



## For immediate Release:

# Summer ‘Trauma’ Season Highlights Child Safety Risks

Summer is an exciting time for Kiwi families. With the days longer and sunnier, it offers an excellent time for trips to the beach, bush, and a variety of outdoor activities. Summer however is also called the “Trauma Season” among medical professionals due to the dramatic increase in preventable deaths and serious injuries to children.

“Unfortunately summer injuries aren’t limited to skinned knees and scraped elbows. New Zealand has some of the highest rates of preventable child injuries within the OECD, which rises sharply during the summer months,” said Ann Weaver, Director of Safekids New Zealand.

Along with high temperatures and sunshine, this holiday period brought with it many incidents of the following injuries:

- **Burns.** Kids seriously burned after causing fire after playing with lighters and matches, falling into hot pools, and by spilt hot drinks and kettles.
- **Drowning.** Drowning and near drowning at beaches, rivers and pools, and kids getting into serious trouble while playing in vessels on open water.
- **Cycling.** Kids falling, crashing, losing control at speed downhill, and children struck by vehicles while cycling.
- **Child Passenger injuries.** Children injured and killed in car crashes, some unrestrained. Children left in cars or left to play around cars unsupervised.

Also reported in the media were children seriously injured or killed after being *run over on home driveways and church car parks, by lawnmowers, poisoning injuries, falls, and in collisions and crashes with trains, cars and motorcycles.*

Information and interventions to prevent these injuries are already available. “As parents and caregivers, we all have to do better at taking responsibility and control of protecting our children, ensuring they are adequately supervised and safe at all times,” Ann said.

### **Safekids’ Top 5 tips this summer season:**

- Keep lighters and matches out of reach and out of sight, and beware of children when holding a hot cup of tea, coffee or kettle.
- When in unfamiliar surroundings, always stay within sight and reach of young ones (1-5 years). Actively supervise older kids (6-14 years) when they are in, on and around water.
- Encourage kids to learn bike skills and safety, and insist that they wear a helmet.
- Check for children before driving off, and teach kids not to play in driveways and car parks.
- Kids should use a child restraint or booster seat until they are 148cm tall.

For more information in keeping kids safe at home, at play and on the road, visit [www.safekids.org.nz](http://www.safekids.org.nz).

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### **About Safekids New Zealand**

Safekids New Zealand is the injury prevention service of Starship Children’s Health and a member of SAFE KIDS Worldwide. Our mission is to reduce the incidence and severity of unintentional injuries to New Zealand’s children aged 0 - 14 years. For more information, contact Anthony Rola at [anthonyr@adhb.govt.nz](mailto:anthonyr@adhb.govt.nz), visit [www.safekids.org.nz](http://www.safekids.org.nz) or call 09 631 0717.