



NEWS DIGEST  January 19, 2010

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**SAFE KIDS IN THE NEWS**

1. **Gear Up Properly for Safe Winter Sports (TheKansan.com, Kansas) [| TOP](#)**

January 14, 2009 / The Newton Kansan

The cold weather during the holidays does little to keep winter sports enthusiasts inside – especially children. In fact, children ages 14 and under are at a high risk for winter sports injuries. In 2007, there were 17,000 estimated injuries among children from skiing and snowboarding; 24,500 estimated injuries from sledding; and 1,500 estimated injuries from snowmobiles and other equipment in the United States.





According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, ski helmets could prevent or reduce the effects of 50 percent of head injuries suffered by children under 15 while skiing or snowboarding. “Kids should always wear helmets when they ski, sled, snowboard, or play ice hockey,” says Cherie Sage, State Director for Safe Kids Kansas. “But parents should know that there are different helmets for different activities. Make sure your child’s helmet meets federal safety standards, and have an expert check that the helmet fits correctly so it won’t come loose at a critical moment.”

Along with wearing a helmet while skiing or snowboarding, parents should know these ten useful tips to keep their children safe when doing outdoor activities this winter:

### **Sledding**

\* Kids can suffer serious head injuries from sledding, and should wear a multi-sport helmet. When sledding, do not go down a hill head-first. Sit up, face forward, use a clear, safe path and make sure an adult is supervising.

\* A good sledding hill does not lead to a street, a body of water or a crowded gathering place. In addition, remember to inspect sleds regularly for worn, damaged or loose parts that could break or snag at high speed.

### **Snowmobiles**

\* Children under six should not be riding a snowmobile and no one under 16 should drive one. All snowmobile drivers and passengers should be wearing helmets designed for high-speed motor sports - a bike helmet isn’t sufficient for a four-wheeled motorcycle that can go up to 90 miles per hour.

### **Ice Skating and Hockey**

\* There is no consensus among experts about the need for helmets while ice skating, but parents should consider them for kids who are just beginning to learn to skate.

\* Helmets are a must for ice hockey, along with mouth guards, knee pads and elbow, shoulder and shin protection.

\* Teach kids how to protect themselves if they do fall through ice. Remind them to stretch their arms out wide and kick as if swimming, shout for help, and try to crawl backward onto solid ice.

### **General**

\* Always wear sport-specific, properly fitting safety gear when participating in winter sports activities. Since proper equipment fit and maintenance are important for safety, bring your child along when shopping for skates, helmets, boots, etc.





\* Dress in layers and wear warm, close-fitting clothes. Make sure that long scarves are tucked in so they don't get entangled in lifts, ski poles or other equipment.

\* Stay hydrated and wear sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher.

\* If children become distracted, irritable or begin to hyperventilate, they may be suffering from hypothermia or altitude sickness, or are too tired to participate safely in winter sports. They should go indoors, rest and warm up.

"Remember, your children learn safety habits by watching you," adds Sage. "So parents should always practice good safety behavior and wear the right safety equipment for their winter activities too."

For more information about sports safety, visit [www.usa.safekids.org](http://www.usa.safekids.org).

Safe Kids Kansas, Inc. is a nonprofit Coalition of over 70 statewide organizations and businesses dedicated to preventing accidental injuries to Kansas children ages 0-14. Local coalitions and chapters cover Allen, Anderson, Atchison, Butler, Clay, Coffey, Dickinson, Doniphan, Douglas, Elk, Ellis, Finney, Geary, Harvey, Jackson, Jefferson, Johnson, Labette, Leavenworth, Marion, Marshall, McPherson, Meade, Mitchell, Montgomery, Pottawatomie, Riley, Saline, Sedgwick, Shawnee, Smith, Sumner, and Wilson counties, as well as the city of Emporia and the Metro Kansas City Area (Wyandotte county and several Missouri counties.) Safe Kids Kansas a member of Safe Kids Worldwide, a global network of organizations whose mission is to prevent accidental childhood injury. The lead agency for Safe Kids Kansas is the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

<http://www.thekansan.com/news/x1409375939/Gear-up-properly-for-safe-winter-sports>

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## 2. **Keep Kids Injury-Free This Winter (Thedailystar.com, New York) | [TOP](#)**

January 11, 2010 / Safe Kids of Otsego County

The cold weather does little to keep winter sports enthusiasts inside \_ especially children. In fact, children ages 14 and younger are at a high risk for winter sports injuries.

