

# Inquisitive and invincible 1½ – 3½ years

## safe kids now

### Skills your child is learning

Your child is now actively exploring their environment. They want to do everything without help or interference by the parent. Your child will begin to run and jump without fear of heights or danger. The smell, taste and texture of things become fascinating. This is when three out of every four children will incur an injury, many of which will need hospital attention.

### Common Safety Concerns

- A child's body is top heavy and their lack of balance causes them to overbalance easily.
- Getting into cupboards where poisons and medicines are stored.
- Climbing and jumping off furniture and running into sharp objects.
- Scald injuries from hot water are common in this age group due to pulling hot utensils or cups with hot contents down from the stove, bench or table.
- Falling from playground equipment.
- Running onto the road without looking, for example, after a ball.
- Driving over small children in driveways because they are difficult to see.

### Feeding

- Always use a 5 point harness in the highchair.
- Introduce appropriate eating behaviour to quieten your child while eating.
- Supervise your child when eating popcorn, hard lollies or chips. Fresh food such as apples and carrots need to be cut/sliced into small pieces. Nuts are not recommended for children under 5 years.



### Bathing

- Restrict your child's access to the bathroom when it is not in use. Close the door.
- Never leave your child unsupervised in the bath.
- When filling the bath, run the cold water first, then hot, then cold again and mix for an even temperature.
- Do not have electrical appliances within reach or near the bath.



### Sleeping

- Your child might start to climb out of the cot. It may be time to leave the sides down or move your child into a bed.
- Bunk beds are not designed for children to play on and not recommended for children under 8 years of age.
- Check the smoke alarm batteries in the bedroom regularly.
- Install night-lights to allow your child to confidently find the toilet.



### In the home

- Buy toys appropriate to your child's age.
- Ensure that poisons are stored away safely – preferably in a cupboard with a child-resistant lock located at least 1.5m from the ground.
- Use safety glass in low windows and doors or attach shatter resistant film.
- Pad sharp corners on furniture.
- Be aware that little fingers can be amputated by door hinges – prop doors open or use finger jam protectors.



## At play out and about

- Use a forward facing car restraint until your child outgrows it or weighs approximately 18kg.
- Never leave your child alone or unsupervised in the car. Take your child with you, even for short errands.
- Look out for water hazards. Fountains, creeks, dams and swimming pools expose the child to the risk of drowning. Never take your eyes off children when they are playing near water.
- Always hold your child's hand near the road and start teaching them to help you look for traffic before crossing.
- Make it clear to your child that the road is a dangerous place.



## In the back yard



- Always supervise your child near water.
- The law requires all private pools and spas in Victoria to have safety barriers erected around them. Kidsafe recommends isolation fencing with tension adjustable (self-closing) polymer gate hinges and a safe, child resistant magnetic gate latch.
- Dress your child in a hat and long sleeves and use sunscreen that is suitable for young children. Ask a pharmacist for help.
- Supervise your children when they are playing with dogs.
- Buy or build only play equipment that meets the Australian Standard and is suitable for your child's age, size and stage of development.
- Place impact absorbing material under play equipment.
- Dress your child in low fire risk clothes to minimise the risk of catching fire.
- Lock weed sprays, fertilisers and garden equipment in a garden shed.
- Clear out any junk from the back yard.
- Make sure your child wears a safety helmet when riding a tricycle, scooter or bicycle.
- Make sure children do not play on the driveway, footpath or road.

## safe kids now General Tips on Safety

1. Ensure you have current CPR (cardio-pulmonary resuscitation) skills.
2. Attach a CPR instruction card to your pool fence.
3. Have Emergency Services telephone numbers by your telephone in case of an emergency.
4. Ensure your child car restraint suits the child's size and weight. Have the installation checked by a restraint fitting station.
5. Fence off a safe play area for a toddler that is shaded and well clear of the driveway.
6. Buy or build a lockable cupboard and store all your hazardous chemicals in it to prevent child access.
7. Ask your Council if your pool fence and self closing gate meets Regulations.
8. Keep children away from dogs when the dogs are being fed.
9. Only buy toys that are suitable for the age and development of your child.
10. Be a good role model. Hold your child's hand in the street. Obey traffic signals and talk about how you decide when and where to cross the road.

### For more information

Your local Maternal and Child Health nurse	
Maternal and Child Health Line 24 hours	13 22 29
Your Local Council for pool fence regulations	Telephone directory
St John's Ambulance for a variety of first aid courses	13 13 94
Red Cross for CPR courses	9685 9990
Victorian Aquatic Industry Council for swimming courses	9761 3722

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