

Winter Safety Tips



Safe Kids Kootenai County would like to keep you and your children safe when engaging in North Idaho's outdoor playground.

- 1. Kids should always wear helmets** when they ski, sled, snowboard and play on the ice. All snowmobile drivers and passengers should wear helmets designed for high speed motor sports.
- 2. Stay dry and dress in layers** of loose clothes including wool and synthetics. Wearing a hat will keep you warmer by reducing the amount of heat escaping from your head. Make sure that long scarves are tucked in so they don't get entangled in lifts or other equipment. Go indoors periodically to warm up.
- 3. Stay hydrated** by drinking warm fluids before, during and after winter activities. Avoid drinking alcohol and caffeinated drinks. Alcohol gives a false sense of feeling warm when in fact it increases heat loss. Caffeine increases water loss thus causing a risk of dehydration. Tobacco and nicotine increase the risk of frostbite.
- 4. Watch for signs of hypothermia** such as shivering, loss of coordination, slow speech, irritability, and confusion. Do not ignore shivering, for this is the first sign of the body losing heat. Find a warm shelter and drink plenty of warm fluids.
- 5. Frostbite** most often affects the nose, ears, cheeks, chin, fingers and toes. The first sign of frostbite is redness and pain advancing to loss of feeling to the affected areas.
- 6. Buckle up!** When children wear bulky winter jackets it is difficult to get the car seat harness to fit correctly. Dress the child in a warm outfit, harness them into the car seat, and use a blanket to cover them. **For any car seat questions: 208.625.4642.**
- 7. Prepare an emergency car kit.**
www.itd.gov/highways/Winterdrivingchecklist
- 8. Check the latest road conditions (511.idaho.gov).** If you become stranded, stay in your vehicle and move anything you need from your trunk into the passenger area. Wrap yourself with a warm blanket, huddle with another person for warmth and periodically move your arms and legs to improve circulation. Run your car heater for about 10 minutes per hour but crack your window and make sure that snow is not blocking your exhaust pipe to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning.
- 9. When playing on the ice** be aware that river ice is 15% weaker than lake or pond ice due to currents. Everyone on or near the ice should wear a life jacket. If you break through the ice, place your arms on the ice, kick your feet to raise your lower body to the level of the ice and pull yourself onto the ice surface. Roll or crawl at least 6 feet away from the hole before you attempt to stand. The only absolute in ice safety is to stay off the ice.
- 10. Have fun and be safe!**

For more information contact:

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