



NEWS DIGEST ~ April 16, 2010

Safe Kids in the News (click on link for full text)

[One Child Killed, One Hurt in Fall From Window \(Fox 5, Washington, D.C.\)](#)

[Toddler Run Over by Mother Backing Out of Driveway \(KMOV, Missouri\)](#)

[Put Safety First When Bicycling \(TheDailyStar.com, New York\)](#)

[Booster Seat Law Unlikely To Get Through Florida Legislature This Year \(Jacksonville.com, Florida\)](#)

[Practice Window Safety And Protect Your Children From Falls \(WUSA9, Washington, D.C.\)](#)

Risk Area News (click on link for full text)

Child Passenger Safety

[Booster Seats Now Ohio Law for Kids \(MarionStar.com, Ohio\)](#)

Pedestrian Safety

[NHTSA to Focus on Pedestrian Safety \(detnews.com, Michigan\)](#)

[Crosswalk Safety Law Gets Tougher \(NorthJersey.com, New Jersey\)](#)


SAFE KIDS IN THE NEWS

One Child Killed, One Hurt in Fall From Window (Fox 5, Washington, D.C.) [| TOP](#)

April 14 / Sherri Ly

FALLS CHURCH, Va. - It is a deadly rite of spring. People open their windows for fresh air never imagining that a child could fall out. It has now happened twice in Fairfax County in four days. In one case, the child died.

The latest happened Tuesday night at an apartment complex in the 3600 block of Barcroft View Terrace





in Falls Church, Va. A two-year-old girl fell more than 20 feet from a third-floor bedroom window. She survived but with serious injuries.

"Apparently, the child was with siblings and fell out. They were rough housing, being children, that sort of thing, being toddlers," said Lucy Caldwell of Fairfax County Police.

Four days earlier in Reston, a two-year-old boy did not survive. Police say he was also playing with siblings in a bedroom at the home in the 11000 block of Heritage Oak Way, when he fell from a third-story window and landed on the driveway. The child had leaned on the window screen.

"A screen is not strong enough to withstand the weight of a child and it's actually meant to keep bugs out and not kids in," said Chrissy Cianflone, program director with Safe Kids USA, which advocates for child safety.

These accidents happen more than you think. Safe Kids USA says every year, an average of 4,000 children fall from a window and 12 are fatal. Those that do survive are often seriously hurt.

"It can be traumatic brain injury. It could be internal bleeding, compound fractures, broken bones," said Cianflone.

In some cases, a child may hit an awning or bush, bracing a child's fall but those are rare.

What is so tragic is these deaths are preventable. It is simple as installing a window guard for about \$25. It screws into the window and typically has metal bars that go in front of the mesh screen to prevent falls. Window guards are actually required by law in New York City apartments after too many children were hurt and killed in that city. Now any building there with three or more apartments must have window guards in apartments where children 10 years old or under live. They must be on every window, except emergency exits. No such law exists in Virginia, Maryland or the District.

A cheaper alternative is a window stop. They cost as little as \$6 to \$8 at the hardware store. The window stop keeps the window from raising high enough for a child to get through.

Usually it is toddlers, children four and under, that fall. They're too young to grasp the danger an open window poses.

"There are so many things that parents have to be cautious of and be aware of that sometimes, things as simple as an open window get forgotten or overlooked," said Caldwell.

In both Fairfax County cases, the parents were home at the time. But with open windows, all it takes is a split second for an accident like this to happen.

Here are some tips to prevent window falls from Safe Kids USA:

-Install window guards to prevent children from falling out of windows. For windows above the first floor,





install window guards with an emergency release device in case of fire.

-Install window stops so that windows open no more than four inches.

-Keep windows locked and closed when they are not being used.

-Keep furniture away from windows so kids cannot climb to the ledge.

-If you have double-hung windows - the kind that can open down from the top as well as up from the bottom - it is generally safer to open the top pane, but growing kids may have enough strength, dexterity and curiosity to open the bottom pane.

-Do not rely on window screens to prevent falls.

-Keep windows locked when they are closed.

-Supervise children at all times, especially around open windows.

