



**W. A. T. C. H.**  
world against toys causing harm, inc.

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## **W.A.T.C.H.'S "10 TOP SUMMER SAFETY TRAPS" FOR 2021**

### ***Safety Tips to Keep Children Safe from Injuries as COVID-19 Restrictions Are Lifted***

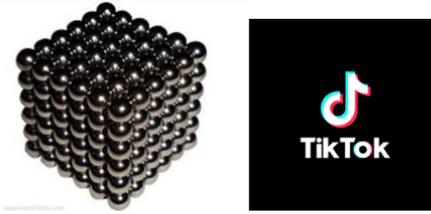
**THIS YEAR A HIGH-POWERED MAGNET TREND ASSOCIATED WITH TIKTOK, SHALLOW WATER DIVING, AND BACKYARD TRAMPOLINES ILLUSTRATE SOME OF THE MANY POTENTIAL HAZARDS TO WATCH OUT FOR SO CHILDREN CAN HAVE A SAFER SUMMER.**

WITH THE LIFTING OF COVID RESTRICTIONS, MORE CHILDREN ARE GETTING OUTSIDE. DEMAND AND SALES OF CERTAIN PRODUCTS SKYROCKETED, INCLUDING ABOVE-GROUND AND IN-GROUND POOLS AS WELL AS TRAMPOLINES AND BIKES, AS FAMILIES TRIED TO STAY ACTIVE WHILE FOLLOWING COVID RESTRICTIONS. WITH THE PANDEMIC, THERE WAS A DECREASE IN SPORTS-RELATED INJURIES DUE TO THE LACK OF ORGANIZED SPORTS. HOWEVER, AS CHILDREN STAYED HOME IN 2020 AND THE BEGINNING OF 2021, WE SAW AN INCREASE IN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT VISITS IN CERTAIN CATEGORIES INCLUDING TRAMPOLINE AND CYCLING INJURIES. ADDITIONALLY, DURING THE SUMMER, WHEN THERE MAY BE AN INCREASE IN SOCIAL MEDIA USE BY CHILDREN, WATCH OUT FOR POTENTIALLY UNSAFE SOCIAL MEDIA TRENDS, SUCH AS AN ALLEGED TIKTOK "FAKE-PIERCING" CHALLENGE AND ASSOCIATED HIGH-POWERED MAGNET INGESTION INJURIES.

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TikTok Trends and Social Media Influences: High-Powered Magnets



<p><b>COVID-19 IMPACT:</b></p>	<p>With organized sports and group activities limited, the pandemic triggered a surge in the use of social media. Keeping your teens aware of injuries that may be associated with potentially dangerous social media trends can help keep your teens informed and safe.</p>
<p><b>HAZARD:</b></p>	<p>Potential for damage to intestinal tissue, serious infections, life-long digestive conditions or death if high-powered magnets are ingested.</p>
<p><b>W.A.T.C.H. OUT!</b></p>	<p>High-powered magnets are a potential safety risk to children — toddler through teen. W.A.T.C.H. has warned of the safety risk that high-powered magnets (whether or not sold as toys) pose to children in the past. Children have been hospitalized and suffered serious harm after ingesting these powerful magnets. <b>This year, high-powered magnets have resurfaced as part of a social media trend.</b> Recently, in an alleged TikTok “fake piercing” challenge using high-powered magnets, users pretended to have tongue or cheek piercings using magnetic balls. These magnets are not the magnets off your grandparents’ refrigerator door. They are up to eight times stronger than magnets that are used in toys. When two or more of these magnets – some of which are smaller than the tip of a ballpoint pen and 30 times stronger than a standard kitchen magnet – are swallowed, their powerful force pulls them together across, or between, segments of the digestive system.</p>
