



Worry: A Parent's Guide

by Lindsay Dunkel, Executive Director First 5 Nevada County

With parenthood comes worry. We worry that the baby is sleeping too much, or not enough, that she is not eating enough, is cold, or doesn't really like us. We worry about little things and big things, things we can do something about and things we can't. As our children grow, so do our worries. Parenthood is a huge responsibility, so naturally we worry—I suppose it is a sign that this job is important to us.

But there is one thing parents worry a lot about that is out of proportion to the risk: stranger abduction, also known as kidnapping. We keep our kids inside or in our yards, don't let them walk to school, and panic when we lose sight of them in the grocery store. But according to the U.S. Department of Justice, only about 115 children are kidnapped by strangers each year: to put this in context, about 1,400 children die of cancer in a year and 4,000 die as a result of accidents. And the rate of stranger abduction is lower than it was in the 1970s, when many of us were running around unsupervised outside.

So why do we have this national, irrational fear? Why are there children on milk cartons? Thousands of children are abducted by non-custodial parents each year and this number greatly inflates the number of "missing children." The other big contributor to this number is runaways—mostly teenagers who have been victims of abuse and/or neglect. Finally, media attention to some of the 115 cases of stranger abduction has been intense, heightening our awareness, which then heightens our fear and makes it feel like a big risk. You should know that teenage girls, not young children, are the primary targets of kidnappers.

In all actuality, what parents need to be worried about are accidents and that is something we can prevent. Unintentional injury is the number one cause of death for children: things like car accidents, drowning, fires or burns, and suffocation. So what is a parent to do?

For children under 1 year, suffocation is the leading "accident." Use a blanket sleeper rather than a blanket for your baby and keep cribs free of pillows, covers, and large, soft toys. Put your baby to sleep on his back: we've reduced the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome by more than 50% since 1990 by making this switch. Always buckle your baby into a rear-facing, infant car seat when traveling and rotate the carry handle down behind the seat; car-seat use reduces risk of death by 71% for infants. When your baby becomes mobile, be sure to gate access to any pool or pond and never leave standing water around (babies most often drown in buckets, bathtubs, or toilets). Get trained in first aid, CPR, and resuscitation.

Children 1 to 4 years of age are the most likely to be injured or killed in accidents, so provide close supervision of tots. For this group, transportation is the main risk: always buckle children into a safety seat in the back seat of the vehicle; when they outgrow their toddler safety-seat, graduate them to a booster seat until they are at least 4'9" tall and at least 8 years of age. Booster seats reduce injury risk by 59%

Ongoing Events

Early Pregnancy Class

Limited time offer, mention that you saw it here in the First 5 newsletter to receive 50% off. Now only \$27.50 For women in their first or second trimester. Classes scheduled regularly. Call to register 477-5442
lauriechamberlin.com

Mondays

Mother Dance

Dance class for moms and pre-walking babies designed to nourish and nurture both Mom and baby with an opportunity to connect intimately through touch, movement, rhythm and dance! Mondays 10:30-11:30. Cost \$10/class. Moving Ground Studio, Grass Valley
Phone: 272-4240

Wednesdays

"Your Amazing Infant"

A series for parents and their infants, ages birth through 3 months. On Wednesdays, noon to 1:15pm at Sierra Mountain Community Education Center in Truckee. These classes increase bonding through nurturing touch, infant massage and baby yoga. Drop-in at any time. Cost for a series of 6 classes is \$72.00 with scholarships available. Call 582-2583.

Wednesdays & Fridays

Toddler Gymtime

Toddlers and their parents enjoy free play in the big gym with an exciting array of exciting developmental equipment. Have fun, meet new friends and build new skills. Sierra Mountain Community Education Center in Truckee. Ongoing sessions follow the school schedule. Parent-facilitated and free to families. Wednesdays and Fridays, 10-Noon. Call 582-2583

Thursdays

Music Together

New session starting February 12

Children birth to 4 and their parents enjoy this research-based program that includes songs, instrument play and movement in a relaxed and playful setting. Sierra Mountain Community Education Center in Truckee. New 8-week session begins Feb. 12. \$130 for the series and materials. Scholarships available. Call 582-2583 to save a spot.

compared to seatbelts alone (which are designed for bigger people and tend to cause internal injuries in children in a crash). Always have children wear helmets when riding bikes, trikes, scooters, skateboards, etc. and when skiing or snowboarding. And again, almost 30% of children this age who die do so as a result of drowning, usually in home swimming pools under the care of one or both parents; most were last seen inside the home and had been out of sight for less than 5 minutes. Fence those pools!