On the Net:

www.safekids.org/safety-basics/safety-spotlight/national-window-safety-week-april-4-10/

<http://www.myfoxdc.com/dpp/news/local/one-killed%2C-one-hurt-in-fall-from-window-041410>

Toddler Run Over by Mother Backing Out of Driveway (KMOV, Missouri) | [TOP](#)

April 14 / Diana Zoga

Police in Brighton, Illinois say a 2-year-old, run over by his mother Tuesday evening, is recovering at Children's Hospital in St. Louis. The toddler sustained a head injury while the child's mother backed out of the driveway of a home in the 500 block of West Center Street around 5:30 p.m.

A medical helicopter flew the child to St. Louis - where police say the toddler is in stable condition. Police say it appears the incident was accident.

The case has been referred to the Department of Children and Family Services and the state's attorney's office for review.

According to the non-profit group Safe Kids, 7,475 children between the ages of one and 14 years were treated for non-fatal motor vehicle back over injuries in emergency departments between 2001 and 2003. Forty seven percent of back-overs occurred at home: www.safekids.org/our-work/research/fact-sheets/in-and-around-cars-fact-sheet.html



Sunday, a six-year-old girl in Pontoon Beach was killed when she was accidentally struck by a truck backing out of a driveway: www.kmov.com/news/just-posted/Six-year-old-killed-in-biking-accident--90633129.html

<http://www.kmov.com/news/local/Toddler-Run-Over-By-Mother-Backing-out-of-Driveway-90871894.html>

Put Safety First When Bicycling (TheDailyStar.com, New York) [TOP](#)

April 12 / M.K. Moynahan, Contributing Writer

The snow is gone from most of our region. With warmer days upon us and summer just around the corner, area residents are dusting off their equipment, filling up the tires and even oiling chains and gears, preparing for their beloved seasonal pastime: bicycling.

And why not? Bicycling is fun exercise.


There are those who even choose to abandon their cars for the summer to peddle to the office, hence eliminating a bit of car exhaust pollution in the air, and even promoting a greener, healthier way of life. But as we gear up for the summer season, bicycle safety organizations nationally and locally are getting out the word to be safe and adhere to the rules and regulations that govern this recreation.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 500,000 people are treated in U.S. emergency rooms and about 700 of these die each year from bicycle-related injuries. Children, the CDC said, are at a particularly high risk for these types of injuries due to unsafe or careless bicycling practices, accounting for 59 percent of all bicycle-related injuries seen in U.S. emergency departments.

Because of this, many national, state and local measures have been implemented. In March, during the National Bike Summit, the U.S. Department of Transportation announced a major policy revision that incorporates safe pedestrian and biking lanes be added to federally funded road projects.

The new policy recognizes that “the establishment of well-connected walking and bicycling networks is an important component for livable communities and their design should be a part of Federal aid project developments.”

On the state level, there is New York State Safe Kids, which has implemented and developed bicycling safety programs and provides grant money for helmets in counties throughout New York. In Otsego County, Bassett Health Care is the Safe Kids’ lead agency, which has administered the bicycling safety program for kids over the past 10 years.





According to program administrator Coleen Vesely, more than 360 bicycle helmets have been purchased this year alone.

As coordinator of the Otsego County Safe Kids program, Vesely goes to area schools to teach children safe bicycling practices. Vesely demonstrates to the children how to put the bicycle helmets on correctly, as well as how to properly distribute reflectors on the bicycles, the use of knee and elbow pads, and instruction on safe bicycling practices. In addition, Vesely donates the helmets to the schools for needy families. She said that children are required to wear helmets when bicycling. "A number of years ago a law was enacted in New York State that requires children under 14 to wear a helmet when bicycling. Many people don't understand this," she said. "Most of our helmets are multi-sport helmets. The kids can use them for skateboarding or roller skating as well."

Otsego Safe Kids is scheduled to bring its bicycling safety program to Oneonta, Gilbertsville-Mount Upton, and Greater Plains schools in the next few weeks, according to Vesely. At this time, participants will not only learn correct helmet use, but also how to avoid collisions, how to be aware in intersections, how to stop for cars and more. The organization uses a variety of methods to teach kids safe bicycling practices including games, puzzles and inter-active books.

