

Protect Children From Being Injured In Lawnmower Accidents

(NAPSA)—A few common sense precautions can help prevent lawnmower related injuries from befalling children.

Each year, Shriners Hospitals for Children treat a number of children who have been seriously injured as a result of power lawnmower incidents.

Many of these incidents result in the loss of fingers, toes, limbs and even eyes. Tragically, some lawnmower accidents can result in permanent brain damage or death.

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, one in every five deaths caused by a lawnmower involves a child.

The Commission estimates that most of the deaths to children occur when a child falls off a riding mower and is run over, or when a child is in the path of a moving mower.

Many of these unfortunate situations could have been avoided or their impact reduced dramatically if the following safety tips from Shriners Hospitals and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission were followed:

- Read the owner's manual and know how to operate the equipment.
- Don't cut grass when it is wet.
- Don't allow passengers on a riding mower.
- Keep children out of the yard and indoors while you're mowing the lawn.
- It is recommended that children under the age of 14 not be



Following a few simple precautions can help avoid injuries to children due to lawnmowers.

- allowed to operate a lawnmower.
- Check your lawn for items such as sticks, rocks, toys or hand tools. Make sure nothing is hidden in the grass.
 - Handle fuel with care.

Always wipe up fuel spills as soon as they occur.

- Never fill the fuel tank on a mower while it is still hot.
 - Never smoke or use any kind of flame around gasoline.
 - Wear appropriate clothing and shoes. Wear long pants, long-sleeved shirts, eye protection and heavy gloves. Wear sturdy closed-toe shoes with slip-resistant rubber soles.
 - Don't remove or disable guards, shields or any other safety devices.
 - Use a lawnmower equipped with an automatic blade cut-off. Stay behind the handle until the blade stops. Never reach under a mower while it is still operating.
 - If you need to remove debris to check the blade, disconnect the wire from the spark plug.
- For more information on lawn mower safety, or the Shriner's network of 22 hospitals that treat children with orthopedic problems, burns and spinal cord injuries, please write to International Shrine Headquarters, Public Relations Department, 2900 Rocky Point Drive, Tampa, FL 33607.

If you know a child the Shriners can help, call 1-800-237-5055 in the United States and 1-800-361-7256 in Canada, or you can visit their Web site at www.shriner-shq.org. Shriners Hospitals provide free treatment to children under age 18 without regard to race, religion or relationship to a Shriner.