

Supervision key to summer safety

The fun elements of summer can turn deadly for youths without proper supervision.

Pools, enclosed vehicles and bicycles each present hazards to children; yet injuries are preventable when adults are prepared for them.

"We just encourage all parents to be aware this summer," Cobb County Safety Village Coordinator Allison Carter said. "Make sure someone is paying attention because accidents can happen at any time."

Drowning, for example, is the leading cause of injury-related death among children ages 1 to 4, according to the organization Safe Kids. Experts warn that it can happen even in a crowded pool and victims can slip beneath the water with no warning signs such as splashing or yelling.

Carter recommended that adults take turns focusing their entire attention on the children swimming – meaning no cell phone or laptop use that might distract them. Youths should be taught to never go swimming without adult supervision.

Pools can pose an inherent danger. For that reason, state laws require a locking fence surrounding pools that is at least six feet tall, a nearby life ring and a rope that separates the deep end from the shallow end, she said. Swimmers shouldn't dive into an area of the pool any shallower than nine feet.

Meanwhile, everyone going out on boats or other watercraft should make certain to wear their life jackets, Carter said.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, heatstroke is the nation's leading cause of non-crash, vehicle-related deaths for children. Leaving children alone in the car even for a minute puts their lives at risk.

"On average, every 10 days a child dies from heatstroke in a vehicle," she said. "Children heat up to three to five times faster than we do. And within 10 minutes, a vehicle can heat up to 20 degrees hotter than the temperature outdoors."

Carter said adults should keep their vehicles locked even when they aren't in it, so kids don't climb in on their own. When driving children around, adults should keep reminders in the back seat such as their cell phones, purses or briefcases they will need at the final destination — especially if not following one's normal routine.

Other summer considerations include bike safety. More children ages 5-14 are seen in the emergency room for biking incidents than any other sport. Likewise, the toy category causing the most injury — 26 percent — to children 14 and under is a non-motorized scooter. When worn properly, helmets can reduce the risk of severe brain injury by 88 percent, yet only 45 percent of children usually wear one while on their wheels, Carter said.

'Accidents can happen at any time.'



Gary A. Witte

Pool safety and supervision is important for protecting young children from the hazards present in the water. Drowning is the leading cause of injury-related death among children ages 1 to 4.

Bikes should undergo basic maintenance, including inflating tires, working brakes/chains and checking proper seat position. Riders need to be taught the rules of the road and to follow all traffic signals. Youths should always walk their bikes across intersections and railroad crossings.

Adults should make sure children drink plenty of water throughout the season. A child who seems tired or achy should rest in the shade or go inside for a while, Carter said.

Get immediate medical help any time a child's skin is hot to the touch (with or without perspiration), if a child has a seizure or if they become disoriented in hot weather.

More tips are available on the Safety Village page available through cobbcounty.org.

"We want everyone to be safe throughout the summer," Carter said.

Pool gets upgrade

Officials cut the ribbon for the newly renovated Sewell Park pool March 16. The pool, one of two outdoor swimming facilities run by the county, now also features a children's splash pad and upgraded building.

An overall \$2.1 million redevelopment at Sewell Park is being paid for through the 2011 Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax. This work includes renovation of the park's baseball fields.

The pool is open to the public with a nominal admission fee. Season passes are available. Hours of operation will be 1-5 p.m. daily, 5:30-8:30 p.m. Monday and Wednesday. Friday includes Teen Night 5:30-8:30 p.m.

From Aug. 9 through Sept. 1, the pool will be open only on weekends and Labor Day 1-5 p.m. For more information, call (770) 528-8465. Sewell Park is located at 2055 Lower Roswell Road, Marietta.



Gary A. Witte

Youth performing arts camps set

There will be two types of performing arts camps available at the Jennie T. Anderson Theatre this summer. The ETC Camp for rising grades 3-9 will allow students to rehearse and perform a musical show for family and friends. Separate sessions will be held 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m. **July 7-11, 14-18 and 21-25.** The cost is \$80 per week for Cobb residents and \$105 a week for nonresidents. No experience is required and performances are held 7 p.m. on the Friday night of each session. The Prompt Camp, for rising grades 5-9, is a musical theatre workshop -- not a performance opportunity -- where participants work on their skills in acting, singing and dancing. Separate sessions will be held 1-3:30 p.m. **July 7-11, 14-18 and 21-25.** The cost is \$40 per week for Cobb residents and \$65 a week for nonresidents. For additional information, call 770-528-8490 or email Holly.Brazeel@cobbcounty.org.

Family fun events at Safety Village

The Cobb County Safety Village will host Family Fun Safety Days 9 a.m.-noon, **June 13 and July 18.** Bring your family for a fun-filled time of safety awareness. Activities include a tour of Sparky's House, water safety games, free finger printing kits and up-close emergency vehicles. The cost will be \$5 per person with a \$20 per family maximum charge. For group rates of more than 20, please call 770-852-3270. Refreshments will be provided by Harry's Farmers Market. The Cobb County Safety Village is located at 1220 Al Bishop Dr., Marietta.

Prevent crime, keep informed on the Web

As summer arrives and school is out, crimes such as burglary car break-ins often increase. Please review your current habits related to crime prevention and make adjustments where necessary to keep your homes and vehicles safe.

- Lock doors and windows and set the alarm every time you leave.
- Keep garage doors closed and locked.
- Remove all valuables and anything that would appear to a thief to contain valuables from your vehicle every night and lock the door.
- Install outdoor security lighting, preferably on a timer.
- If you go on vacation, have a friend or neighbor pick up your mail and check on the residence.
- Don't post vacation plans on Facebook or other social media sites and don't post vacation photos until you return.
- Record make, model and serial numbers of all firearms and electronics and email the list to yourself.
- Remember, if you see something suspicious, call 911 right away.

If you want to receive crime information alerts for your area, sign up online at cobbcounty.org/pens. The Police Email Notification System is maintained by the Cobb County Police Department to enhance communication between its five police precincts and the communities they serve.



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