



NEWS DIGEST  January 29, 2010

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

[Driveway Fatalities Reached 6 Last Year \(Nzherald.co.nz, New Zealand\)](#)

[Mountain Medicine: If You Are Going to Sled, Do it Safely \(azdailysun.com, Arizona\)](#)

[Firefighters Warn of CO Danger \(HJNews.com, Utah\)](#)

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**Risk Area News** (click on link for full text)

### **Pedestrian Safety**

[Cities Strive for Safer School Pathways \(jconline.com, Indiana\)](#)

[UPDATE: Police Say Shelby Children Hurt in Accident Are Recovering \(The Muskegon Chronicle, Michigan\)](#)

### **Home Safety**

[Experts Warn About Supervising Children After Three Hemet Children Fell from Open Windows \(PE.com, California\)](#)

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## **SAFE KIDS IN THE NEWS**

**Driveway Fatalities Reached 6 Last Year (Nzherald.co.nz, New Zealand) [TOP](#)**

January 26 / Kieran Nash

A child is taken to hospital every two weeks and four are killed each year after being run over in driveways, child safety campaigners say.

However, six children were killed last year, two in December.





Safe Kids director Ann Weaver said Christmas and the holiday period was a time when the most deaths happened.

"This is certainly the season for driveway deaths," Ms Weaver said.

She said more children played outside at this time because of the warmer weather and adults were more likely to be inattentive during the busy period.

"It's the worst kind of incident that can happen to a family when someone close to the family kills or injures a child. We have to look at it as a bigger issue of making everyone aware that these situations happen," Ms Weaver said.

"We have to learn and take note of the ways to prevent them."

Motorists needed to be made aware that vehicles have a 2m visibility "black spot" at their rear, putting toddlers especially at risk.

Glancing in the rear-view mirror after getting behind the wheel was an insufficient safety check because "if you place a toddler behind a car, you can't see them".

Some new cars had an inbuilt camera displaying the view from the rear of the vehicle on a dashboard screen, but not everyone could afford that.

"It is about being very cautious about reversing out of a driveway."

Ms Weaver said people should also fence off a play area for young children that does not allow them access to the driveway.

New Zealand has one of the highest rates of driveway deaths in the world.

Ms Weaver said New Zealanders typically have larger sections than other countries, making long driveways more common.

The death of 3-year-old Blenheim toddler Jason Baxter-Schroder in January came just a month after a coroner called for closer adult supervision around driveways.

Jason was riding a scooter along a footpath on Graham St in Blenheim when he was struck by a reversing car.





A report published in the New Zealand Medical Journal in 2002 identifies driveway design as a contributing factor to the accidents.

\* [www.safekids.org.nz](http://www.safekids.org.nz)

[http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=1&objectid=10622263](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10622263)

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## **Mountain Medicine: If You Are Going to Sled, Do it Safely (azdailysun.com, Arizona) [TOP](#)**

January 24 / Shawn Bowker

If sledding down a snow-covered hill is your family's idea of fun this winter, make sure you know how to sled smart before heading outside. Sledding is a popular wintertime activity, but it's important that you and your children know the risks associated with this fun activity. While sledding is a great winter activity, it isn't risk-free. From considerations of where to sled, to how to sled, to what to wear, taking safety measures while sledding can prevent the occurrence of serious injury.

### **MAKING SAFETY A PRIORITY**

More than 50 percent of sled-related emergency department visits in the U.S. are due to head and neck injuries, according to the journal *Pediatric Emergency Care*. That's why safe sledding starts with wearing the proper sledding equipment including warm clothes that allow for movement and a helmet, such as a bicycle helmet.

When your family is ready to sled, taking the time to look over the sledding location can help prevent injuries. Look for a big hill with a gentle slope to avoid collision with trees, bushes or other barriers such as fences. While you may think you can navigate away from these landmarks, the high speeds a sled or inner tube can reach may make slowing down or turning impossible.

Some common injuries seen at in Flagstaff Medical Center's Emergency Department associated with sledding include:

- Back fractures
- Broken arms
- Dislocated shoulders
- Head trauma
- Ages of patients range from toddlers to the elderly





Educating yourself and your children can keep you out in the snow instead of inside the hospital with a troublesome injury. FMC's Trauma Services and the Safe Kids Coalition in Coconino and Maricopa Counties are working together to decrease the number of injuries experienced while sledding. Sledding is fun, but it's more fun when parents have the peace of mind that their children are safe.

### **YOUR INJURY-FREE CHECKLIST**

If you and your child want to have fun out in the snow, it's important you do so properly. Take a few minutes to read over this checklist before you head outside:

- Always wear a helmet and be sure to fasten the strap.
- If you experience a fall, replace your helmet as soon as possible.
- Never sled headfirst -- sled on your knees instead.
- Never go sledding in the dark or during a snowstorm.
- Look for bare spots in the snow that can stop your sled suddenly.
- Don't sled over jumps or moguls.
- Never sled close to trees or large rocks.
- Put padded cushions on your sled to reduce back injury.
- Sled in a designated area.