<p><b>REAL LIFE, MORE THAN STATISTICS:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Last month, a 13-year-old girl reportedly required major abdominal surgery to remove part of her bowel and her appendix after she accidentally swallowed fifteen magnet balls allegedly following a “fake piercing” challenge on TikTok. Although they were swallowed on multiple occasions, once ingested, the magnets tried to stick together. (Rainhill, U.K.)<sup>xxv</sup></li> <li>• In May, a mother posted on Facebook that her 11-year-old boy, who did not have a TikTok account but was possibly participating in the alleged magnetic ball fake piercing TikTok craze, was “fighting for his life.” The boy underwent multiple surgeries after accidentally swallowing five magnets. Newsweek reports the boys’ mother posted an online warning: “This TikTok craze could/would have killed him if left any longer. Please talk to your children and tell them how DANGEROUS THESE ARE.” (Worcestershire, England) <sup>xxvi</sup></li> <li>• Recently it was reported a 2-year-old boy needed surgery after he swallowed 16 magnetic balls that his older sibling had brought back from school. The magnets stuck together after they were ingested and perforated the boy’s intestines.(Orlando, Fla.)<sup>xxvii</sup></li> <li>• Toys with high-powered magnets have been associated with serious injuries for many years: In 2006, the CPSC reported 34 incidents involving small magnets, including a 20-month-old boy who died after he swallowed magnets from a toy magnetic building set. The magnets twisted his small intestine creating a blockage.<sup>xxviii</sup></li> </ul>
<p><b>FACTS:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The increase in social media usage by kids during COVID-19 and the expected increase in social media usage by children with more free time on their hands during the summer<sup>xxix</sup> are compelling reasons to stay informed about online trends associated with injuries.</b></li> <li>• The pandemic triggered a jump in the use of electronic devices among children and teens in the U.S. and screen-time has doubled from what it used to be.<sup>xxx</sup></li> <li>• TikTok’s popularity saw a dramatic increase in the U.S. during the pandemic, growing 180% among 15-25 year old users.<sup>xxxi</sup></li> <li>• Social media is a significant influence on many children and teens. According to one study, <b>social media use by teens jumped 63% during quarantine.</b> Instagram, Snapchat and TikTok were the top three platforms parents were concerned about.<sup>xxxii</sup></li> <li>• Over the past 21 years, the rate of foreign-body ingestions by children younger than 6 increased by 91.5%.<sup>xxxiii</sup></li> <li>• A safety risk: In 2014, following the injury and hospitalization of hundreds of children nationally, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission deemed toy magnets and games made from rare-earth elements a safety</li> </ul>

