Safe Kids Minnesota offer the following tips to help supervise children's play.

Frostbite. Being out in the cold without enough protection can result in frostbite. Be sure to:

- Dress children warmly in several layers of clothing. Children should wear boots, gloves or mittens and hat.
- Set reasonable time limits on outdoor play. Call children in periodically to warm up.
- Limit the amount of time that infants are outdoors when it is colder than 40 degrees F. Infants lose body heat quickly.

Ice skating. Children should skate only on approved areas. Check for posted signs or call local park and recreation departments to find a safe place to skate. Children should be taught to:

- Skate in the same direction as the crowd and avoid darting across the ice.
- Never skate alone.
- Learn basic skating skills, such as how to stop and fall safely.

Sledding. Parents and caregivers should look for:

- Gently sloping hills that are free of rocks and other obstacles and far from traffic. Hills should be covered with packed snow (not ice).
- Sturdy and safe equipment, with no sharp or jagged edges.
- Energy absorbing pads on sled seats. Teach children it's better to sit up while riding downhill — lying flat increases the chance of head and abdominal injuries.
- Easy steering. Remind children *never* to ride on a sled that is being pulled by a car.

Snow skiing and snowboarding. Parents should make sure that children:

- Take at least one skiing or snowboarding lesson to start off on the right track. Follow posted signs and rules.
- Use caution when entering or exiting the ski lift.
- Be aware of other people on the slope, and never ski alone. Young children should always be supervised by an adult.
- Wear sunglasses and sunscreen even on cloudy days.
- Kids — or caregivers — who become distracted or irritable, or begin to hyperventilate, may be suffering from hypothermia, or they may be too tired to participate safely in winter sports. They need to go indoors to warm up and rest.

Snowmobiling.



MINNESOTA SAFETY COUNCIL

Making Minnesota a Safer Place to Live
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- It is recommended that children under 6 not ride a snowmobile, and youth under 16 should use extreme caution if driving one. (*The American Academy of Pediatrics strongly recommends drivers be age 16 or older.*)
- All snowmobile drivers and passengers should wear helmets designed for high-speed motor sports.
- Like any vehicle, snowmobiles have the potential of turning into deadly machines if not handled properly. Minnesota law requires certification training in the proper use and handling of snowmobiles. For more information on state snowmobile regulations, visit the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources website at www.dnr.state.mn.us/si www.dnr.state.mn.us/snowmobiling/index.html.

Acknowledgments:

[Safe Kids Worldwide](#)

National Safety Council



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