



CAPT NEWS, April 2010

Welcome to the Child Accident Prevention Trust's email news bulletin

Welcome to the latest edition of CAPT News, the newsletter from the Child Accident Prevention Trust which aims to equip you with the knowledge, resources and tools to make a significant contribution to preventing childhood accidents in your community.

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NEWS

Child Safety Week – safety messages to take away

If you're a regular recipient of CAPT News, you should now have received your Child Safety Week toolkit. If you've only recently signed up to the CAPT database, then it will be with you soon. To view the ideas booklet on-line go to <http://www.chilsafetyweek.org.uk/>

This year's bumper edition is packed full with even more information about risks, advice and ideas for activities, and competitions and quizzes for you to copy and use with parents and children. Don't

forget that you can order extra copies of the toolkit for your colleagues – see the back page of the Child Safety Week booklet for details.

The new on-line [Time Pledge](#) – where anyone who cares about children can pledge time – is a way to encourage real commitment to action against accidents. We want to encourage anyone prepared to make a pledge that, with very little time, they can do so much to protect children from serious accidents.

Please help us to promote the time pledge, for example, on your organisation's email footer, intranet or website, or in your newsletters or email bulletins. And don't forget to pledge some time yourself!

We also recommend that you have information for parents to take away with them and use as a guide when they get home. We have put together three special planner packs this year to make this as easy as possible. They contain all the resources you need to ensure that parents and carers you talk to take away important prevention messages. Each one includes a daily planner sheet to help you run your activity as easily as possible.

Order your pack now, to give you time to plan: www.capt.org.uk/packs/default.htm

The launch of the 2010 Child Safety Week website caused such a high level of interest our hosting company took the site down for an hour last Tuesday. So apologies if you tried the site and couldn't get onto it – please try again www.childsafetyweek.org.uk and don't forget to go back regularly.

Free home safety leaflet temporarily out of stock

CAPT regrets that its free leaflet *How safe is your child at home?* is temporarily unavailable. Orders for the leaflet have been much higher than anticipated, and it is currently out of stock.

The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), which licenses the publication from CAPT for free distribution throughout England, has been unable to reprint the leaflet in the six weeks running up to the general election, due to pre-election restrictions.

However, it does give CAPT the opportunity to revise the leaflet to include additional up-to-date information on blind cord safety and dog safety, which we know, following recent high profile incidents, are of concern to practitioners, parents and carers.

We appreciate your patience. The DCSF will reprint as a matter of priority as soon as the election is over, and stocks will again be available shortly after that.

Stocks of its complementary publication for professionals, Accidents and Child Development, are currently running low, but will also be revised to include information on blind cord safety and dog safety, and will be reprinted after the election.

Pre-election restrictions also have an impact on what we can promote in the newsletter, which is why it's a bit shorter than usual this month. Needless to say, we've got a bumper edition lined up for May!

Open windows – keep children safe from falls

At last, the sun's out, it's getting warmer and we can throw open the windows for a good blow through. Now that spring is finally here, it's a great time to remind parents to take steps to ensure their young children are safe from accidental falls out of open windows.

Please encourage the parents and carers of young children to:

- keep furniture such as beds and chairs away from windows
- fit window locks or safety catches to stop windows opening more than 6.5cm (2.5"), and ensure that family members know where keys are kept in case of fire.

Recent research has shown that parents are more concerned about fire safety and think that window locks will hamper their evacuation. Reinforce the message that the keys need to be kept close by.

While you're on the subject, you could also reiterate the value of them practising their escape in the event of a fire. See www.childsafetyweek.org.uk/child-safety-week/parents-section/safety-topics/fire-safety/

As you know, the theme for Child Safety Week is *Make time for safety*. It takes just minutes to carry out a quick check to make sure that there's nothing for children to climb on positioned near windows, and just an hour to fix a window lock or safety catch to stop windows from opening too wide.

Finally, as with all home safety advice, remind parents to be aware of the risks when they visit the homes of friends and family who may neither have young children nor take the same precautions.

More information about falls: www.childsafetyweek.org.uk/child-safety-week/parents-section/safety-topics/falls/

Finally, CAPT has also produced a leaflet with top tips on preventing falls: <http://www.capt.org.uk/homegarden/default.htm>

FOCUS ON... Holiday pool safety

Like the bad weather, music festivals and exam results, reports of drowning incidents while families are on holiday have tragically become part and parcel of summer press coverage, much to our dismay.

Over the last six years, 30 children under 10 have drowned in swimming pools while on holiday abroad. More than half of the victims were under four. Children aged two to three are most at risk. In many cases, the toddler wandered away from their parents and fell into an unsupervised pool.

With the bank holiday season in full swing and another report of an incident involving a three-year-old in a resort in Malaga earlier this month, we think it's timely to remind parents and carers of some of the realities of drowning:

- Children drown silently. They don't cry out for help and wave to be rescued. Instead they disappear under the surface of the water, often unseen.
- A significant number of holiday pool drownings happen on the first or last day of the holiday, when parents may be distracted and children can more easily slip away to explore.
- A young child can drown in just 5cm of water – that's a lot less water than the average paddling pool will be filled with.
- While pools at hotels, villas and campsites are the main culprits on holidays abroad, at home, most two and three-year-olds drown in the home or garden. A pond in a neighbour's garden can be very tempting for a toddler visiting the home of friends or family.
- It's not just young children who are at risk – older children love swimming in the sea and wild swimming, but strong currents, deep water, hidden objects and underwater vegetation are especially dangerous.

