



CAPT NEWS, October 2009

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.

In this issue:

1. Thermostatic mixing valves
2. *Mind the Road!* Road safety resources for childminders
3. Focus on... Sparkler safety
4. In the know:
 - Socket covers – a waste of money?
 - Drowning in toxic smoke
 - Preparing for Christmas
 - Gas and cowboys don't mix!
5. Safety signposts – news in brief:
 - Free CAPT resources
 - Sleeping with your baby
 - European child safety conference
 - Health and wellbeing in education conference
 - Postal strike
 - An apology – problems with our phones

Thermostatic mixing valves – take the initiative

Earlier this year, the government announced that it will be compulsory to fit safety devices called thermostatic mixing valves (TMVs) to bath taps in all new homes in England and Wales. While implementation has been postponed until April 2010, we are urging councils and housing associations to press ahead with installing TMVs.

Every week, four children are admitted to hospital with serious scalds caused by bath water. Their average age is just two. A young child's skin is much thinner than an adult's and it can take just five seconds for a toddler to suffer third degree burns from water from a bath hot tap. Children may need painful skin grafts until they stop growing, many years later.

In contrast to the cost of treating a child in intensive care (£2,500 a day for an average of 40 days), the £40 it costs to bulk buy a TMV is tiny. Factor in ongoing medical costs, and the psychological costs of serious scalds for children and their parents, and the merits of TMVs are unquestionable. For more information on TMVs see: www.safehotwater.co.uk

If you work with parents and carers, do encourage them to take measures to prevent their children being seriously scalded at bath time:

- Always start with cold water when running a bath, then top up with hot
- Stay with young children during bath time and don't let them play with the hot tap
- Get a TMV fitted by a plumber.

For more information on keeping children safe from scalds, see our website:

<http://www.capt.org.uk/parents/safety-advice/burns-and-scalds.html>

Mind the Road! Online road safety resources for childminders

CAPT has launched a new online resource aimed at childminders. Mind the Road! – www.mindtheroad.org.uk – has been produced with the support of the Department for Transport, and brings together a broad range of free downloadable resources to support childminders working with children and families.

Developed with help from the National Childminding Association and road safety teams in Oxfordshire and Manchester, the site contains advice from childminders themselves, guidance from road safety experts, quizzes to test your knowledge of road safety, and resources and quizzes designed to be used with children.

Ian Evans, CAPT's Head of Education and Engagement, explains: "The best way to develop road safety awareness in younger children is to integrate it into their day-to-day activities and routines. So childminders are very well placed to teach and reinforce road safety to the children they care for.

"These materials draw on the real-life experiences of childminders as well as the specialist knowledge of road safety experts. We hope they will serve as a valuable resource for teaching children as well as a road safety refresher for adults".

Please help us to promote the website as widely as possible, by publicising it to your local childminding colleagues.

FOCUS ON... Sparkler safety

Amazing fireworks displays, bright crackling bonfires and dazzling sparklers – it's no wonder that children love this time of year. But sparklers can reach temperatures of 2,000 degrees centigrade – 20 times the boiling point of water. And three sparklers burning together generate the same heat as a blowtorch!

With just a week to go to bonfire night, it's not too late to get these essential sparkler safety messages across to parents, carers and children themselves:

- Don't give sparklers to children under five – they're too young to safely hold a sparkler and don't understand why they might be dangerous.
- Always supervise children using sparklers.
- Make sure that children who hold sparklers wear gloves.
- Show older children how to hold sparklers – at arm's length, away from their body.

- Teach children not to wave sparklers near anyone else or to run while holding them.
- Avoid dressing children in loose or flowing clothes as they may catch light.
- Never hold a baby or young child if you have a sparkler in your hand – they may reach out for it without understanding the dangers.
- Used sparklers can still be very hot, so put the hot ends into a bucket of water or soil once they've gone out, to stop anyone picking them up again.

CAPT is supporting the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) on this year's firework safety campaign – look out for safety advice in your local paper. For more information on firework safety, log on to our website www.capt.org.uk/specialfireworks. You can also encourage parents and carers to visit www.direct.gov.uk/fireworks

IN THE KNOW

'Socket covers may be a waste of money' – Which?

The consumers' association Which? believes that plug socket covers designed to stop children putting their fingers in electrical wall sockets may be a waste of money.