*Shawn Bowker, R.N., C.E.N., C.R.R.N., is the Injury Prevention coordinator for Flagstaff Medical Center's Level I Trauma Center. Is there a health topic you'd like to know more about? Please write to Mountain Medicine, c/o FMC Public Relations, 1200 N. Beaver St., Flagstaff, AZ 86001. or visit FMC's web site at [FlagstaffMedicalCenter.com](http://FlagstaffMedicalCenter.com).*

[http://www.azdailysun.com/lifestyles/health-med-fit/columnists/article\\_40505125-5fa1-543e-9b5a-198401926f9c.html](http://www.azdailysun.com/lifestyles/health-med-fit/columnists/article_40505125-5fa1-543e-9b5a-198401926f9c.html)

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### **Firefighters Warn of CO Danger (HJNews.com, Utah) [LTOP](#)**

January 23 / Charles Geraci

Logan Fire Chief Mark Meaker says his department responds to roughly a half-dozen carbon monoxide calls each week, one or two of which involve it being present at "dangerous levels."

He urges all families in the valley to put one carbon monoxide detector on each floor of their home.

"It's dangerous stuff because you can't smell it, and you can't taste or see it," Meaker told The Herald





Journal on Friday. “We’ve had a couple of situations where we’ve had near death experiences because of carbon monoxide poisoning, and of course, down in Hyrum a couple years ago ... had two people killed.”

David Hull, a firefighter with the Logan Fire Department and member of Safe Kids Bear River Coalition, noted that carbon monoxide alarms are available at hardware stores for about \$20.

Meaker added, “In Cache Valley, I believe that we’ve saved (as many) or more lives with carbon monoxide detectors in the seven years I’ve been the fire chief than we have with smoke detectors. And that is not in any way, shape or form to diminish the criticality of people having working smoke detectors.”

The Bear River Health Department and Safe Kids Bear River give the following safety tips to protect families from carbon monoxide poisoning:

- Prevent carbon monoxide buildup in the first place — make sure heating appliances are in good working order and used only in well-ventilated areas.
- Don’t run a car engine in the garage, even to warm it up; move the car outside first.
- Install a carbon monoxide alarm outside every sleeping area, on every level of your home and at least 15 feet away from every fuel-burning appliance.
- When you check your smoke alarm batteries each month, check the batteries on your carbon monoxide alarms at the same time and replace the batteries twice a year.
- Never use a stove for heating.
- Have all gas, oil or coal burning appliances inspected by a technician every year to ensure they’re working correctly and are properly ventilated.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 400 Americans die from unintentional carbon monoxide poisoning each year. In addition, more than 20,000 have to visit the emergency room annually, while more than 4,000 are hospitalized due to carbon monoxide poisoning.

Low-income families that need carbon monoxide detectors can call Safe Kids Bear River at 435-792-6510.

<http://hjnews.townnews.com/articles/2010/01/23/news/news02-01-23-10.txt>

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## RISK AREA NEWS

**Cities Strive for Safer School Pathways (jconline.com, Indiana) [| TOP](#)**





January 27 / Amanda Hamon

When she walks her kindergarten daughter to class at Cumberland Elementary School, Susannah DeVault notices that crosswalks, beacons and vigilant crossing guards help keep the area safe.

"Walking to school, I think it's important. It's good exercise, and it's healthy," said the West Lafayette resident and mother of three. But "as a parent, you want to make sure your kids are safe."

The recent installation of several new safety features around schools -- including school zone and crosswalk beacons around Cumberland and Happy Hollow Elementary -- is part of a larger, rounded approach to encouraging more children to walk to school, city officials said.

That approach is now outlined in the city's Safe Routes to School master plan, a wide-ranging document released last week.

Paid for with part of a \$71,500 federal grant, the plan outlines specific ways the community can foster a culture that promotes walking to school, said Dave Buck, the city's engineer.

"The whole safe routes to school program is about safety, but it's also about the health benefits and the activity benefits of the kids getting out there and walking to school," Buck said.

"It's a much more holistic review of everything we can do as an entire community."

The master plan is the result of several months of meetings between city officials, consultants, police, teachers and parents who discussed ways West Lafayette's pathways could be made safer for children, Buck said.

Included in the plan are ways to educate children and parents about the benefits of walking or biking to school, traffic enforcement strategies for making school zones safer and strategies to make walking and biking enjoyable and easy.

For example, the plan suggests implementing curriculum-based education for children. That could include outlining environmental benefits of walking in elementary science classes and incorporating distance calculation in math classes.