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, ski helmets could prevent or reduce the effects of 50 percent of head injuries suffered by children younger than 15 while skiing or snowboarding.

"Kids should always wear helmets when they ski, sled, snowboard, or play ice hockey," says Rich McCaffery a community educator with the Bassett Healthcare Network and Safe Kids of Otsego County. "But parents should know that there are different helmets for different activities. Make sure your child's helmet meets federal safety standards, and have an expert check that the helmet fits correctly so it won't come loose at a critical moment."





Along with wearing a helmet while skiing or snowboarding, parents should know these 10 useful tips to keep their children safe when doing outdoor activities this winter:

### **Sledding**

Think with your head when using a sled.

Kids should always wear a helmet. When sledding, do not go down a hill head-first. Sit up, face forward, use a clear, safe path and make sure an adult is supervising.

Location, location, location.

A good sledding hill does not lead to a street, a body of water or a crowded gathering place.

In addition, remember to inspect sleds regularly for worn, damaged or loose parts that could break or snag at high speed.

### **Snowmobiles**

Age matters, so does gear.

Children younger than 6 should not be riding a snowmobile, and no one under 16 should drive one.

All snowmobile drivers and passengers should wear helmets designed for high-speed motor sports \_ a bike helmet isn't sufficient for a four-wheeled motorcycle that can go up to 90 miles per hour.

### **Ice Skating and Hockey**

When starting out ice skating, use a helmet.

There is no consensus among experts about the need for helmets while ice skating, but parents should consider them for kids who are just beginning to learn to skate.

Protective gear is a must for ice hockey.

When slapping around a puck, always wear a helmet, mouth guards, knee pads and elbow, shoulder and shin protection.

Be prepared for a fall.



Teach kids how to protect themselves if they fall through ice. Remind them to stretch their arms out wide and kick as if swimming, shout for help, and try to crawl backward onto solid ice.

### **General**

Always wear sport-specific, properly fitting safety gear when participating in winter sports activities.

Since proper equipment fit and maintenance are important for safety, bring your child along when shopping for skates, helmets, boots, etc.

Where the right clothes.

Brands and colors aside, dress in layers, and wear warm, close-fitting clothes. Also, make sure that long scarves are tucked in so they don't get entangled in lifts, ski poles or other equipment.

Be good to your body.

Stay hydrated, and wear sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher.

Watch out for hypothermia.

If children become distracted, irritable or begins to hyperventilate, they may be suffering from hypothermia or altitude sickness, or are too tired to participate safely in winter sports. They should go indoors, rest and warm up.

[http://www.thedailystar.com/community/local\\_story\\_012043007.html](http://www.thedailystar.com/community/local_story_012043007.html)

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### **3. Cordless Window Treatments Might End Up Saving Child's Life (IndyStar.com, Indiana) [TOP](#)**

January 2, 2010 / Liz Szabo, USA Today

The death of a Maryland toddler has prompted a federal safety alert about the risks of window cords.

Thapelo Kwofie, 2, was strangled in November after his head became entangled in window cords.

About one child a month dies after strangling in cords from blinds or shades, according to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, which issued the alert in November. Manufacturers have recalled 5 million window treatments in the past few months, spokesman Scott Wolfson said.





For the first time, the safety commission now recommends using only cordless window treatments in any home where children live or visit.

"This is a classic example of the fact that we live in a world designed by adults for the convenience of adults, and child safety is unfortunately too often an afterthought," said Gary Smith, director of the Center for Injury Research and Policy at Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, Ohio.

Smith said children can get into trouble silently and quickly, putting themselves at risk in seconds.

If parents can't afford new blinds, they should raise them above their children's heads. They also should cut cords or make sure no dangling cords are within a child's reach, said Chrissy Cianflone of Safe Kids USA.

All furniture -- especially cribs -- should be moved away from windows, she said.