By law, all British electrical sockets must have safety shutters that prevent children from accessing the live terminals. This safety feature makes plug socket covers – one of the most popular items of child safety equipment – unnecessary.

The Electrical Safety Council (ESC) has long voiced concern over the usefulness of socket covers. Its Director General, Phil Buckle, says: "Parents should be reassured that socket-outlets in the UK – which are generally regarded as having the safest design in the EU – already have an in-built safety shutter mechanism designed to prevent access to live parts".

Which? also raised concerns that, in a worst case scenario, some socket covers might actually increase the risk of a child being electrocuted. It found that some socket covers are relatively easy to remove. If a child removed the socket cover and then reinserted it upside down, it would open the safety shutters and leave the live terminals open and dangerous.

Phil Buckle is keen to reassure parents that this scenario is very unlikely: "There does not appear to be a substantial body of evidence to support a ban on socket covers because they might be used inappropriately. The ESC, as the UK's leading electrical safety charity, continuously investigates and reassesses risks, and we would act accordingly if evidence were to suggest that covers could be dangerous.

"In the meantime, we advocate educating children (and those responsible for their care) about electrical safety". For more information visit the Electrical Safety Council's website: www.esc.org.uk/safety-in-the-home/for-children.html

See the Which? report for more information: www.which.co.uk/news/2009/09/plug-socket-covers-may-be-waste-of-money---185233.jsp?src=rss156452

Drowning in toxic smoke

You run the risk of drowning in toxic smoke if you don't have a working smoke alarm in your home. That is the stark message from the new 'Fire Kills' campaign.

Two to three breaths of toxic smoke can dramatically affect your ability to breathe, making you feel like you're drowning. New survey results from the Fire Kills campaign show that many people don't realise the dangers of toxic smoke. Of those surveyed:

- 48 per cent think the smell of smoke would alert them to a fire
- 43 per cent believe they could survive for over two minutes in a smoke-filled room
- 18 per cent believe a pet or someone else would alert them to a house fire.

In fact, without a working smoke alarm, your risk of dying in a house fire is doubled, as you are quickly overcome by poisonous smoke – after two to three breaths you're unconscious. And toxic smoke can kill a child in under a minute.

Encourage the families you work with to get smoke alarms fitted, test them weekly and plan how they would escape from their homes if a fire broke out.

All UK fire brigades provide free home fire safety checks and fit free smoke alarms in the homes of vulnerable families. Find your local fire and rescue service via our website:

<http://www.capt.org.uk/parents/safety-advice/fire-safety.html>

To see the campaign video and for more fire safety advice, visit the directgov website:

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/NI1/Newsroom/DG_181083

Preparing for Christmas

With eight weeks to go, now is the ideal time to start to encourage parents and carers to think about child safety at Christmas.

CAPT already produces a one-stop guide to toy safety – *How safe are your child's toys?* The leaflet gives up-to-date advice on choosing toys, understanding safety marks, picking toys that are right for a child's age and buying pre-used toys. It's the perfect guide for parents who are about to start Christmas shopping. You can see a sample on our website:

<http://www.capt.org.uk/samples/default.htm>

We will be working with the Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) to develop online resources for practitioners on staying safe at Christmas – details in the next issue of *CAPT News*. If you are planning any media or education work around Christmas, please do tell us about your plans: pam.prentice@capt.org.uk

Gas and cowboys don't mix!

You may have seen the new TV ad that shows – in a clip from *Blazing Saddles* – how gas and cowboys don't mix. But there's a serious message behind the humour. There are 7,500 unregistered gas engineers in Britain, carrying out 250,000 gas installations each year – and one in ten of these illegal gas installations is dangerous.

Gas Safe Register – which replaced the CORGI gas registration scheme in Great Britain and the Isle of Man in April 2009 – is keen to encourage householders to check that their gas engineer is Gas Safe registered. All Gas Safe registered businesses are listed on their website www.GasSafeRegister.co.uk. You should always ask to see the engineer's Gas Safe Register ID card, which shows the type of gas work they are qualified to do.

You can help to spread the word about Gas Safe Register by distributing free marketing materials – there are leaflets, posters, FAQs for your website or noticeboards, and ready-to-use text for your newsletters and emails. To request your free materials, please email marketing@gassaferegister.co.uk with the subject heading 'Promotional Pack'.

