

# winter safety 101

**That chill in the air and the first snow of the year is always an exciting time, but it's important to remember these cold weather tips to keep your children safe and warm while they enjoy this winter wonderland.**



## Bundling Up

- Dress your child and/or infant warm for outdoor activities. Wearing multiple layers will keep your kids dry and warm. A good rule of thumb for older babies and younger children is to dress them in one layer of clothing more than an adult would wear.
- Keep blankets, quilts, pillows and other loose bedding out of an infant's sleeping environment to help prevent the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). Instead, use one-piece sleepers or wearable blankets to provide warmth.
- When your child heads outside to play make sure they have a snack before they leave. The calories will give their bodies extra energy in the winter weather.
- Ultimately there is no recommended amount of time kids should be allowed to play out in the cold, but when the cold becomes unpleasant or uncomfortable then it's time to go inside.

## Winter Health

- For infants frequent bathing may dry out or irritate the skin during the colder, drier months. Pediatricians recommend bathing two to three times a week for the first year.

- Be sure to educate your child on the benefits of hand washing during the winter season and teach them to sneeze or cough into the bend of their elbow. Cold weather does not cause the flu, but the germs associated with the flu are more commonly spread in the winter when kids are in closer contact with each other in school.
- If your child has frequent nosebleeds in the winter try using a cold air humidifier in his/her room at night. Also, the use of saline nose drops or petroleum may help keep nasal tissues moist. If bleeding persists or is severe consult your pediatrician.

## Outdoor Activities

- Make sure to apply sunscreen to your child's exposed skin even in the winter. The sun's rays can still cause sunburn, especially when they reflect off snow.
- If your family enjoys sledding be smart. Always supervise your children while sledding. Keep them away from motor vehicles and consider having your child wear a helmet while sledding. Avoid sledding in crowded areas, and sled feet first or sitting up instead of lying down head-first.

Source: *KidsHealth.org and HealthyChildren.org*