

# SAFETY TIPS



- Only keep children indoors in temperatures below  $-25^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $-13^{\circ}\text{F}$ ).
- Set time limits for play and bring your child inside periodically to warm up.
- Dress your child in thin layers to keep them warm and dry.
- Between  $0$  and  $10^{\circ}\text{C}$  dress your child in: pants, shirt and socks and a coat, a hat, boots and mittens.
- Below  $0^{\circ}\text{C}$  dress your child in: thermal underwear, shirts, warm socks, pants, sweater, a coat or snowsuit, boots, mittens, neck warmer and hat.
- Avoid scarves and mitten strings because they can be a choking hazard. Use neck warmers and mitten clips instead.
- Treat frostbite by slowly warming the area, call your doctor if numbness or pain does not subside.
- Call 911 immediately if you suspect your child has hypothermia. Signs include: shivering, slurred speech and clumsiness.

In case of emergency call 911 immediately.

For information or to find settlement services near you, visit [www.settlement.org](http://www.settlement.org)

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CHILD SAFETY Series

## PREVENTION

### What you can do



Wintertime can be a lot of fun, and children love to play in the snow! Dressing for winter weather may be new to you and your family. Whether your child is playing outside or simply walking to and from school, the information in this brochure can help you to dress them properly for winter. Then they can enjoy the outdoors and stay warm and safe.

#### Stay warm



The weather in Canada during the winter can sometimes become very cold with temperatures of  $-30^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $-22^{\circ}\text{F}$ ). If your child is dressed properly, however, they can go outside as long as the temperature is not below  $-25^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $-13^{\circ}\text{F}$ ).

When they go outside to play, set a time limit and bring your child in periodically to warm up. When they come in, immediately remove all wet clothing and boots and give them something warm to drink.

Dress your child for the outdoors in several thin layers of clothing. Layers will keep them warmer and dryer than 1 heavy outfit. Don't use too many layers since your child could become overheated and sweat. Then when they stop playing they could become cold. Older babies and children need 1 more layer of clothing than you do.

Between  $0 - 10^{\circ}\text{C}$  dress your child in pants, shirt and socks and a coat, a hat, boots and mittens.

In weather below  $0^{\circ}\text{C}$  dress your child in thermal underwear, shirts, warm socks, pants and a sweater. Then dress them in a coat or snowsuit, boots, mittens, neck warmer and hat. Keep the coat or snowsuit zipped up at all times.



Most body heat is lost through the top of the head, so always dress your child in a hat when it's cold. Avoid scarves because they can be a choking hazard. Strings are

sometimes used to keep children from losing their mittens. Instead of strings, use mitten clips. Strings can be a choking hazard too. Dress your child in bright colours so that drivers can see them easily.



If your child is not dressed properly for winter weather they can be at risk for frostbite and hypothermia.



#### Frostbite

Frostbite usually affects fingers, toes, ears and noses. The skin becomes frozen from cold temperatures. At first, it is red and swollen.

Then it becomes grey, pale and blistered.

If your child complains of numbness or pain in their hands, feet or elsewhere begin to warm that area with your hands. Use warm (not hot) washcloths or water to slowly warm the skin. Never rub frostbitten skin. Dry the area and give them a warm drink. Call your doctor for treatment if the numbness lasts for more than a few minutes.

#### Hypothermia

Hypothermia occurs when your child's body temperature drops below normal ( $98.6^{\circ}\text{F}$  or  $37.0^{\circ}\text{C}$ ). Your child can get hypothermia if they are playing outside in the snow for a long time and become wet. Even in warmer weather ( $10^{\circ}\text{C}$ ), if it is rainy and windy, hypothermia can still happen. Hypothermia can cause your child to shiver badly, slur their speech or be clumsy.

If you think your child has hypothermia call 911. Before help arrives, bring your child inside and remove any wet clothing. Then wrap them in warm blankets.