

Home for the Holidays....

December 2007

Parenting *Rules!*

Whether you celebrate Christmas, Kwanzaa, Hanukkah or Yule; your holidays may become hectic and over-scheduled. When parents become stressed and distracted by this busy time of year, children are at a greater risk of illness or injury. This special holiday edition of Parenting Rules! contains valuable information to help parents keep their kids safe while they celebrate.

Safe Shopping....

Every year Americans spend an average of 15 hours shopping for the holidays. Many parents need to bring their children with them on these shopping trips. These kids are at a higher risk of injury when their parents are distracted with shopping.

Here are some tips that can help you have a safe and happy holiday season:



Shopping Carts:

Children can be seriously injured or even killed by shopping cart accidents.

- ✓ **Never** allow your children to hang on the outside of the cart.
- ✓ **Always** buckle your child into the seat at the front of the cart.
- ✓ **Never** leave your child unattended, even for a second.

Parking Lots:

- ⇒ Always **hold your child's hand** or carry them through the parking lot.
- ⇒ During the busy season drivers are in a hurry and are not as careful when traveling through parking lots, so teach your kids to **look both ways** before they cross.
- ⇒ Cars with snow or ice on the windows may not be able to see a small child. Make sure to **clear your car windows** before you drive.
- ⇒ **Teach children** to be careful and watch out for cars in the parking lot.
- ⇒ If you have more than one child with you, have them keep one hand on the shopping carriage and **walk with you**.



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Escalators are dangerous:

Thousands of people are hurt each year in escalator accidents. Children under 5 years old are especially at risk to being injured on an escalator.

Keep your kids safe by following these tips:

- Teach your kids to ride safely by standing in the middle of the escalator stair, facing forward and holding the hand rail. **Never let them run up and down the escalator.**
- Check your child for **loose shoe laces, drawstrings or scarves** that can get trapped in the escalator.
- Don't allow kids to sit or play on the escalator steps.
- Learn where the **emergency shut off button** is before you ride the escalator.

For a "Be a Safe Rider" activity book contact: Elevator Escalator Safety Foundation
362 Pinehill Dr., Mobile, AL 03306
800-949-6442 www.safetrider.org

Little Wanderers:

To young children the world is a big and interesting place to explore. More than 2,000 missing children reports are filed every day. When taking your children shopping remember:

- **Never** leave your kids unattended. **Not even for one second!**
- **Don't** put children in charge of watching other children
- **Teach** kids to go to a store employee if they get separated from you
- **Don't** let them play alone in the toy or video department while you shop
- **Always** go with them when they use the public restroom
- **Never** ask a stranger to watch your child while you try on clothing

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Safe Toys....

More than 150,000 children are hurt each year by toys. These injuries often happen because the toys are not age appropriate, adults are not supervising or the toys are defective.

When you shop for toys this holiday season, keep these *guidelines* in mind:



- ❖ **Choose** toys that are **sturdy** and do not have sharp or pointy edges
- ❖ Pay close attention to the **manufacturers age recommendations**, make sure your child is old enough to play with the toy
- ❖ Avoid toys with **cords** that are long enough to **wrap** around a child's neck
- ❖ **Read warnings** or other safety information found on the toys packaging
- ❖ Teach your children how to properly use their new toys
- ❖ **Toys with small parts can be a choking hazard to young children**
- ❖ Check to be sure the toy has **no broken or loose parts**.

To find out if a toy has been recalled due to a safety hazard contact:

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

Toll-free Consumer Hotline: 800-638-2772 (TTY 800-638-8270).

www.cpsc.gov

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Holiday Resources for Parents...

Christmas in Newport - A two-week festival that celebrates the noncommercial traditions of the holiday season. In keeping with the true spirit of the season, all events listed in the annual program are free of charge or benefit a non-profit institution or charity.

For more info call (401) 849-6454 or visit the website - www.christmasinnewport.org

Festival of Lights - Thousands of white lights glow while families enjoy tree lighting, hayrides, music, entertainment and breakfast with Santa.

For more info call (401) 295-5566 or visit the website - www.wickford.org

Gingerbread Fest - Discover an array of gingerbread castles, cottages and cabins, bedecked with sugar icicles and candy wreaths. Kids help decorate a large ginger bread house with frosting and candy and decorate their own gingerbread cookies to take home.

For more info call (401) 273-5437 or visit the website - www.childrenmuseum.org

Pawtucket's Winter Wonderland in Slater Park - 400 decorated evergreen trees, Victorian buildings, snowman, train rides, carousel rides, and entertainment. Free admission.

For more info call (401) 726-3185 or visit the website - www.pawtucketwinterwonderland.org

Cultural Holiday Celebrations - Rhode Island State House offers festive ethnic Holiday displays and noontime Holiday concert performances in the rotunda.

For more info call (401) 222-2678 or visit the website - www.preservation.ri.gov

ABOUT PARENTING RULES! E-NEWS...



Prevent Child Abuse

Rhode Island



Rhode Island

Family & Children's Trust Fund

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Please share this information with the families in your programs. Thank you!