Some dangers may not be immediately visible.

For example, Roman shades often contain hidden strings in the back of the material.

In July 2008, a 20-month-old boy became entangled in cords from a Roman shade while in his crib but was rescued by his grandfather.

Window cords aren't the only strangulation hazard in the home.

The safety commission has recalled hundreds of thousands of children's clothes with drawstrings around the neck in the past two years, and the agency is creating a new rule to ban them. The commission issued one recall in February after a 3-year-old boy in Fresno, Calif., strangled to death after his hooded sweatshirt became snagged on a playground set.

Nearly 900 children ages 4 and younger strangle to death from various causes each year, Safe Kids USA said.

<http://www.indystar.com/article/20100102/LIVING02/1020305/1084/LIVING02/Cordless-window-treatments-might-end-up-saving-child-s-life>

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#### 4. **Safe Kids Exec to Step Aside, Not Away (Tulsa World, Oklahoma) [TOP](#)**

December 31, 2009 / Sara Plummer, World Staff Writer

The coordinator will trade in her paycheck for a volunteer's hat.





Mary Beth Ogle might have retired as coordinator of Safe Kids Tulsa Area after 16 years, but she's not going anywhere.

"I'm trading in my paycheck for volunteer hours," said Ogle, whose last day as the group's coordinator was Wednesday. "I'll be right back at it. It just won't be on a regular basis."

Ogle said she wants to spend more time with her grandchildren, but she still will be working with Safe Kids at community events, car-seat checks, bicycle helmet giveaways and pool-safety events.

As she looks back on her tenure as the group's coordinator, Ogle is most proud of those educational opportunities, she said.

"Those kids leave every time safer than when they came in," she said. "We may have saved that kid's life. It's totally gratifying."

Beth Washington, the group's child-passenger safety coordinator, will succeed Ogle as coordinator of Safe Kids Tulsa Area.

"I couldn't have asked for a better mentor and friend to work with," Washington said. "I think it's wonderful she's decided to stay and volunteer."

With Ogle still working with Safe Kids, Washington said it will be easy to ask for advice.

"I'm familiar with everything. I've been here for 12 years. I'll be working on the leadership role," she said. "There's things I'm still unsure of. I can call her up and ask her."

Ogle said she isn't worried about Safe Kids under Washington's guidance.

"She's been by my side the whole time," she said. "It's never been hierarchical. It's always been side by side."

There's isn't a time in her life when Ogle doesn't see herself involved with Safe Kids, she said.

She'll work with the group "till I can't walk. And then I could type, I guess," Ogle said. "I always see myself in a role helping kids."


[http://www.tulsaworld.com/news/article.aspx?subjectid=11&articleid=20091231\\_11\\_A7\\_MrehO1442253](http://www.tulsaworld.com/news/article.aspx?subjectid=11&articleid=20091231_11_A7_MrehO1442253)

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## 5. **Program Leader Honored for Efforts to Help Children (StatesmanJournal.com, Oregon) | [TOP](#)**

December 30, 2009 / Ruth Liao

The leader of an Oregon public health program designed to reduce unintentional injury and death among children has been nationally recognized for her efforts, officials said.





Adrienne Greene, a Portland-based manager of Safe Kids Oregon, was named the 2009 Safe Kids USA Coordinator of the Year.

Greene has led Safe Kids Oregon since 2001. She also manages the children's injury prevention program within the Oregon Public Health Division.

There are 14 Safe Kids coalitions in the state. The Safe Kids campaign is designed to provide training and resources to communities to prevent children from injuries such as motor-vehicle crashes, drowning, fire and burns, bicycle crashes, falls, poisoning and suffocation.

For information, go to [www.safekidsoregon.org](http://www.safekidsoregon.org).

<http://www.statesmanjournal.com/article/20091230/NEWS/912300420/1001/news>

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## 6. **Booster Seats Safe, Group Says (Gainesvilletimes.com, Georgia) | [TOP](#)**

December 27, 2009 / Stephen Gurr

Safe Kids rebuts report on unsatisfactory models


A recent report on booster seat safety has caused confusion and undue concern for parents, the nation's largest child safety advocacy group says.