While more kids are wearing helmets and injuries have declined statewide over the past decade, Vesely said, children between the ages of 12 and 14 years old are reluctant to wear their helmets and police are reluctant to enforce the law.

Despite this, Vesely said, community involvement and perks are the key to this issue. Pointing to observations of lack of helmet use by kids in the Oneonta area, particularly at Neahwa Park skate board area, she said, "I don't know why the police aren't enforcing the helmet law. Perhaps they don't want to scare the kids or they don't have the manpower to enforce it. Despite the fact that there is a sign posted in the skateboard area, there are a significant number of children not wearing their helmets. There are incentives throughout the community though that encourage the kids to use their helmets. For example, last year Stewarts in Oneonta gave away free ice cream to any kid who was riding a bicycle and wearing a helmet."

There's no doubt that helmets save lives. Several years ago, according to Delaware County Sheriff Tom Mills, a young boy was hit by a car in Hamden. Mills said the boy's head hit the windshield; yet, he walked away with only minor scraps and bruises because he was wearing his helmet. "His head hit that windshield pretty hard. It destroyed the helmet. He was OK though," Mills said. "We gave him a new helmet."

The Delaware County Sheriff's office has for the past 10 years collected funds to provide bicycle helmets to kids throughout the county. "We have 80 so far. Each year we give away several hundred helmets. The money comes from individuals, organizations and businesses. People contribute to this cause quite willingly and are very generous," Mills said.





When asked about enforcing the bicycle helmet law Mills said, “Kids ages 5 to 12 are generally very good about wearing their helmets. It’s very difficult to enforce this law. It’s also difficult to encourage young teens to wear their helmets.”

To promote safe bicycling practices, Mills’ office does provide school programs as well as the helmets; however, Mills, himself a bicycler who wears a helmet, often provides anecdotal stories to bring the point home.

“When I was a state trooper about 20 years ago, I had a friend who was also a state trooper, who rode his bicycle to work everyday. He wasn’t wearing a helmet and had an accident. He dusted himself off and continued to work. Sometime later, he was in a coma and a year later he was dead,” Mills said.

Helmet prices vary from \$20 to \$150, according to the Bicycle Helmet Safety Institute, or BHSI, which recently tested pricey and cheap helmets and concluded both perform equally well. According to BHSI, it submitted six helmet models to a leading U.S. test lab: three in the \$150 price range and three in the \$20 price range.

The impact test results were virtually identical. The BHSI concluded: “When you pay more for a helmet you may get an easier fit, more vents and snazzier graphics. But the basic impact protection of the cheap helmets tested equaled the expensive ones.”

BHSI said the most important advice for consumers is to find a helmet that fits well so that it will be positioned correctly if you have an accident.

According to the Otsego Regional Cycling Advocates, or ORCA, young and old should practice safe bicycling habits and avoiding bicycle accidents is fairly simple. The organization says the key to this is “know where the real risks are and avoid them.”

In an article about avoiding bicycling accidents and adapted for its website, ORCA states:

“For example, the uniformed cyclist is fearful of being hit by a motorist from behind, so he erroneously travels facing traffic on the left side of the road to keep the motorists in sight. In reality, being hit from behind is the least probable cause of car-bike crashes and driving against traffic on the left side of the road is the most probable of those crashes. Riding against the traffic is one of the most dangerous things a cyclist can do. Cyclists fare best when they act and are treated as drivers of vehicles. Ride on the right with traffic where a motorist can see you, can define you as part of traffic, and can make decisions about you, just as he would with any other slow moving vehicle.”

The organization has additional information on bicycling hazards available at www.occainfo.org/ORCAarticles.htm.





http://www.thedailystar.com/lifestyles/local_story_102091308.html

Booster Seat Law Unlikely To Get Through Florida Legislature This Year (Jacksonville.com, Florida) | [TOP](#)

April 11 / Larry Hannah

Some Say Education Needed More; Sponsors Will Try Again Next Year

Cynthia Dennis could use a little help. But she won't be getting it from the Florida Legislature this year.

Dennis, coordinator of Safe Kids Northeast Florida, a nonprofit whose mission is to prevent childhood injuries and that is funded locally by Wolfson Children's Hospital, spends several days a month teaching people how to properly install a car seat.

