



**Safety
First**

Snowplow & Winter Safety

- ◆ The first sight of snow falling from the grey sky can be one of the greatest thrills for children during the winter. Nearly all kids love to engage in 'snow fun' – whether through sledding, sliding, or building a snowman. Please remember that while winter is a great season for outdoor activities, snow can bring both fun and danger for children.
- ◆ Children should be warned of the dangers of playing near roads during falling snow or icy conditions. It becomes much harder for cars to steer or brake in the snow – making it much more difficult to avoid potential accidents – and snowplows clearing the road are often a big (and dangerous) draw for younger children.
- ◆ Children need to understand that snowplows are very large and that they take time to slow down and stop. However, it may be difficult for children to hear a snowplow approaching, and children should move well back from the road if they see or hear one.

Safety begins with ME!

Teach your children a few important rules for winter play

Tell Your Children

- ◆ Stay away from snowplows and snow blowers. Choose play areas away from roads, fences, water, and the end of driveways.
- ◆ Wear bright colors outdoors. Bright colors help drivers see children better.
- ◆ Take extra caution when crossing roads because it might be hard for drivers to see children playing if they have snowy or frosty windows.
- ◆ Don't build snow forts or make tunnels – especially along the roadway and at the end of a driveway. Snow forts can collapse and trap or injure a child, be hit by an out of control car, or be destroyed by a snowplow clearing snow or cleaning up an area.
- ◆ Don't play on roadside snow banks. The driver of a snowplow or other vehicle may not see a child.
- ◆ If you can't see the snowplow driver, they can't see you. Stay far away from plows when they are working.



Winter Play

- ◆ Help children choose play areas with a warm shelter nearby such as near home or a friend's home.
- ◆ 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 well supervised outside. Check often on older children who are playing outdoors for a long time.
- ◆ Check often to ensure your child is warm and dry. Children should take regular breaks and come inside for a warm drink. Active games, making snow angels and building snowmen will help to keep your child warm.
- ◆ Never send children outside in extreme weather conditions such as snowstorms. Keep children indoors if the temperature falls below -25°C (-13°F) regardless of the wind chill or if the wind chill is -28°C (-15°F) or lower regardless of the temperature.
- ◆ Apply sunscreen to exposed skin, even when it's cloudy.
- ◆ No snowball fights. They can cause an injury. Snowballs are most dangerous if the snow is hard-packed or icy.
- ◆ 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.
- ◆ Always check with an adult before venturing onto ice covered ponds, rivers, lakes or streams.



Why is Sledding Safety Important?

- ◆ Though it may seem like harmless fun, sledding injuries send tens of thousands of people to hospital emergency rooms each year. More than half of all sledding injuries are head injuries, which can be very serious and even deadly. Sledders are actually more likely to be injured in collisions than skiers or snowboarders.



Tobogganing/Sledding Tips

- ◆ Children under 5 should never go down a hill alone.
- ◆ Always wear a ski or hockey helmet – not a bicycle helmet – while sledding. Bicycle helmets are only tested up to -10°C (14°F) and need to be replaced after one crash. If you use a hockey helmet, make sure it meets the *Canadian Standards Association* standards.
- ◆ Never use a sled with sharp or jagged edges. Handholds should be secure.
- ◆ Use a sled you can steer rather than a snow disk or inner tube. It will provide better control.
- ◆ Always sit up or kneel on a sled. Lying down can increase the risk of injury to the head, spine and stomach.
- ◆ Never sled on or near roadways. Look for shallow slopes that are free of trees, fences or any other obstacles.
- ◆ Avoid sledding on crowded slopes.
- ◆ Sled during the day. If you sled at night, make sure the hill is well lit.
- ◆ Slide down the middle of the hill and climb up along the sides. Remember to watch for other sledders and move quickly out of the way once at the bottom of the hill.

Choose the Right Hill

- ◆ When hills get coated with snow, they may all look like great locations for sledding. But not all hills are safe. Select a hill that is not too steep and has a long flat area at the bottom for you to glide to a stop.
- ◆ Avoid hillsides that end near a street, parking lot, ponds, trees, fences or other hazards.
- ◆ Make sure the hill is free of obstacles such as jumps, bumps, rocks, or trees before you begin sledding.
- ◆ Choose hills that are snowy rather than icy. If you fall off your sled, icy slopes make for hard landings.
- ◆ Try to sled during the daytime, when visibility is better. If you go sledding at night, make sure the hillside is well lit and all potential hazards are visible.



Dress for Success

- ◆ Wear sensible winter clothing — hats, gloves or mittens, snow pants, winter jacket, snow boots — that are waterproof and warm, and change into something dry if your clothes get wet. Frostbite and even hypothermia are potential dangers.
- ◆ Avoid wearing scarves or any clothing that can get caught in a sled and pose a risk of strangulation.



Winter Play

- ◆ Designate a go-to adult. In the event someone gets injured, you'll want an adult on hand to administer first aid and, if necessary, take the injured sledder to the emergency room.
- ◆ Always sit face-forward on your sled. Never slide down a hill backwards or while standing, and don't go down the hill face-first, as this greatly increases the risk of a head injury.
- ◆ Young kids (5 and under) should sled with an adult, and kids under 12 should be actively watched at all times.
- ◆ Go down the hill one at a time and with only one person per sled (except for adults with young children). Piling more than one person on a sled just means there are more things on the hill that you can collide with.
- ◆ Never build an artificial jump or obstacle on a hill.
- ◆ Keep your arms and legs within the sled at all times, and if you fall off the sled, move out of the way. If you find yourself on a sled that won't stop, roll off it and get away from it.
- ◆ Walk up the side of the hill and leave the middle open for other sledders.
- ◆ Never ride a sled that is being pulled by a moving vehicle.



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Safety Questions?

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