

### Winter Safety for Your Little Ones

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Whether you're taking your kids out to look at holiday lights, spending the day sledding and drinking hot cocoa, or traveling to see family, there's a lot to consider in the cold weather regarding your little ones' safety.

#### Outside Play

Small bodies lose heat more quickly than adults and toddlers, and babies are less likely to notice when they get too cold. But a little bit of preparation before venturing out into the cold can keep your little ones warm and dry.

A hat, mittens, waterproof boots, and several layers should be worn during outside play in the snow and the cold. Layers can be removed and reapplied as needed as your child heats up and cools off. Consider wool base layers and socks instead of cotton as it insulates better from both wetness and the cold. If your child's clothes do get wet, change them as quickly as possible.

Provide time for warming-up breaks in the home or car with the heat turned on. Sunscreen is also still important in the winter, so make sure to apply and reapply the same as you would in the heat of the summer.



#### Car Safety

It may be tempting to put your kids in their car seats wearing their winter coats when they're cold, but that puffiness can quickly flatten out in the event of a crash and allow room for your child to slip out of the straps. Instead, remove their coat and cover them with a blanket or let them wear their coat backwards once buckled.

Properly installed car seats are vital in icy driving conditions. Most local police and fire departments will give you a free car seat inspection and/or help you install it safely.

#### Illness

Cold, flu, and RSV season is upon us. Did you know that one of the reasons you're more likely to get sick in the winter is because you're inside more? Airborne germs stick around way longer inside than outside. So now is

the time to teach your little ones how to wash their hands and to sneeze or cough into an elbow. When germs do manage to sneak in and make your family sick, be sure to stay home to prevent spreading it to your friends and families. Also, allow everyone time to rest and get better and be sure to reach out to your pediatrician if you have concerns.