Last week, the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety released ratings of 60 booster seats, which are used for children in the transition between "convertible" child car seats and a vehicle's standard seat belts. The institute put 11 of the seats on its "not recommended" list, including the Alpha Omega and Dorel brands.

The report said the seats were not safe because the lap belts were too high on the abdomen and the shoulder belt too far out on the shoulder. The institute came up with the ratings by using a crash test dummy of an "average-size 6-year-old."

But Safe Kids USA said the Insurance Institute's tests were flawed because "real children are not like crash test dummies."

"Children come in all shapes and sizes — all seats are not going to fit all children," said Kim Martin, coordinator for Safe Kids of Gainesville/Hall County.





Safe Kids says all booster seats on the market meet federal standards and are safe as long as they are installed properly. Parents should buy booster seats that fit their children.

"The key factor is the proper placement of the lap and shoulder belt," Martin said. "You don't want it on the neck or the abdomen in a crash, or I can guarantee you, there will be injuries."

Booster seats are recommended for children who are shorter than 4 feet, 9 inches and weigh between 80 and 100 pounds. Research shows that children in belt-positioning booster seats are 45 percent less likely to be injured in a crash than those who wear a car's standard seat belt.

Parents are required by law to use child car seats for all children younger than 6.

Martin said recent television network news reports on the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety's booster seat ratings may have created the wrong impression among parents.

"In the videos, the seat belt was not properly placed," she said. "I'm afraid parents are going to think their booster seats are not safe and move their children into vehicle seats way too early."

While many children outgrow booster seats by age 8, Martin noted that her daughter needed one until she was 10.

The Gainesville Police Department offers free inspections of child car seats to check for proper installation. For more information, call 770-219-8095.

<http://www.gainesvilletimes.com/news/archive/27666/>


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## 7. 'Tis the Season to be Cautious (TBO.com, Florida) [TOP](#)

December 23, 2009 / Suncoast News Staff Report

NEW PORT RICHEY - West Pasco residents can keep the holidays free of injuries with some safety tips from Pasco County Fire Rescue, Safe Kids USA and the United States Fire Administration.

While candles, Christmas trees and other decorations are part of the holiday spirit, they can pose fire and poisoning hazards, according to Mike Ciccarello, assistant chief for Pasco County Fire Rescue.





Curious children especially are susceptible to such hazards, Ciccarello reports in a press release.

A few precautions can be taken when decorating for Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, or other festivities.

Wintertime is the most dangerous time of the year for injuries and deaths from fire. Each year, about 450 children ages 14 and younger die in residential fires. Children younger than the age of 5 face the greatest risk.

"Never, never leave [lit candles](#) unattended," says Suzanne Morton, Safe Kids USA fire and burn safety program manager. "Don't put candles on a tree or a natural wreath, or near curtains or drapes, and keep [matches and lighters](#) locked out of reach of children."

In 2005, candles started an estimated 15,600 home fires in the United States, and the top four days for [candle fires](#) are around Christmas and New Year's, according to the [National Fire Protection](#) Association.

Battery-powered [flameless candles](#) can provide an alternative without the risk of fire.

Decorative lighting should be labeled with the seal of an independent testing lab and should only be used outdoors if it's labeled for outdoor use.

U.S. Fire Administrator Kelvin J. Cochran urges people to check smoke alarms, practice a [home fire escape plan](#) and follow basic safety tips for holiday ornaments.

Never leave a [lighted Christmas tree](#) or other decorative lighting display unattended, experts caution. Inspect lights for exposed or frayed wires, loose connections, and broken sockets.

Do not overload extension cords or outlets and do not run an electrical cord under a rug. [Natural Christmas trees](#) always involve some risk of fire. Get a fresh tree and keep it watered at all times. Do not put the tree within 3 feet of a fireplace, space heater, radiator, or heat vent.

Keep ornaments with small parts or metal hooks, or look like food or candy, on branches out of reach of children.

Do not burn Christmas tree branches, treated wood, or wrapping paper in an indoor fireplace.

To avoid accidental poisoning, keep alcohol, including baking extracts, out of reach of children and do not leave alcoholic drinks unattended.

