

Child Safety Update



Become a Superhero of Summer Safety

(NAPS)—You can protect the kids you care about from the playground falls, lawn mower accidents and campfire and fire pit burns that are common and potentially life-altering childhood injuries.

Darren Rottmann knows firsthand how easily accidents can happen. He lost his leg in a lawn mower accident when he was 3 ½ years old and was treated at Shriners Hospitals for Children®—St. Louis, where he was fitted for different prosthetic legs as he grew. Despite his injury, Rottmann was able to walk then run and eventually, play baseball, basketball and football.

Now 37, Rottmann is a certified prosthetist at that same hospital where he was treated. He was inspired to help children the same way he was helped as a boy. “I think it puts the kids’ minds and their parents’ minds at ease to see that somebody else has been through it,” he explains.

Today, Rottmann is helping Shriners Hospitals for Children encourage kids to become *Superheroes of Summer Safety* by learning and following a few simple rules of safe summer play.

Mowing Matters

- Teach children to never play on or around a lawn mower, even when it is not in use. They should never be permitted to walk beside, in front of or behind a moving mower.

- Children under 6 years of age should be kept inside while you are mowing.

- Children should be at least 12 years of age before operating a push lawn mower and at least 16 years of age before operating a riding lawn mower.

Playground 101

- Choose playgrounds appropriate for the child’s age and that offer shock-absorbing surfaces.

- Teach children that pushing and shoving can result in accidents and injuries.

- Remind kids to use the slide one at a time and to wait until it is completely clear before taking their turn. Teach them to always face forward with their legs straight in front and to never slide down headfirst.

- Remind children to swing sitting down. Encourage them to wait until the swing stops before getting off and to be careful when walking in front of moving swings.

Make a Safe Splash

- Teach children to never swim



Darren Rottmann fitting a patient for a new prosthetic.

alone or go near water without an adult present.

- Give children your undivided attention when they are swimming or near any body of water.

- Always jump in feet first to check the depth before diving into any body of water.

- Never dive in the shallow end of the pool or into above-ground pools.

Fun on the Water

- Always have children wear Coast Guard–approved, properly fitted life jackets while on a boat, around an open body of water or when participating in water sports.

- Educate yourself. According to the U.S. Coast Guard, 86 percent of boating accident deaths involve boaters who have not completed a safety course.

- Always check water conditions and forecasts before going out on the water.

Fire Safety Simplified

- Teach kids to never play with matches, gasoline, lighter fluid or lighters. Store these items up and away from young children.

- Do not leave children unattended near grills, campfires, fire pits or bonfires. Always have a bucket of water or fire extinguisher nearby.

- Take your child to a doctor or hospital immediately if he or she is injured in a fire or by fireworks.

Learn More

For further tips on preventing injuries and to learn to be a *Superhero of Summer Safety*, visit shrinershospitalsforchildren.org/safesummer.

Shriners Hospitals for Children changes lives every day through innovative pediatric specialty care, world-class research and outstanding medical education. Their 22 locations provide advanced care for children with orthopaedic conditions, burns, spinal cord injuries, and cleft lip and palate regardless of the families’ ability to pay. Learn more at shrinershospitalsforchildren.org.