The plan also calls for distributing materials to parents. Allaying parents' concerns about abductions and other dangers while walking is a big goal of Safe Routes to School, officials said.

Sally Miller, principal at Happy Hollow, said the school plans to hand out maps of walking routes in the fall.





That's also when the school will incorporate strategies suggested by the students to encourage walking and biking, she said.

In Lafayette, city officials plan to use a \$100,000 federal grant this summer to build sidewalks on 26th Street between Cason and Union streets near Lafayette Christian School and Sunnyside Middle School, city Engineer Jenny Miller said Tuesday.

The city will identify more Safe Routes to School projects once its trail and greenways master plan is complete this year, Jenny Miller said.

Sally Miller said the Safe Routes to School plan is an example of how community groups can come together and achieve benefits for all.

"It's just a win-win for everybody," she said.

West Lafayette city and school officials said they'll begin some preliminary surveying this spring and begin implementing major strategies in the fall.

<http://www.jconline.com/article/20100127/NEWS/1270326/Cities-strive-for-safer-school-pathways>

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**UPDATE: Police Say Shelby Children Hurt in Accident Are Recovering (The Muskegon Chronicle, Michigan) | [TOP](#)**

January 27

SHELBY — A young brother and sister who were struck by a vehicle on their way to elementary school early Tuesday are recovering, according to Michigan State Police from the Hart Post.

The 10-year-old girl and 5-year-old boy ran out in front of a Jeep on Ferry Street and were at first pinned under the vehicle, according to police. The accident was reported at 7:14 a.m.

Orlando Hernandez, 5, was transferred to Spectrum Health in Grand Rapids from Mercy Health Partners Lakeshore Campus in Shelby. The boy suffered a fractured skull, according to police. He was listed in serious condition Wednesday.

His sister, 10-year-old Crystal Millan, was treated at the Shelby hospital and released.

Sgt. Mike Cookenmaster said Wednesday that the driver, Lawrence Robert Howland, 50, of Shelby, could not stop in time and no charges are expected.





The children were on their way to attend an early morning program at Thomas Read Elementary School when the accident occurred.

[http://www.mlive.com/news/muskegon/index.ssf/2010/01/update\\_police\\_say\\_shelby\\_child.html](http://www.mlive.com/news/muskegon/index.ssf/2010/01/update_police_say_shelby_child.html)

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### **Experts Warn About Supervising Children After Three Hemet Children Fell from Open Windows (PE.com, California) | [TOP](#)**

January 24 / John Asbury, The Press-Enterprise

Hemet Fire Chief Matt Shobert said it's unusual for children to fall from second-story windows, but it's happened three times in the city in the last three months, prompting him to caution parents to keep a close watch when windows are open.

Three Hemet children, including a baby who died, have fallen while unsupervised.

In the latest accident, on Jan. 17, a 2-year-old girl was playing with her 4-year-old brother on her bed near the window, Hemet police said. The window was open about a foot and was blocked by a screen. When the boy went outside, the girl leaned on the screen to wave at him and the screen gave way, according to a Hemet police report.

The girl tumbled out, landing in a plastic trash can with plastic bottles inside. The girl had minor injuries and was taken to Riverside County Regional Medical Center in Moreno Valley.

Police said the parents had added a window lock, but the child loosened the lock and opened the window enough to slip through. Authorities did not release the family's name.

"Parents need to have a heightened level of awareness of kids or pets," Shobert said. "You take the fragile body of an infant falling 16 to 24 feet, it will sustain serious injuries."

A 9-month-old boy, Kaden Perez, fell to his death Dec. 12 when he leaned on a window screen, Hemet police said. The boy's father was a few feet away but could not react in time.

Authorities did not have details on the third accident.

Riverside County Injury Prevention has not recorded any previous deaths as a result of children falling from windows, said the agency's director, Olivia Ballesteros.





Nationally, from 1999 to 2006, 127 children younger than 15 were reported to have fallen from buildings. Falls that resulted in injury or death included four children younger than 1 year old and 80 children younger than 5.

An estimated 4,700 children younger than 14 are treated in hospital emergency rooms each year for injuries related to window falls, according to Safe Kids USA, an injury-prevention advocacy group.

Riverside County injury prevention experts said many children have been found to be playing on a bed before a fall happened, so parents should move beds away from windows.

Ballesteros said children can be hurt even if they are left alone for only a split second.

"Falls can be prevented, and caregivers play a key role in protecting them," Ballesteros said.

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[http://www.pe.com/localnews/inland/stories/PE\\_News\\_Local\\_W\\_window25.3fdde8b.html](http://www.pe.com/localnews/inland/stories/PE_News_Local_W_window25.3fdde8b.html)

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