Color additives used in fireplace fires are a toxic product and should be stored out of reach.

Artificial snow can be harmful if inhaled, so use it in a well-vented space.



Mistletoe berries, holly berry and Jerusalem cherry can be poisonous.

Make sure children and pets cannot reach them.

In a poison emergency, call the national Poison Control Center at 800-222-1222.

For more information, go online to [www.usa.safekids.org](http://www.usa.safekids.org)> or [www.usfa.dhs.gov/citizens](http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/citizens)>.

<http://suncoastpasco.tbo.com/content/2009/dec/23/pe-tis-the-season-to-be-cautious/>

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## 8. **Stuck for Gifts? (Manukau Courier, New Zealand) [TOP](#)**

December 22, 2009

The joy of Christmas can quickly disappear for many people when faced with the challenge of picking the perfect gift.

Safe Kids New Zealand has some tips for choosing the right gift for the kids, family and friends.

"Show that you love them by treating them with gifts which they can enjoy and at the same time, help protect from injuries at home, at play and on the road."

### **What to buy:**

- **Booster seats** - Parents can jazz it up and let their imagination run wild by telling kids it's a rocket ship or a fairy chariot
- **A cycle helmet** - If Lance Armstrong needs one, your kids do too. Let them pick their own helmet and remember to be a role model and buy and use one yourself
- **Tools with safety locks** - Nothing pleases dad more than a brand new power tool. Buy one with a safety lock and protect curious little hands by storing them out of sight and reach of children
- **Portable pool fence** - Owners of small or portable pools still need to comply with pool safety regulations. A portable and flexible pool fence is perfect to help enjoy the summer season safely
- **Smoke alarms** - If you've noticed a loved one's house doesn't have a smoke alarm, buy one as a present for them. It's a gift that could save a life. And don't forget the batteries.

### **What not to buy:**





- Toys that are choking hazards - If a toy can fit inside the hole of a toilet roll, it's a potential choking hazard for babies and toddlers
- Baby bath seats and rings - They give a false sense of security and can be dangerous. Babies can slip or get trapped underwater
- Baby walkers - Babies using them could fall against fires, down stairs and off decks. They could be burned by hot water from kettles or pots they shouldn't have been able to reach or poison themselves with medications and cleaning products parents thought were stored high enough.

Visit [www.safekids.org.nz](http://www.safekids.org.nz) for more information about how to keep kids safe at home, at play and on the road.

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/auckland/local-news/manukau-courier/3171377/Stuck-for-gifts>

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## 9. Tips for Buying Safe Toys (WCIV, South Carolina) | [TOP](#)


December 21, 2009

Charleston, SC - The holiday season is here and for many kids that means one thing: toys! While dashing from store to store in search of those last minute gifts, keep safety at the top of the list.

Each year, an estimated 169,300 toy-related injuries in children ages 14 years and younger are treated in hospital emergency rooms across the United States. With the new federal toy safety standards, passed by Congress and in place this year, parents can be reassured that the vast majority of toys on store shelves are safe.

Kristin Greeson, MUSC Safe Kids Trident Area coordinator, still believes parents should remain vigilant, "Shoppers should still make sure they are buying age appropriate toys and following important toy safety guidelines. The Consumer Product Safety Commission should continue to monitor the marketplace to ensure that toys comply with these standards."

Top five tips for making sure children's toys are safe during this holiday season:

- Before shopping for toys, consider the child's age, interest and skill level. A fun, but inappropriate toy for a particular child can be dangerous.
  - Make sure toys intended for older children are stored separately from those for younger children.
  - Keep toys with small parts away from children under age 3. They can choke on small toys and toy parts.
  - Check regularly for damage that could create small pieces that are choking hazards. Make any necessary repairs immediately, or discard damaged toys out of the reach of children.
  - Actively supervise children when they are playing with riding toys as well as any toy that has small balls and small parts, magnets, electrical or battery power, cords and strings, wheels or any other potential hazard. Simply being in the same room as your child is not necessarily supervising. Active supervision means keeping the child in sight and in reach while paying undivided attention.
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To stay informed about harmful products in the marketplace, parents can go to [www.recalls.gov](http://www.recalls.gov) and sign up for email alerts on recalled children's products. "If you get the emails sent to you each time a recall happens, you'll know right away which products to avoid," Greeson said.

