

## **Spotlight on Health and Safety**

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### **Outdoor Safety**

The great outdoors is a perfect place for us to get active, learn, and have fun, but it also presents its own set of risks.

**Camping and hiking** - If you enjoy camping and hiking, it's a good idea to be prepared. Ensure you pack the essentials such as appropriate clothes and footwear for the weather and terrain, sunscreen, insect repellent, first aid supplies and plenty of water and food. Children should know the importance of being aware of their surroundings, staying on the trail, and knowing what to do if they find themselves lost. Also, research and learn how to recognize poisonous plants, insects and wildlife in the area.

**Water safety** - It's always best to have lessons to know how to swim and stay afloat in water, how to recover from an unintentional plunge and how to recognize dangerous situations. If you or your loved ones are not experienced swimmers, consider wearing a lifejacket. Ensure lifejackets are proper fitting and always used when in a boat.

**Bicycling** – Learn and follow the rules of the road, wear reflective gear and of course, always wear a helmet.

**Farm safety** – Farm machinery is fascinating for children therefore it is important to remind them that it can be very dangerous and to never play in or near machinery or equipment. Storage areas on the farm that contain chemicals, fertilizers, grain, seed or hay can also be very dangerous. Farm animals can sometimes be unpredictable and therefore it is important for knowledgeable adults to teach children a few safety rules and demonstrate the right way approach and interact with animals and livestock.

**All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs)** – Many families enjoy the use of ATVs, Utility Terrain Vehicles (UTVs) and Off-Road Vehicles (ORVs). Depending on the vehicle, there are manufacturer's recommendations and legislative responsibilities. Know where you can ride, who can ride, the road rules you need to follow and how to be a safe and responsible rider.

Adult supervision is important until kids are old enough to play outside alone and teaching/modeling appropriate practices is significant in reducing accidents and injuries, keeping us and our loved ones safe. We wish all of our families a wonderful and safe spring season.