She encourages parents to keep their child in a booster seat after they have outgrown the harnessed car seat. But parents are not always receptive.

"Parents think they're doing the right thing by having their children wear seat belts because the law says they can do it," said Dennis.

Forty-seven states and the District of Columbia have laws that require booster seats for kids who have outgrown their car seat. The National Transportation Safety Board recommends this because children 4-7 years old are often too small for a regular seat belt.

The three states without a law? Arizona, South Dakota and Florida.

And Florida requires only children 3 and younger to be in a car seat.

A bill has been introduced in the Legislature to change that. The Senate Transportation and Economic Appropriations Committee unanimously approved the booster seat bill last week, but it has gone nowhere in the House.

"It doesn't look like it will be heard in a single [House] committee this year," said Rep. Richard Steinberg, D-Miami Beach, who co-sponsored the bill with Rep. Richard Glorioso, R-Plant City.

Unless something changes, the bill will not pass, Steinberg conceded.

He sponsored similar legislation that went nowhere in 2009. This year, he got Glorioso to co-sponsor the



bill to make it bipartisan, but it hasn't helped. The bill is held up in the Economic Development and Community Affairs Policy Council, whose chairman, Rep. Dave Murzin, R-Pensacola, has not held a hearing.

The legislative session ends April 30.

Stephanie Terek, legislative assistant to Murzin, said the bill is unlikely to get a hearing.

"Rep. Murzin prefers to focus on education rather than regulation when it comes to booster seats," she said.

The goal should be to raise awareness of the issue instead of passing a law, Terek said.

But Dennis, the Safe Kids coordinator, said a law would raise awareness, and emphasize that a booster seat is something parents should do.

"If parents are told this is something they should do," she said, "then most of them would do it."

Jacksonville legislators said they weren't sure why the bill has gone nowhere.

"I think getting a booster seat law would be a positive for this state," said Rep. Lake Ray, R-Jacksonville. "But if you look at the bills working their way through the Legislature most of them deal with the economy, jobs and education."

Rep. Audrey Gibson, D-Jacksonville, said she has heard almost nothing about the legislation and doesn't know why it hasn't gotten a hearing.

AAA Auto Club South, which supports the bill, is touting the fact that the Official Journal of American Pediatrics said children ages 4-7 are four times more likely to suffer head or brain injuries, and three times more likely to suffer severe abdominal injuries, when wearing only a seat belt instead of a booster seat.

AAA also said booster seats reduce the rate of fatal injury for children by 59 percent compared to the seat belt alone.

Steinberg said he won't give up.

"I'm hoping next year when we get new leadership [in the House] we'll also get a different result," said Steinberg. "Rep. Glorioso and will be introducing it again next year."

larry.hannan@jacksonville.com, (904) 359-4470

<http://jacksonville.com/news/metro/2010-04-11/story/booster-seat-law-unlikely-get-through-florida->





[legislature-year](#)

Practice Window Safety And Protect Your Children From Falls (WUSA9, Washington, D.C.) [TOP](#)

April 7

FRONT ROYAL, Va., (WUSA) -- "They try and lean up on the window sill and look out and see what's going on," says Neal Jacob.

He has always made it his mission to keep his three children safe.

The Front Royal, Virginia dad took precautions everywhere except around the windows.

"I guess I never really, ahh, gave it any thought," he says.

That is, until one of the children managed to pop the screen out of a window last week.

"Screens are to keep bugs out, not keep kids in," says Chrissy Cianflone.

The program director for [Safe Kids USA](#) is going to teach the stay-at-home dad how to prevent unintended falls.

"One of the first things you can do is actually just move the chair away from the windows," she says.


And that takes the temptation to climb away.

"All you have here is the screen," Chrissy says.

So, she tells Neal to get a window guard that he can easily install himself.

[How To Install A Window Guard](#)

"Now if the children are playing underneath the window and they lean against the guard, it's not going to give," she says.





National Window Safety Week

If for some reason, the family needs to make an emergency exist, he can press the release system and get out of the house.

In the bedrooms, Chrissy says the corded blinds can be a problem.

The program director says, "Tie this cord up out of his reach so that even when he's playing and he reaches up, he doesn't have access to it."

And again, a window guard could offer another layer of protection.