	risk and recalled them from the market. In the years immediately following this action, magnet ingestions decreased nearly 80%. <sup>xxxiv</sup> A 2016 decision by the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals to vacate the order, however, put these dangerous toys back on store shelves and into homes across the country. <sup>xxxv</sup>
<b>TO DO:</b>	<b><i>Familiarize yourself with the hazards associated with the ingestion of small magnets. Beware of toys and trends (i.e. TikTok challenges) that may involve the use of high-powered magnets. Keep high-powered magnets away from children and if your children are on social media, make sure they are aware of the serious injuries that have resulted when high-powered magnets were unintentionally ingested.</i></b>

**TRAP #2**

**NOT FOR PLAY: ADULT EXERCISE EQUIPMENT**



<b>COVID-19 IMPACT:</b>	As demand for home exercise options skyrocketed, sales of exercise equipment climbed a sweeping 170% during lockdown. <sup>xxxvi</sup> In 2021, participation in self-instructed home exercise is expected to increase 69% versus pre-COVID-19. <sup>xxxvii</sup>
<b>HAZARD:</b>	<b>Potential for abrasions, fractures, or death</b>
<b>W.A.T.C.H. OUT!</b>	When gyms closed due to COVID-19, many adults looking for ways to stay fit purchased home equipment, including treadmills and stationary bikes. While many may be venturing back to the gym after a long hiatus, the fact remains that many more homes have exercise equipment than before the pandemic. This summer, exercise equipment could look enticing to kids looking for fun ways to spend their days now that school is out, but exercise equipment has the potential to be dangerous for children. At home gyms, equipped with treadmills, stationary bikes, or weight lifting racks are not toys, and parents and caretakers need to “exercise extreme caution” when it comes to keeping children away from home gyms.
<b>REAL LIFE, MORE THAN STATISTICS:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recently, a 6-year-old boy died after being pulled under the rear of a Peloton Tread+ Treadmill.<sup>xxxviii</sup></li> <li>• In 2018, a 5-year-old boy from Pennsylvania was killed in a tragic treadmill accident. Officials reported that he was somehow trapped by the treadmill while it was running, which caused fatal injuries to his neck.<sup>xxxix</sup></li> <li>• In 2009, world-famous boxer Mike Tyson’s daughter became another victim of a tragic treadmill accident when she became entangled in the treadmill cord and was unable to free herself, leading to her death.<sup>xl</sup></li> </ul>
<b>FACTS:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• According to the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System, there were nearly 21,000 children treated in emergency departments nationwide for injuries from home exercise equipment in 2019 alone. <sup>xli</sup></li> <li>• Exercise machines such as treadmills pose special risks to toddlers and young children, who account for the greatest percentage of serious injuries. Emergency rooms around the country are reporting a growing number of severe burns on the hands and fingers of young children who reach down or under and touch a treadmill belt when it’s running.<sup>xlii</sup></li> <li>• Exercise equipment isn’t just a <b>potential hazard for young children, it also presents a danger for older children</b>, who may try equipment for fun without knowing how to use it properly.<sup>xliii</sup></li> <li>• <b>During the pandemic, Peloton more than quadrupled in value--<sup>xliv</sup> but it came as a price.</b> After 39 incidents and the death of child, Peloton recently recalled 125 thousand Tread+ Treadmills. Multiple reports involved children becoming entrapped, pinned, and pulled under the rear roller. <sup>xlv</sup></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-pandemic, even before the uptick in home gym purchases, children were getting injured on home exercise equipment. (see above box)</li> </ul>
<p><b>TO DO:</b></p>	<p><i>Beware of the potential safety traps posed by some home equipment that could put children at risk of serious harm. Keep abreast of product recalls, such as the recall of Peloton’s Tread+, and follow the recommended actions. Young children should not have access to exercise equipment. For older children who may be allowed to operate the equipment, make sure they receive proper instruction and are not left unattended during use. Furthermore, it should be noted that many home gym machines such as treadmills have a minimum weight limit for safe operation. If an older child does not meet the minimum weight for a particular piece of equipment, they should not be allowed to use it. Follow recommended safety tips including teaching older children to use safety clips when using machines such as treadmills. Clips can stop the machine from running if the user were to fall. This can help to prevent articles of clothing or body parts from being stuck or caught in amongst the moving components of the machine, which can cause serious injury. One critical safety guideline is to never leave children unsupervised around home gym equipment. Prevent children from accessing exercise equipment when you aren’t around. When working out, ensure that children, particularly young children, are not around the equipment. These are only a few of the safety guidelines to keep in mind -- due diligence is important when it comes to keeping kids safe in homes with exercise equipment. For more information about toy safety, go to <a href="http://www.toysafety.org">www.toysafety.org</a></i></p>

**TRAP #3**

**DIVING INTO DANGER: SHALLOW OR OBSTRUCTED WATER**



<p><b>COVID-19 IMPACT:</b></p>	<p>With many consumers choosing to spend time outdoors near home since COVID-19, demand and sales have skyrocketed for boats, above-ground pools, and in-ground pools.</p>
<p><b>HAZARD:</b></p>	<p>Potential for neck, spine, head and other life-threatening injuries</p>
<p><b>W.A.T.C.H. OUT!</b></p>	<p>An increase in the number of people participating in boating and pool-related activities could correlate with an increase in incidents that have been associated with these pastimes, such as shallow water diving injuries. In an instant, a single dive can permanently change a life. <b>Many children and adults do not know the risks of diving into shallow and/or unsafe waters</b> that can lead to catastrophic head and neck injury and even death. Raising awareness about the injuries that have resulted from <b>diving off boats and docks</b> into unknown waters, or diving into <b>pools</b> that are shallow, can save lives.</p>

