



Autumn Safety Issue 2023

Road and Cycle Safety Advice

With children and young people returning to schools in autumn, emphasising travel and road safety practices is particularly important. This includes:

- Pedestrian safety – encourage young children to hold an adult's hand when crossing the road, teach children the Green Cross Code from age 5, remind older children to not use their phones or listen to music when crossing the roads.
- Making sure your child's car seat is the right one for their height/weight and checking your car seat is compatible with your car. For more information on choosing the correct car seat for your child, check guidance on the [Child Accident Prevention Trust](#) website.

Cycling is a healthy and eco-friendly way to travel to school. Cycle safety advice includes:

- Encouraging children to wear a helmet and high-visibility clothing.
- Ensuring cycles are fitted with front and back lights to ensure cyclists remain visible.
- Discouraging use of phones and earphones while cycling.

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

Young people today are facing a significant number of stressors, including the rising cost of living and the COVID-19 pandemic and with schools reopening this Autumn, ensuring the mental health of children and young people is a priority now more than ever.

Some tips to help support your child's mental health include:

- Encouraging your child to maintain a daily routine, including eating regular and healthy meals, sleeping well and exercising regularly.
- Looking out for signs that your child might be in distress, including losing interest in daily life, talking about death, exhibiting mood swings (upset, anxious, angry, agitated).
- Listening to your child's concerns and seeking professional help from school/college staff or your local GP if you are worried about your child's mental health.

Various resources are available to help you support your child's emotional wellbeing, including [Every Mind Matters](#), [Kooth](#) and [MindEd](#). You can also access the [Suffolk Emotional Wellbeing Hub](#), which provides advice for anyone concerned about the mental health of a child or young person and provides the number for a helpline to call if additional support is required.

Advice on Asthma

Asthma is a common respiratory condition that can affect both children and adults. Asthma symptoms, such as wheezing and breathlessness, can be triggered by multiple factors, including colds and flu, allergens like dust and pollen, smoking, stress and anxiety. Awareness of [asthma triggers](#), regular asthma checks (with a peak flow meter at home) and making an [action plan](#) are important in managing asthma proactively and preventing hospital admissions.

Schools in Suffolk are being encouraged to join the [Asthma Friendly Schools Initiative](#) to help schools manage asthma exacerbations and prevent avoidable harm to children with asthma.





Other tips to reduce the number of asthma exacerbations include:

- Keeping the home smoke-free by encouraging children and adults with asthma (as well as other members in the household) to stop smoking and vaping.
- Turning off car engines while stopped or waiting – keeping car engines on for longer than necessary can contribute to poor air quality and make asthma symptoms worse.

Vaping and Smoking

Evidence suggests that while the prevalence of smoking in young people is falling, the use of e-cigarettes (vapes) is on the rise. Current research highlights the risks to lung health when vapes are used, particularly in children and young people who have never smoked previously. Furthermore, it is currently illegal for children under the age of 18 to smoke.

Immunisations

Vaccines are the most effective way to prevent infections and stop the spread of disease, particularly in the winter months. Campaigns that warn against vaccinating your child are often not based on scientific evidence and have led to the rise of certain infections such as measles and mumps. For more information about vaccine safety and the NHS vaccination schedule, visit the [NHS website](#) or contact your local GP.

ADVICE FOR PARENTS: 'Health and Wellbeing in the First Few Years' Booklet

Click [here](#) for the latest edition of the 'Health and Wellbeing in the First Few Years' booklet, which is an invaluable online resource for parents and carers of young children. This guide contains advice about taking care of babies and infants and covers a wide range of topics from feeding and healthy eating to safe sleeping to bonding and communication. It also provides information about common childhood illnesses, including symptoms to look out for, guidance on preventing the spread of disease and advice on when to contact a health professional.

Safer Sleeping for Infants

Research has shown that safe sleep practices are important in reducing the chance of babies dying suddenly with no explanation, often termed sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) or cot death. In the UK, SIDS accounts for 300 infant deaths each year and can be prevented by:

- Putting your baby to sleep on their back with their feet at the foot of the cot.
- Ensuring your baby sleeps on a firm and flat mattress with no pillows, duvets, weighted bedding, bumpers, nests or sleep positioners.
- Not exposing your baby to smoke during pregnancy or after birth, particularly at home.
- Keeping the room temperature between 16 and 20 degrees and ensuring babies do not get too hot or cold during the night by keeping their head and face uncovered.
- Not lying down with your baby after smoking, drinking alcohol or taking medications that may cause drowsiness.
- Breastfeeding your baby – support for infant feeding in your area is available [here](#).

Download the [Baby Check App](#) for FREE to learn about the simple checks parents can do if their baby is showing signs of illness and advice about when to seek medical advice.





Safety at Home

Children under 5 are at risk of being injured at home, with falls accounting for the majority of non-fatal accidents and threats to breathing (e.g. choking) causing the highest number of deaths. The risk can be reduced through improvements in the home environment, increased awareness and greater product safety.

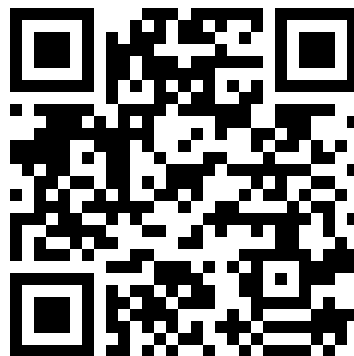
These are some tips to ensure the safety of your children at home:

- **Falls** can be prevented by ensuring stairs and rooms are well-lit, clearing stairs and the floor from toys and other tripping hazards, securing furniture to the wall and locking away medicines and household cleaning materials.
- **Stairgates** are useful when your child becomes mobile but can be hazardous when used incorrectly. Prior to installation, take time to read the instructions provided. Fit screw-fit stairgates at the top and bottom of the stairs and check safety features. Do not stack two stairgates on top of each other and do not attempt to make your own!
- **Button batteries** are used to power certain household objects but can be hazardous when swallowed due to the risk of choking and internal damage. Keep these away from children and seek medical advice if you suspect your child of swallowing one.

CDOP Newsletter Feedback

We would love your feedback on the CDOP newsletter and how you think we can improve for next time. Please scan the QR code below to answer our short survey:

<https://forms.office.com/e/EBX4hhZ5LM>



If you have any queries, please contact Dr Mash Maidrag - mashbileg.maidrag@suffolk.gov.uk

