

Staying Warm and Safe in Cold Weather

Winter time can be really fun for children of all ages! It's a great time to build snowmen or forts, go skating or sliding.

But while everyone is out enjoying the snow, they need to know how to keep warm and be safe. Here are some cool and easy tips for children.

- Dressing in layers is the best way to stay warm and toasty in the cold. Depending on the temperature, more or less layers may be needed. But if you're in doubt, go for more layers as they can always come off later. (Whatever you do, always keep your coat on, that's one layer that should stay!)
- Avoid jeans or light cotton pants (like khakis), because they won't keep you warm. They will actually make your legs colder if you fall down and get wet. Waterproof pants (like ski pants) are best. Finish up with heavy socks and waterproof boots. If you're going to be doing lots of exploring, wear boots that have good treads for keeping steady on snowy and icy areas.
- After getting all bundled up and ready to go, you might think you are forgetting something? Don't forget to put a hat onto your head! A lot of body heat escapes right from your head. Scarves, facemasks, and earmuffs are also great at covering you up so you'll stay comfortable longer. Be sure not to forget mittens or gloves, the waterproof kind are best if you know you'll be playing around a lot in the snow. Keeping your hands warm and dry is important because fingers are very sensitive to the cold.
- Drink up! Sounds like advice for hot weather, not cold weather, right? Well, the truth is that it's good advice for both kinds of weather. When you're outside in the cold and breathing hard, you lose a lot of your body's water through your breath. And the best way to get that water back is to drink up!
- If you're starting to shiver or your teeth are chattering, it's a message from your body that you need to head inside. Keeping an eye on others can help make things safe. If it looks like a friend is shivering and really cold, suggest that you take a break inside for a while. Ignoring these signs your body sends could put you in danger of getting frostbite. Frostbite is when the body's tissues freeze, and it usually happens to skin that is exposed (like your face or your ears) or to parts of the body like your fingers or toes. If you think even for a second that you might have frostbite, go indoors and tell an adult right away.

Keeping safe in the winter is easy to do, once you know how. You want your snow day and other cold days to be the most fun they can be, so put on those layers, wear your hat and gloves, have something warm to drink and enjoy your day!

Adapted from : <http://kidshealth.org/en/kids/winter-safety.html?WT.ac=ctg%23#>
Woodstock Education Centre, Anglophone School District-West