SAFETY SIGNPOSTS – NEWS IN BRIEF

Free distribution of two CAPT publications hailed a success

Earlier this year, the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) licensed two of CAPT's highly-regarded child safety publications for free distribution to practitioners in England: a leaflet for parents and carers, *How safe is your child at home?*, and a guide for practitioners, *Accidents and child development*.

In the first five months of the agreement, DCSF distributed over 120,000 leaflets and over 18,000 guides. Copies of both publications are still available from DCSF by calling 0845 60 222 60, quoting the following references:

- For *How safe is your child at home?*: DCSF-00254-2009LEF-EN
- For *Accidents and child development*: DCSF-00255-2009BKT-EN

Not based in England? You can still order the publications direct from CAPT. See our website: <http://www.capt.org.uk/sales/default.htm>

Sleeping with your baby

New research has found that, for half of all unexpected deaths of babies in South West England, babies died while sleeping with a parent or carer. The risks were heightened if parents fell asleep on the sofa or under the influence of drink or drugs.

The Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths (FSID) and the Department of Health advises parents that the safest place for a baby to sleep is in its own cot, in the room with them – advice we reflect in our baby safety booklet *Keep Your Baby Safe*.

According to FSID, parents whose babies are at greatest risk of cot death are very young mums, often single. This is why FSID has launched a website: www.bubbalicious.co.uk a baby-care focussed, social networking site for mums and dads under 20.

For more information, visit the FSID website: <http://fsid.org.uk/Page.aspx?pid=667>

European Child Home Safety conference, 2/3 November 2009, Stratford on Avon

RoSPA and the European Child Safety Alliance of EuroSafe have joined forces to stage the first European conference devoted to child home safety.

The aim of the conference is to bring together practical and effective solutions to this issue from across the continent, with both speakers and delegates expected from across Europe. For more information visit: www.rosipa.com/events/eurochildsafety/index.htm

Henry Watson, Head of the Child Safety Unit at DCSF, is due to give the keynote presentation at the conference on Monday 2 November.

Health and Wellbeing in Education conference, 10/11 November 2009, Birmingham

Don't forget to come and see us on Stand 68 at the NEC in Birmingham. We'll be there for the duration, giving away copies of *How safe is your child at home?* and *Accidents and child development* (see above).

Why not come and find out more about the latest research, initiatives and policies on child safety or simply find out what we do and how it can help you in your work.

Katrina Phillips, CAPT's Chief Executive, will be chairing a day-long programme on Child Safety and Accident Prevention on Tuesday 10 November.

Admission is free of charge if you work in the health or education sectors, or in the public or voluntary sectors. Register online at: www.healthwellbeingeducation.co.uk or call 0151 709 8979 and ask for delegate registration.

Postal strike

Though the postal strike may have ended by the time you receive this e-bulletin, it's likely there will still be a backlog of post at sorting offices. So, to make sure your order reaches us, please email it to sales@capt.org.uk or fax it to us at 020 7608 3674.

We would also encourage you to pay by BACS rather than cheque – see your invoice for details. And, to help speed the process up, we can email your invoice to you – just let us know at the time of ordering.

For more general enquiries, please visit our website www.capt.org.uk. If you can't find the answer you need there, email us at safe@capt.org.uk.

An apology – problems with our phones

We do apologise if you've phoned us recently, only for your call to be cut short or lost while the call is being transferred. There has been a problem with phone lines in our area that BT is working hard to correct. Please do try again. And, if you are still struggling to get through to us, drop us an email at safe@capt.org.uk.

This newsletter has been sent to you from the Child Accident Prevention Trust, Canterbury Court (1.09), 1-3 Brixton Road, London SW9 6DE. Registered charity no. 1053549. Registered in England and Wales as a company limited by guarantee no. 3147845. Registered office as above. VAT registration no. 740387826.

We're keen to spread information about child accident prevention as widely as possible, so we're happy for you to forward this email to colleagues or other networks, or use parts of it in your own (non-commercial) publications. The e-bulletin is also available on our website as a pdf file. Visit www.capt.org.uk and click on 'CAPT News'.

If you have been forwarded this email by a colleague, and want to subscribe yourself, please visit www.capt.org.uk and click on '[Join our mailing list](#)'.

If you do not wish to receive these newsletters, please email news@capt.org.uk with the word UNSUBSCRIBE in the subject line and tell us in the body of the message the email address to which it was sent.

We are able to bring you this email bulletin thanks to a three-year strategic grant from the Department for Children, Schools and Families.