

Tips for raising healthy, happy kids

Experts from Children's discuss lawn mower safety and preparing for baby

Cut lawn mower injury risks

Each year more than 9,000 children are injured in lawnmower accidents. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children be at least 12 years old to use a push mower and at least 16 years old to use a riding mower.

"Younger children's injuries occur when they run up on a push mower or when a riding lawn mower backs up on them," says Lori Vinson, Trauma program manager at Children's Medical Center. "The teens are usually operating the mower and either run over a foot or a finger gets stuck in the blades."

Mower safety tips

- Only adults should adjust blades.
- Start and refuel the mower outdoors — not in a garage.
- Clear yard of twigs, rocks and toys.
- Wear closed-toe shoes while the mower is on.
- Children should never be allowed to ride or drive a riding lawn mower.

Visit www.childrens.com for more tips.

Prenatal care begins before conception

Planning for a new baby shouldn't begin with diapers and formula. When you're ready to welcome a child into the world, Dr. Michael Zaretsky, UT Southwestern Maternal Fetal Medicine specialist at Children's Medical Center at Legacy, recommends you take these steps before you try to conceive:

- Take 400 mcg of folic acid daily, beginning at least three months before planning to become pregnant.
- Stop smoking and avoid alcohol.
- Eat a healthy diet.
- Exercise regularly, maintain a healthy weight before becoming pregnant and follow your doctor's advice on healthy weight gain during pregnancy.
- Get adequate sleep.
- Control medical problems, such as diabetes and high blood pressure.
- Talk with your doctor about the safety of any medications you take.

Learn more at www.childrens.com/maternal.

Sports Medicine Program now open at Children's at Legacy

Parents and coaches know that injuries can occur in almost any physical activity. In fact, almost one-third of all injuries incurred in childhood are sports-related injuries. Injuries in children are best handled by pediatric specialists trained in treating skeletally immature patients. The Sports Medicine Program at Children's at Legacy offers the only comprehensive, integrated program in North Texas specifically designed for young and growing athletes. The program goes beyond treating traumatic injuries that occur on the playing field to more complex problems associated with sports participation, including cardiac and psychological disorders. Visit www.childrens.com/sportsmedicine for details.