

AGES 3 TO 12 YEARS OF AGE IMPORTANT POINTS ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S SAFETY

FIRE SAFETY: Once your child is **five years old** start doing **fire drills** at home, teach them how to dial **911**, keep their room door **closed**, keep a **monitor** in their room to hear them, and have a voice recorded fire alarm like **Kidde Smoke Detectors**. A study published in Pediatrics showed that kids slept through traditional alarms but woke up immediately to their panicked mother's recorded voice. So a voice recorded alarm is best to have.

Do a family field trip to your local fire station and they will give you some nice information.

Have a landline again!! At least have a "911 phone": keep an old cell phone always charging in the kitchen for access in an emergency. Even without service they work to call 911. Teach them your cell number and home address.

CAR SAFETY Kids under two should face backwards in their car seat even if their legs bend or cross. This is to prevent internal decapitation. Check your seats instructions for how long they can be and face backwards.

A **five point harness restraint is the safest!** Kids usually will fit in those until first grade. If your harness only goes to 40" and 40 lbs., consider buying a five point harness booster (a booster is anything that faces forward); they usually go to 65 lbs., are cheaper than a convertible (which goes forward or backwards) and safer than a belted booster. We recommend that your child be in a five point harness until they are five or six, **then in a booster until 4'9" (57")** despite the law only requiring until 8. Children should not sit in the front seat until they are 13 years old and 4'9", unless all other seats are occupied by younger children. See www.safekidscoalition.org.

Put your purse, or phone, or your shoe in the back seat with your child to prevent **hot car deaths** and have a system set up with your daycare to notify you if your child is not dropped off (see www.rayrayspledge.org for more info).

Other common sense things:

HELMETS Wear them!! The laws vary by city (it is the law in Austin for all those under 18 years of age) but have a family law! **Hold hands** with your children in parking lots and streets. Talk to them about **strangers** and private parts when you think they are old enough to understand. **Teach your child how to swim**. The American Academy of Pediatrics now recommends infant safety swimming classes. Always supervise your child while he or she is bathing or near water. Keep buckets empty and toilet lids closed.

Keep **Poison Control Center** phone number posted at home and programmed in your cell phone. **1-800-222-1222** It is best to keep poisons in a locked cabinet.

Keep guns locked up in a gun safe, unloaded, and stored separately from ammunition. Make sure there are **no guns accessible to your child** when you visit other homes as well. When your child goes on play dates or sleepovers, ask about pets, pools, and guns.

WEBSITES & APPS See www.kidshealth.org by Nemours Children's Hospital and www.healthychildren.org by the Academy of Pediatrics for more info. For additional reference material we recommend the above-referenced websites, as well as www.aap.org.

The KidsDoc Symptom Checker, from the American Academy of Pediatrics, will serve as a valuable tool to help you determine if your child is ill, the severity of the condition and what to do next. If it recommends to seek immediate medical care, then give us a call. It's simple, convenient; on your phone or free on your computer. Here's how to get it:

1. For free, go to www.HealthyChildren.org website, under Quick Links, click on Symptom Checker or find the link on our www.NorthAustinPediatrics.com website
2. Or for a one time fee of \$1.99, download the KidsDoc app from your iPhone or Android app store.