Safe Kids Trident Area reminds parents that most toys are safe, especially if you buy from a reputable retailer. "That doesn't mean you have to go to a 'big box' store" Greeson says. "But if you shop at a locally-owned toy store, make sure that the owner is aware and vigilant about getting recalled items off the shelves."

If secondhand toys are purchased, or received from friends or relatives, Safe Kids Trident Area advises parents to visit [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov) and make sure the toy hasn't been recalled for safety reasons. Used toys should also be in good condition with all original parts and packaging, if possible. If a new toy comes with a product registration card, mail it in right away so the manufacturer can contact you if the item is ever recalled.

For more information about toy safety call 843-792-5327 or visit [www.usa.safekids.org](http://www.usa.safekids.org).

<http://www.wciv.com/news/stories/1209/689385.html>

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## 10. Drowning: Silent Killer of RP Kids (mb.com.ph, Philippines) [| TOP](#)

December 20, 2009 / Jenny F. Monongdo

Drowning is now the second leading cause of death among children aged one to 14 years old in the country, outnumbering deaths from serious diseases such as tuberculosis, malnutrition, diarrhea, cancer, and meningitis, local experts revealed in a recent study.

The findings were contained in an analysis on the drowning situation among kids conducted by Safe Kids Philippines, the Philippine Life Saving Society and the Department of Health entitled, "Child drowning in the Philippines: The silent killer speaks."

The study covered the period 1963 up to 2003 and utilized data from the World Health Statistics Annual, the National Epidemiology Center (NEC) and community-based drowning surveys in the municipality of Los Baños in Laguna and Iligan City in Mindanao.

It revealed that almost 2,000 children die yearly from drowning and 35.6 percent of all drowning victims are children up to 14 years of age.

"We have more severe flooding now... community surveys say 10 to 12 percent drowning fatalities happen during flash floods," said Dr. Rafael J. Consunji, President of Safe Kids Philippines, during a press conference.





It was also found that boys are twice more likely to die of drowning compared to girls of the same age, and that the most common site for drowning was open water such as seas, lakes, rivers and creeks as established in 77 percent of drowning cases in Los Baños and Iligan City.

“Ten percent of all drowning deaths per year occur during maritime disasters. The smaller cases such as small boats that sink do not get added to the list...throughout 40 years, drowning rates have remained largely unchanged. It is under-recognized as a public health priority,” Consunji lamented.

Dr. Soe Nyunt-U, World Health Organization (WHO) country representative, said that the country’s unique geographical and climatic conditions “pose a risk for drowning.”

He also said that the lack of legislation related to water safety has contributed largely to the growing number of drowning children.

Dr. Soe recommended a set of measures to curb this growing public health threat among children.

“Effective interventions include removing or covering water hazards, requiring isolation fencing – four-sided around swimming pools; wearing personal flotation devices; and ensuring immediate resuscitation,” he said.

“Promising interventions include ensuring the presence of lifeguards at swimming areas, and conducting targeted awareness-raising on drowning.”

Meanwhile, the Department of Health has begun a national electronic surveillance system on injuries, which does not include drowning, piloted in six hospitals – the Vicente Memorial Medical Center in Cebu, Davao Medical Center, East Avenue Medical Center, Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Center, Philippine Orthopedic Center and the Quirino Memorial Medical Center.

Dr. Yolly Oliveros, Director of the National Center for Disease Prevention and Control, said the list currently includes injuries related to road and traffic accidents, mauling and assaults, and falls.

“It does not capture drowning; that is why we have to strengthen community-based surveillance activities,” she said.

In Lingayen and Dagupan City in Pangasinan, Dr. Oliveros revealed that drowning incidents have increasingly forced local governments to raise awareness on the issue. As a result, authorities have started using reporting forms for every drowning incident.

The DoH official said this should be replicated nationwide so that the surveillance system can effectively list all drowning incidents in the country.

<http://www.mb.com.ph/articles/234955/drowning-silent-killer-rp-kids>