"It is something that will give you a bit of security," she says.

Falls Prevention

In case of an accident, Neal thought the bushes outside his son's room would provide some extra cushion.

But Chrissy Cianflone says a child could miss the shrubs and land on the ground.

"There are over 4,000 kids every year who are seriously injured from falling out of a window, so having concrete here isn't a good thing to break his fall," she says.

Falls Prevention Tips

The kids here aren't the only ones learning a valuable lesson. Dad says he's ready to use the knowledge he's gained.

Those window guards will cost you between \$15 and \$20 a piece. That can really add up if you have a lot of windows.

So, Safe Kids USA's Chrissy Cianflone says at the very least, you'll want to outfit the rooms where your children spend the most time, their bedrooms, the living room, and the kitchen.

http://www.wusa9.com/rss/local_article.aspx?storyid=99738





RISK AREA NEWS

Booster Seats Now Ohio Law for Kids (MarionStar.com, Ohio) | [TOP](#)

April 12

Aim Is to Prevent Injury to Youths

MARION - Starting this month, violators of Ohio's new child passenger safety law face fines if they are caught by law enforcement.

The new law took effect on Oct. 7 stating that children younger than 8 years old, unless they are at least 4 feet, 9 inches tall, must use a booster seat. According to an Ohio Department of Health press release, law enforcement had only issued warnings during a six-month educational period that expired on April 7.

Now violators face fines ranging from \$25 to \$75 per violation.

"This has helped Ohio take a significant step toward ensuring all of our young motor vehicle passengers are safe on our roads," stated Ohio Department of Public Safety Director Cathy Collins-Taylor.

Marion Township firefighter and paramedic Jerry M. Gandee, who helps promote injury prevention programs for children, praised the new law. He said children in that age group are subjected to spinal injuries, damage to their liver or other injuries because safety belts are made for adults, not children, and do not fit children properly. He said by 8 years old their body size and height should be sufficient to use the regular safety belt.

Gandee said that children should still ride in the back seat until they are 12 years old.

According to the press release, at least 34 children between 4-7 years old died in motor vehicle crashes in Ohio between 1999 and 2006. Traffic is the leading cause of death for the age group.

Only 18 percent of Ohio children 4-8 years old used a booster seat, according to Partners for Child Passenger Safety.

<http://www.marionstar.com/article/20100412/NEWS01/4120311>





NHTSA to Focus on Pedestrian Safety (detnews.com, Michigan) [TOP](#)

April 10 / David Shepardson, Detroit News Washington Bureau

Officials say new technology soon will detect walkers, cyclists to prevent fatal accidents

Washington -- The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is launching a major effort to improve pedestrian safety.

At a forum Friday at the New York International Auto Show, NHTSA Administrator David Strickland said the agency is "making every effort to promote pedestrian safety."

The renewed emphasis came after Volvo unveiled last week at the show its 2011 S60, which has a collision warning system that can detect a pedestrian in front of the vehicle and automatically apply the brakes if a driver isn't paying attention.

The technology will be added to other Volvo models in the future.

The NHTSA chief took notice of the development.

"Other technologies such as those capable of detecting vulnerable road-users such as pedestrians and cyclists show great promise," Strickland said.


NHTSA this year will unveil its revamped car rating system that will encourage technologies -- such as forward collision warning systems and lane departure warning systems -- that can help prevent pedestrian and bicyclist accidents.

Pedestrian deaths accounted for 11.6 percent of traffic deaths in 2008. A total of 4,378 pedestrians were killed and 69,000 injured.

Pedestrian deaths haven't decreased as fast as other categories of traffic deaths.

About three quarters of pedestrian deaths occur in urban areas and at nonintersection locations, such as when someone tries to cross in the middle of a road. Two-thirds happen at night and nearly all in normal weather.

One reason pedestrian deaths haven't decreased as much as those in other categories is that the economic crisis that has reduced driving hasn't stopped people from walking to school or to work, said Adrian Lund, president of the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.





But Lund said he is "very hopeful" that technology like that in the Volvo S60 can curtail pedestrian injuries and deaths.

"We may see some pretty slick technology rolled out in the next few years," Lund said.

But the institute hasn't done in-depth testing on the Volvo technology or other pedestrian avoidance technologies.