Check out pages 20-21 in your Child Safety Week Ideas Booklet for essential water safety advice for homes, gardens and on holiday. To sum up:

- Actively supervise young children near water.
- Empty paddling pools when they're not being used.
- If you have young children and a pond, fill it, fence it off or cover it. Ensure that children can't get through to neighbours' gardens which may have ponds. Check when you visit the homes of friends or family.
- Teach older children about the dangers of rip tides, strong currents and other hidden dangers in rivers, lakes and canals. Encourage them to swim in a swimming pool.
- Choose a beach with lifeguards to swim in the sea, learn what the safety flags mean and how to spot a rip tide.

For more information on swimming pool safety for children while on holiday, visit the RoSPA website: <http://www.rosipa.com/LeisureSafety/AdviceAndInformation/WaterSafety/child-holiday-swimming-pool-safety.aspx>

For safety at the beach and in the sea, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency has an excellent online resource for parents, teachers, children and teenagers: www.seasmart.org.uk

IN THE KNOW

Blind cord safety – CAPT recommends new resource

Hampshire Trading Standards Service have designed a poster on blind cord safety, which is widely available to help Children’s Centres, other trading standards services and other practitioners spread the word about the danger of blind cords for young children.

This simple, effective poster can be overprinted with any organisation’s logo. It costs just £78 (plus VAT) for 200 copies. CAPT fully supports the Hampshire commitment to blind cord safety and recommends the poster as a very cost-effective way of communicating with parents and carers.

You can see a copy here: <http://bit.ly/dyCAfK>. For more information about the poster, email: rsadvice@hants.gov.uk

They have also developed an innovative pack for Hampshire residents which includes:

- a copy of the British Blind and Shutter Association safety leaflet
- a blind cord warning label
- a cleat hook (for securing cords safely).

So far, around 1,000 packs have been distributed to schools, nurseries and Children’s Centres in the county. A further 6,000 are now available and will be promoted to parents via the County Council’s residents’ magazine and other channels.

Pauline McWilliams, Principal Trading Standards Officer, who led on the development of the resources, said: ‘Hampshire Trading Standards have worked closely with the British Blind and Shutter Association to raise awareness of the danger some blind cords can pose for young children. We have tried to create resources that will help child-focused organisations raise this issue with parents and for the parents and carers themselves.’

For further information, visit their website: <http://bit.ly/d4Dtxr>

Risky behaviour peaks at adolescence says new report

Teenagers take the most risks compared to other groups, with 14-year-olds displaying the most risky behaviour. That’s the conclusion of research carried out by scientists at the UCL Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience, published last month.

While teenagers, unlike children, are good at weighing up the pros and cons of a risky decision, they were found to enjoy the thrill of a risky situation, especially when they had a lucky escape.

The study of 86 boys and men between the ages of 9 and 35 involved a computer gambling game. Co-author of the research, Dr Sarah-Jayne Blakemore explained the value of the findings in

understanding the ‘health paradox’ – the peak in physical health at the same time as high levels of death and injury.

This report provides child safety practitioners with valuable insight into teenagers’ behaviour, and their predilection for taking risks such as dangerous driving, unsafe climbing, swimming and diving.

Past research has suggested that teenagers associate risk-taking behaviour with misbehaviour, which is linked to a need to create a new identity, distinct from that of their parents and in tune with the priorities of their peer group. It has also suggested that teenagers are unsure about the extent to which risks can be controlled, and struggle to understand probability and the likelihood of an accident happening.

This new lab-based research suggests that teenage boys can foresee consequences and actively choose to take risks, as they enjoy winning in a lucky escape situation.

“Understanding why adolescents take such risks is important for public health interventions and for families,” said Dr Blakemore.

For further information: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/news/news-articles/1003/10032503>

SAFETY SIGNPOSTS – News in brief

Case study results in article in Love It! Magazine

Following a request for case studies in a recent newsletter, Valerie Jackson, a mother from Bagshot, Surrey, came forward to tell us her story of her 10-month-old son Gabriel who suffered horrific scalds when he pulled a cup of hot tea over himself.

PR agency Iris, which has been working with CAPT, pitched Valerie’s story to weekly women’s magazine Love It! who published it earlier this month.

We would like to thank Valerie and Gabriel (who’s now a bright and bubbly four-year-old) for coming forward and for Bagshot Children’s Centre for putting Valerie in touch with CAPT.

Case studies are critical to raising awareness, especially around Child Safety Week. Please put the word out. We’re particularly interested in hearing from parents whose child had a ‘near miss’ that could have resulted in a serious accident, eg chewing a detergent capsule, playing with a blind cord or hanging out of an upstairs window.

If they do want to tell their story, please contact pam.prentice@capt.org.uk

Call for papers for 2010 RoSPA Home Safety Congress

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) has put out a call for papers for its National Home Safety Congress in Glasgow on 1-2 November.

The congress will explore different interpretations of the value of home safety, starting with the core principle of valuing quality of life through to evaluating the effectiveness of the methods used by agencies to promote safety in the home.

Organisers are looking for abstracts on subjects including:

- Effective methods for evaluating home safety solutions
- Availability and importance of good quality data
- Value of home safety promotion
- Improving quality of life through home safety and education.

The congress is open to all home safety professionals. Those interested in submitting a paper should send a 500 word abstract to Sheila Merrill, RoSPA, Edgbaston Park, 353 Bristol Road, Birmingham B5 7ST or email: smerrill@rospa.com by Friday 28 May.

Potential delegates should register an interest at www.rospa.com/events. CAPT will be attending – see you there!

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