<p><b>REAL LIFE, MORE THAN STATISTICS:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Last summer, a 13-year-old boy cracked his c6 vertebrae after diving into his family’s backyard above-ground pool, which was just over 4 feet deep. While his injury fortunately did not result in paralysis, other incidents involving similar situations have. (New Brunswick, Canada) <sup>xlvi</sup></li> <li>• In May of 2020, a 16-year-old is paralyzed from the chest down after diving into the middle of a pool. The teen said foam bubbles on the water’s surface obscured the view of the bottom. (Greenville County, S.C.) <sup>xlvii</sup></li> </ul>
<p><b>FACTS:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>If sales of products are an indicator, more families will be on and in the water. Boats and pools are in high demand:</b> New powerboat sales in the U.S. were up 12% from 2019 to 2020 and boat showrooms have little, if any, inventory. <sup>xlviii</sup> Demand for pools increases for a second year in a row. In many cases, there is over a year wait for an <b>in-ground pool</b> and <b>above-ground pool</b> suppliers face a shortage of liners and ladders due to increased sales and supply chain issues. <sup>xlix</sup></li> <li>• Jumping into unknown or unsafe waters accounts for 10 percent of drowning deaths in the Maritimes.<sup>l</sup></li> <li>• <b>Pools:</b> Above-ground pools are too shallow for safe diving, regardless of how experienced the diver might be or how large the pool appears. In-ground pools can have varying depths or obstructed views of the bottom.</li> <li>• <b>Boats:</b> If jumping into water that you are familiar with from a dock or a boat, remember the depth of the water is always changing with the flow of the tides. Whether diving off a boat or swimming near a boat, beware of propellers. Boat propellers are associated with an overall fatality rate of 15 to 17% and a similar rate for major amputations. <sup>li</sup></li> <li>• An impact from diving head first into shallow water can result in severe damage to the spinal cord, paralysis, and other injuries.</li> <li>• Diving is the fifth leading cause of spinal cord injuries for men and women.<sup>lii</sup></li> </ul>
<p><b>TO DO:</b></p>	<p><i> Serious injuries have been associated with diving into shallow/dangerous water. Never dive into water less than 12 feet or that has obscured visibility.<sup>liii</sup> Avoid crowded areas or areas with potential hazards (i.e. propellers, rocks, people, boats, etc.). Never dive into an above-ground pool and make sure to post “no diving” signs. Boating and swimming go hand-in-hand, but before anyone gets in the water to enjoy some summer leisure, be sure the motor on your boat is turned off and the propeller has come to a complete stop. For more information about toy safety, go to <a href="http://www.toysafety.org">www.toysafety.org</a></i></p>

**TRAP #4**

**HOT HAZARD: FIREWORKS/SPARKLERS**



<p><b>COVID-19 IMPACT:</b></p>	<p>Fireworks topped the list for the largest increase in product-related injuries during the first seven months of the onset of the pandemic, increasing an estimated 56%.<sup>liv</sup></p>
<p><b>HAZARD:</b></p>	<p><b>Potential for serious eye and hand injuries, burns, death.</b></p>
<p><b>W.A.T.C.H. OUT!</b></p>	<p>For many, fireworks are synonymous with summer and 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebrations. But for thousands of people every year, the thrill of using fireworks at home is offset by pain and lasting damage from injuries.</p>
<p><b>REAL LIFE, MORE THAN STATISTICS:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On July 18, 2020, a 13-year old boy suffered burns to 10% of his body surface area from illegal fireworks. (Randolph, MA)<sup>lv</sup></li> <li>• On July 9, 2019, a 4-year old girl received burns to her left hand when she grabbed a burning sparkler that someone else was holding. (Boston, MA)<sup>lvi</sup></li> <li>• On July 7, 2020, a young boy’s hand was severely injured when fireworks he was holding went off near Carson Beach in South Boston.<sup>lvii</sup></li> </ul>

<p><b>FACTS:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There were about 10,000 fire-work related injuries in 2019.<sup>lviii</sup></li> <li>• Injuries from fireworks <b>increase during the summer</b>. In 2019, 73% of the estimated injuries occurred between June and July<sup>lix</sup></li> <li>• <b>Children</b> are at special risk of injury from fireworks: Children account for more than a third of emergency room visits for firework-related injuries. 36% of injuries between June and July of 2019 involved children under 15. <b>Sparklers were the number one cause of firework-related injury</b> to children under 5 years, accounting for nearly half (over 45%) of the 1100 emergency department visits.<sup>lx</sup></li> <li>• <b>Most injuries are at home</b> with a significant <b>increase seen after COVID-19</b>: More than 79 percent of fireworks-related injuries occurred at home in the first 7 months of the pandemic, compared to 68 percent of injuries during the same time period in 2019.<sup>lxi</sup></li> </ul>
<p><b>TO DO:</b></p>	<p><i>At-home use of fireworks has been associated with many injuries and requires permits in many states. If you do choose to use fireworks at home, keep children well away from them and follow recommended safety practices. Know the facts before allowing children to use sparklers-- and decide whether the risk of injury is too great. If you do allow your older children to use sparklers, only let them do so under close adult supervision following all safety precautions. For more information about toy safety, go to <a href="http://www.toysafety.org">www.toysafety.org</a></i></p>