NHTSA recently has been trying to improve pedestrian safety, in part by awarding major demonstration projects to New Mexico, North Carolina, Florida and Chicago to create comprehensive pedestrian safety programs during the next three years, Strickland said.

The strategy includes infrastructure improvements that make it safer to walk, along with better education and stepped-up enforcement efforts against drivers and pedestrians who violate traffic laws at intersections.

Last month, Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood unveiled new regulations to encourage better accommodation of pedestrians and bicyclists.

He said the department was "discouraging transportation investments that negatively affect cyclists and pedestrians. ... This is the end of favoring motorized transportation at the expense of nonmotorized." Michigan is among the states that have launched efforts to reduce pedestrian deaths. Last year, the state unveiled a three-year strategy through 2012 to cut deaths and injuries 5 percent.

In Michigan, 48 percent of the 134 pedestrians killed were younger than 21 or older than 55.

The effort to improve pedestrian safety appears to be a break from the past.

"We have had a concerted effort to improve occupant safety inside vehicles, but we haven't had similar campaigns to reduce the risk to people outside the vehicles," the institute's Lund said.

Adding roundabouts is a good way to boost pedestrian safety -- along with other infrastructure improvements, he said.

Some communities in Metro Detroit in recent years have added roundabouts -- circular intersections that route traffic in one direction.

dshepardson@detnews.com (202) 662-8735

<http://www.detnews.com/article/20100410/AUTO01/4100312/1148/NHTSA-to-focus-on-pedestrian-safety>





Crosswalk Safety Law Gets Tougher (NorthJersey.com, New Jersey) | [TOP](#)

April 9 / Dolores Alfieri

A new pedestrian safety law, in effect since April 1, applies stiffer penalties to drivers who do not stop for pedestrians.

The previous law required drivers merely to yield to pedestrians in a crosswalk; the new law demands that they come to a full stop and remain so until the pedestrian has crossed the road.

"I do believe it'll make a difference here in Ridgewood as well as across the state of New Jersey," said Mark Butler, Ridgewood Police Department's traffic safety officer. "It's bringing more attention to our drivers and our pedestrians that the road is a dangerous place, and you need to use extreme caution when crossing the walkway and when driving."

Butler said there were 11 accidents involving pedestrians and automobiles in Ridgewood in 2009. So far this year, he said, there have been six such incidents.

"The main cause of all of our accidents is driver inattention. They're not paying attention as they're driving," Butler said. "You just have to pay attention, that's all."


"Pedestrian safety is Ridgewood's number one safety issue," added Councilman Paul Aronsohn, chairman of the village's Citizen Safety Advisory Committee. "It's something that we as a community, as well as the council, are focused on all the time."

Drivers who fail to come to a full stop when someone is crossing the street face being penalized with two points on their license, a \$200 fine in addition to court fees (up from \$100 under the old law), 15 days of community service and insurance surcharges.

The law states that "the driver of a vehicle must stop and stay stopped for a pedestrian crossing the roadway within a marked crosswalk or within any unmarked crosswalk at an intersection."

Although the new law puts the burden on drivers to be more attentive, it also emphasizes that "no pedestrian shall suddenly leave a curb or other place of safety and walk or run into the path of a vehicle which is so close that it is impossible for the driver to yield. Nothing contained herein shall relieve a pedestrian from using due care for his safety."

Under the law, pedestrians will be fined \$54 for not obeying pedestrian signals and not using crosswalks





at intersections.

Pedestrians need to do their part in order to prevent accidents, Butler and Aronsohn emphasized.

"Both pedestrians and drivers have a responsibility here," Aronsohn said. "Pedestrians, while they have the right of way, have still got to be careful."

Butler said he believes the law is enforceable, and it should be lauded for raising awareness of the severity of the issue. He stated that New Jersey is "the most congested state in the nation," a factor that increases incidents of collisions between people and automobiles. About 150 pedestrians are struck in the state each year, he said.

"[Drivers] have to understand, in whatever way is necessary, that this is a very serious law," Aronsohn said.

E-mail: alfieri@northjersey.com

http://www.northjersey.com/news/90328864_Crosswalk_safety_law_gets_tougher.html