For all ages, keep household poisons, such as cleaners and pesticides, as well as medicines (including vitamins) where children do not have access. Poisonings only make up a small portion of accidental injury to children, but are completely preventable.

Worry is a natural part of parenthood, but you can focus your worry where the highest risk is: accidents. And then you can use that energy to work to protect your child by taking simple, preventive steps like fencing pools and always using a safety seat in vehicles. Send the kids out to play—but buckle on the helmets.

For more information about keeping kids safe, go to: <http://www.cdc.gov/safechild/>

Pregnancy Tip: The Last Few Weeks of Pregnancy

by Laurie Chamberlin, CD, ICCE, LE

“That’s it! I don’t care how I have this baby, I am done being pregnant and I want my baby, now, I mean it!” says almost every pregnant woman around the 38th week of pregnancy. Believe it or not, it is an emotional signpost during those last few weeks of pregnancy. It’s a phase most women go through, just like the first trimester is known for nausea. Almost every client I work with goes through this emotional phase, so I am well versed. Here are some things you can do to get through the waiting phase of labor: 1) Stay in the moment, just like labor, forget about ‘what might happen next’ and just deal with what you have right now. 2) Write yourself a letter of encouragement. In early pregnancy write a letter to yourself about what you will do the last month of pregnancy, how you will spend your time and how you can nurture yourself before your baby is born and what kind of parent you hope to be. 3) Read up on the importance of letting your body and the baby signal when the baby is ready to be born. Funny how the EDD, or ‘Estimated Due Date’ has transformed into the BDB or “Baby Due By”. Remember, your due date is an estimate, a time-frame, not a date your baby will be born by.

Laurie Chamberlin, CD, ICCE, LE teaches childbirth preparation classes, lactation classes and is a prenatal counselor serving the Grass Valley/Nevada City/Auburn area. Information: www.lauriechamberlin.com | lauriechamberlin@comcast.net or call 477-5442

Fridays

"Baby and Me"

New series starting in March
Ongoing series through out the year. Fridays, 9:30-10:45 at Sierra Mountain Community Education Center in Truckee. These popular classes provide education, support, informal discussion and interactive fun for parents and non-ambulatory infants, 3 months to 1 year old. The class fee is \$84.00 with scholarships available. Call: 582-2583.

Fridays

Spanish-English Storytime (TRK)

Storytime for children ages 6 & under at 10:00 a.m. and 1 p.m. at the Truckee Library. Truckee Library: 582-7846

Saturdays

Spanish-English Storytime (GV)

Storytime for children ages 1-4 years old at 11:00 a.m. every 2nd and 4th Saturday at the Grass Valley Library. Phone: 477-5790

Enrolling Now

Baby & Me

Join in for songs, playtime, and discussion while getting to know other parents and babies. Join an existing group now. Birth to 12 months. Weekday mornings at the Grass Valley Methodist Church in downtown Grass Valley. FREE to first-time participants, sliding scale fee up to \$50 for 10 sessions for subsequent groups. Phone: Meg 913-2745

Enrolling Now

Toddler & Me

Join in for songs and playtime in a preschool setting while getting to know other parents and toddlers. We are creating a new group now for children 12 to 24 months. Weekday afternoons at the T.K. McAteer Family Resource Center in Nevada City. FREE to first-time participants, sliding scale fee up to \$50 for 10 sessions for subsequent groups. Phone: Samie 265-0611 x223
e-mail: samie@first5nevco.org
first5nevco.org/programs.cfm



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