

Safe days out and about

Quiz for parents and carers

Exploring the world around them is an important part of a child's development. The park, pool, countryside and seaside are wonderful places for children to visit – so don't let an accident spoil their fun.

Find out how to make your family days out safe days out – by following our safety tips below. Then test your knowledge in our true/false quiz.

Safety tips

- ✎ Don't leave children under eight alone in or near water. Even shallow water can be dangerous for very young children. And children don't wave their arms or thrash about when they are drowning – they just slip under the water.
- ✎ Don't rely on arm bands or swim jackets to keep your child safe. They are designed to help a child learn to swim – not to keep them afloat.
- ✎ Encourage children to swim in public swimming pools where there are trained lifeguards.
- ✎ If swimming at the beach, look out for beaches that have lifeguards – and read and follow the safety signs. Always swim between the red and yellow flags because these are the areas patrolled by the lifeguards.
- ✎ Canals, rivers and flooded gravel pits are not safe places for anyone to swim. There may be dangerous obstacles under the surface that swimmers can get injured or tangled up with. And sudden changes of depth and water temperature create risks for even strong swimmers.
- ✎ Teach children never to eat anything they pick in parks, gardens and the countryside – without checking with an adult first. And teach older children to recognise common poisonous plants such as ivy with berries, yew, deadly nightshade and foxgloves.
- ✎ Older children like to prove themselves to their friends. They often enjoy taking risks. Every year many children are seriously injured and some die, from falls from buildings and other high places. Teach children and young people the dangers of playing on building sites and scaffolding. And to observe 'keep out' areas on cliff paths.
- ✎ Teach children to stay away from railway lines and electricity pylons, and to respect 'danger' and 'keep out' signs.
- ✎ Remember that farms are workplaces not playgrounds. Children may be run over by tractors or trailers, drown in slurry lagoons or grain stores, or be trampled by large animals. They can also have nasty falls from haystacks or be poisoned by chemicals they find in bottles, bags and sheep dips.
- ✎ If you want your children to learn about farms, it's better to take them to farm parks which are designed for families – and usually have designated play areas for children.

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True or false quiz

Decide whether you think the statements below are true or false. Tick the right answer in the box. Then check how well you did against the answers.

1 Children are completely safe from drowning when they wear a swimming jacket or water wings.

true false

2 Farms are ideal places for children to play.

true false

3 It's an 'old wives tale' that ivy is harmful to children. It is really quite safe.

true false

4 You should never swim in a flooded gravel pit because you don't know what's in it.

true false

5 At the beach it is best to swim between the red and yellow flags.

true false

Answers

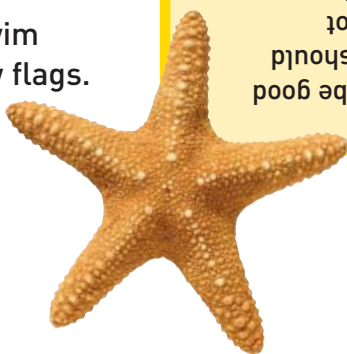
1. False. Life jackets and water wings can be good aids in teaching children to swim. But they should never replace adult supervision. They are not designed to keep children afloat if they get into difficulties in the water.

2. False. Working farms contain lots of hazards that can cause serious injuries to children. Look out for farm parks, which are designed for family outings, as well as marked children's play spaces in areas such as woodland and parks.

3. False. The berries on ivy plants are poisonous. And the leaves are an irritant. Teach children never to pick or eat ivy berries. Avoid growing ivy in your garden if you have young children.

4. True. All sorts of junk, including sharp and rusty objects, get dumped in gravel pits. Swimmers – of all ages – can be injured or get tangled up and drown. There may also be changes of depth and temperature that can be dangerous to swimmers.

5. True. The area between the red and yellow flag is patrolled by lifeguards so is the safest place to swim. Never swim in areas marked by a checked flag – these areas are meant for small crafts like surfboards and kayaks.



For more information about keeping children safe, visit the Child Accident Prevention Trust's website www.capt.org.uk