



# Safe & Secure

## Winter safety: Advice for Parents and Children

Winter is a great season for outdoor activities, such as sledding and skating. Cold weather, ice, and snow can be fun but also dangerous for children. The following tips will help parents and children enjoy winter activities safely.

### In general:

- Children shouldn't play outside alone. Establish a buddy system with one or more friends and have them look out for one another. Children younger than 8 years of age should always be supervised outside. Check every so often on older children who are playing outdoors for a long time.
- Check often to see that your child is warm and dry. Younger children should take regular breaks and come inside for a warm drink.
- Never send children outside in extreme weather conditions such as snowstorms.
- Do not send your child outside to play if the temperature or the windchill is reported as  $-27^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $-16^{\circ}\text{F}$ ) or lower. At these temperatures, exposed skin will begin to freeze.
- Help children choose play areas with a warm shelter nearby (e.g., near home or a friend's home).
- Apply sunscreen to exposed skin, even when it's cloudy.

### Clothing

If your child's feet and hands are warm, what they are wearing is usually good. If your child is dressed too warm, she could sweat and feel colder when she stops playing.

- Dress your child in layers of clothing that can be put on and taken off easily.
- Wear a hat because a lot of body heat is lost through the head.
- Keep ears covered at all times to prevent frostbite.
- Wear mittens instead of gloves so that fingers can be bunched together for warmth.
- Wear warm, waterproof boots that are roomy enough for an extra pair of socks and to wiggle toes.
- Remove drawstrings from clothing that could catch on climbing or play equipment. Use Velcro or other snaps instead.
- Use a neck warmer instead of a scarf, and mitten clips instead of a string to prevent choking.
- Remove wet clothing and boots immediately after playing.
- Infants being pulled in a sled need extra bundling. Because they aren't moving, they can't generate body heat the way a playing child can.





weewatch

# Safe & Secure

## Winter play

Active games, making snow angels and building snowmen will help to keep your child warm. Teach your children a few important rules to go along with winter play.

- Stay away from snowplows and snow blowers.
- Choose play areas away from roads, fences and water.
- Take extra caution when crossing roads. It might be hard for drivers to see you playing if they have snowy or frosty windows. Icy roads can also make it difficult to stop.
- Snowballs should never be aimed at people or cars. They are especially dangerous when the snow is hard-packed or icy. Instead, throw snowballs at safe targets, like trees or telephone poles.
- Building forts and tunnels can be fun, but an adult should always supervise this activity. Forts and tunnels can collapse and suffocate you.
- Don't play on roadside snow banks. Snowplow drivers or other drivers may not see you.
- Don't put metal objects in your mouth. Lips and tongues can freeze to the metal and cause an injury.
- Don't eat snow, which can be dirty.

Excerpt taken from [http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/winter\\_safety](http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/winter_safety)

