

# Safety Matters!

## FAMILY EDITION

December 2019



## Winter Safety Tips

What do most students love the most about winter? Getting that phone call from Andy Jenks informing everyone of a snow day! Whether your child is at school or at home enjoying the winter weather, there are a few safety tips that you may want to keep in mind because students are not always aware of the dangers that can arise.

First, make sure that your child is appropriately dressed for cold weather by wearing layers and protecting the areas most susceptible to frostbite such as the head, face, and hands. Beware of clothing hazards such as scarves and hood strings which can strangle smaller children. Check your child's shoes to make sure that they can "get a grip" on snow and crushed ice.

Regarding ice, please remind your children that they can slip very quickly on "black ice," so caution them about this when they get ready to jump out of your car. Of course, please explain the dangers of ice to your young drivers and remind them to slow down when driving to and from school and especially in school parking lots. We have teenage drivers who drop students off at elementary and middle schools on their way to their high school, so frequent reminders never hurt. Also remind your teenage driver to use patience and good judgment when parking in a school lot because the parking lines may be covered with a thin coat of ice and snow.

Because chunks of ice and rock are often in snowballs, please discourage your child from throwing them at school because they can cause injuries. Outside of school, children love playing in the snow, so you may want to discuss safe ways for them to play such as avoiding throwing snow in a person's face. According to University of Michigan Medicine, head trauma is a common winter injury, usually resulting from sledding and closely followed by skiing and snowboarding; therefore, teach children how to do them safely and have them wear helmets.

Before your child goes outside to play, apply sunscreen because he/she can get a sunburn in the winter, too, as the sun reflects off the snow. In addition, keep your child hydrated because in drier winter air, your child loses more water through his or her breath. Encourage them to drink plenty of water and warm drinks such as soup.

Remind your children to use caution near fires such as wood-burning stoves, fireplaces, and outdoor fire pits. You may want to make sure that your smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors are working at home.

Enjoy this beautiful time of the year with your family and friends!

*Sources: Save the Children, American Academy of Pediatrics, and University of Michigan Health System.*

## Winter School Bus Safety Tips



Here are some safety tips to share with your bus riders to keep them safe in the winter.

1. Dress warmly but be able to see and hear what is going on around them. Make sure your child has a clear line of sight and can hear traffic and other noises.
2. Put down the phone to be able to walk carefully on snow or ice covered surfaces.
3. Don't rush to catch the bus. Allow extra time to get to the bus stop in cold, windy, or snowy conditions.
4. Use the handrails on the bus when getting on and off the bus, and watch the last step!

**Safety Matters!** is a newsletter created by the Office of School Safety & Emergency Management. We would like to hear from you about topics that you would find interesting. Please contact us at 652-3511 or by email.

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## Keep Gifts at Home!

During a variety of holidays and birthdays, many of our students receive gifts and are eager to bring them to school to show friends or use for "show and tell." Please instruct your child to keep them at home because the gift that your child wanted and received may not be appropriate for school and may even be in violation of the *Code of Student Conduct*. Also, gifts could be lost or stolen at school or in route to and from school. So, keep the new stuff at home!

## Frostbite Facts

**Definition:** Frostbite occurs when the body's skin, bones, and blood vessels freeze because of exposure to extreme cold with temperatures below 28 degrees Fahrenheit.

**Symptoms:** Skin may appear pale, gray, or blistered and feel cold to numb. There may also be a tingling or aching sensation or even pain.

**What to do:** Get inside and warm exposed areas with blankets and warm water. Gently massage the area to stimulate circulation. Seek medical attention.

