

Media Release

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Poll cautions parents to balance trampoline safety this summer

With Christmas just weeks away and Santa busy wrapping and packing, Australian parents are being advised about the potential risks of injury to children on trampolines.

The latest Australian Child Health Poll, released today, reveals Australian parents are not supervising children on trampolines, the vast majority are allowing more than one child at a time to jump on a trampoline, and less than one in two parents know the specific first aid for treating some trampoline injuries.

Director of the poll, paediatrician Dr Anthea Rhodes, said while it was impossible to prevent all childhood injuries, the poll was a timely reminder for parents on how to keep their kids safe this Christmas.

The fifth Australian Child Health Poll found:

- More Australian kids today are jumping on a trampoline (79 per cent) than riding a bicycle (68 per cent) or scooter or skateboard (44 per cent).
- Of those who use a trampoline, one in six has sustained an injury such as broken or fractured bones, concussion, cuts or bruises, or sprains.
- Two thirds (66 per cent) of children who use a trampoline are not always supervised by an adult.
- Twenty per cent of children under two are not always supervised by an adult when on a trampoline.
- Despite guidelines* recommending no more than one child on a trampoline at a time, more than 80 per cent of parents said they allow multiple kids to jump on a trampoline.
- One in five parents allow four or more children on a trampoline at once.
- The majority of parents reported knowing the specific first aid for a bleeding wound (84 per cent) and over half for a broken bone (55 per cent), however only one in two parents know the specific first aid for a head injury, dislodged tooth or an unconscious child (49 per cent).

Dr Rhodes said: "Many families across the country will be making room for trampolines this Christmas and there's no reason why they can't be enjoyed. Trampolines can be safe if used properly, but allowing multiple children on a trampoline has been compared to cage fighting by our trauma service at The Royal Children's Hospital.

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"It doesn't matter what age your child is, to keep them safe on trampolines, my advice is to allow no more than one child at a time on the trampoline, and to supervise them at all times, regardless of their age," Dr Rhodes said.

With unintentional injuries the biggest cause of death in Australian children under 15, Dr Rhodes warned that many accidents and injuries are avoidable.

"Keeping active and playing outdoors is an important part of a healthy childhood, and should be encouraged, and there are steps parents can take to keep kids safe.

"Parents should familiarise themselves with basic first aid for accidents and injuries, and understand guidelines and recommendations to keep their children safe and reduce the risk of serious injury while they play this summer," Dr Rhodes advised. RCH

Other key findings from the fifth Australian Child Health Poll include:

- One in six kids (17 per cent) don't always wear a helmet when riding a bike despite it being a legal requirement, and almost half (44 per cent) don't always wear a helmet when riding a scooter or skateboard.
- Over a third (36 per cent) of children under two do not always wear a helmet when riding a bike or as a passenger on an adult's bike.
- Less than half of all parents (45 per cent) reported being very confident that they could rescue a child from a swimming pool.
- Two in five (41 per cent) Australian parents report they do not know first aid for a drowning child
- One in four parents (24 per cent) say they are not confident to administer CPR to a child
- Respondents living in regional areas were more likely to report knowing first aid for a head injury, broken or dislodged tooth or an unconscious child, as well as having increased confidence in rescuing a child from a pool and administering CPR
- 62 per cent of parents reported having a well-stocked first aid kit in their home, and 40 per cent in their car

For more information, including media material, see www.childhealthpoll.org.au

*Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC)

Data Source

The fifth Australian Child Health Poll is a survey of a nationally representative sample of more than 2,000 adults aged 18 years and older. Collectively respondents had a total of 3,608 children. The survey is conducted by an independent research agency on behalf of The Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne. Each sample is subsequently weighted to reflect the latest Australian population figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics census data.