**TRAP #5**

**OFF-ROAD OR OFF-LIMITS: ATV HAZARDS AND RECALLS**



<p><b>COVID-19 IMPACT:</b></p>	<p>With many activities coming to a halt, there was an overall decrease in hospital-treated injuries during the pandemic; however, there were a few exceptions, including a significant estimated increase of 39% for injuries associated with all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) in March to September of 2020 as compared to the previous year.<sup>lxii</sup></p>
<p><b>HAZARD:</b></p>	<p>Potential for head, bone and other impact injuries</p>
<p><b>W.A.T.C.H. OUT!</b></p>	<p>ATVs continue to rise in popularity with outdoor enthusiasts, especially in a year when families are looking for outdoor activities that avoid crowds. <b>However, off-road may mean off-limits</b> to children when you consider the rising number of ATV-related incidents and the recent recalls of ATVs, some sold for use by children as young as 6. This activity has been associated with often devastating injuries including chest, head and internal traumas.</p>
<p><b>REAL LIFE, MORE THAN STATISTICS:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Last month, a 14-year-old died from injuries in an ATV accident. It is believed the ATV he was driving rolled and landed on top of him. (Salt Lake City, Utah) <sup>lxiii</sup></li> <li>• Two children last month were seriously injured in an all-terrain vehicle crash. Troopers said a 14-year-old girl was driving a 2019 Polaris ATV and lost control, causing the vehicle to overturn. (Glen ST. Mary, Fla.) <sup>lxiv</sup></li> </ul>

<p><b>FACTS:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The effect of the pandemic on injuries associated with ATV’s was significant:</b> Between March and September of 2020 there was a 39% increase in emergency department treated injuries for the category “ATV’s, mopeds, minibikes, etc.”-- 29,992 visits as compared to 21,545 the same months the previous year. <b>There was a 149% increase for children 0 to 9-years-old.</b><sup>lxv</sup></li> <li>• According to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), by mid-May the number of deadly ATV/UTV <b>accidents had doubled</b> (12 deaths) from the same time the previous year. This drastic increase could be attributed in part to an <b>increase in riders after many explored new outdoor activities during the pandemic.</b><sup>lxvi</sup></li> <li>• Many injuries are associated with off-road vehicles. From 2015 through 2019, there were an estimated 524,600 treated injuries for ROV, UTV and ATVs (508,900 specifically for ATVs).<sup>lxvii</sup></li> <li>• In addition to the inherent risks involved during off-road riding, <b>faulty manufacturing and design practices</b> expose consumers to further risk of injury. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ATV’s have been recalled for defects including faulty fuel pumps, pedals, and shock absorbers, to name a few.</li> <li>• <b>Already in 2021, there have been seven recalls in the U.S. of ATV, ROV and Off-Road vehicles, totaling 79,826 vehicles that may be in use or in families’ garages.</b><sup>lxviii</sup></li> <li>• Recently, the CPSC and EGL Motors issued a warning for consumers to immediately stop using EGL’s ACE D110 youth ATV, <b>sold for children as young as 6 years old</b>, to avoid serious injury or death.<sup>lxix</sup></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Multiple states have passed regulations prohibiting children from driving ATVs. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, <b>children lack the coordination, reflexes and judgment to avoid crashes while operating ATVs</b> and other motorized vehicles.<sup>lxx</sup></li> <li>• Overturns and collisions (i.e. with trees, other vehicles) are the most common hazards associated with deaths. Overturns are responsible for the most ATV fatalities (38%).<sup>lxxi</sup> Many fatalities happen on paved roads and public ways in part due to tip-overs and the inability to control the vehicles on these types of surfaces.<sup>lxxii</sup></li> <li>• Many children have died or been injured in accidents involving ATVs:<sup>lxxiii</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From 1982 through 2018, 3,353 children under 16-years-old reportedly died in ATV-related incidents (representing 21 percent of the total number of reported ATV-related fatalities).<sup>lxxiv</sup></li> <li>• In 2018, 26% of the estimated 81,800 people treated at hospital emergency rooms for ATV-related injuries in the U.S. involved children under 16 years of age.<sup>lxxv</sup></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>TO DO:</b></p>	<p><i>Children should not drive ATVs and families should know the history of serious injuries associated with ATV use before deciding whether or not to allow children to ride as passengers. ATVs have been associated with high crash rates and have been prone to overturning. The safest choice may be for children to avoid ATVs altogether. Recommended safety precautions, such as wearing helmets and not driving ATVs on paved roads, could minimize the risk of some injuries, but may not prevent all injuries. For more information about toy safety, go to <a href="http://www.toysafety.org">www.toysafety.org</a></i></p>

**TRAP #6**

**ON THE GO: SCOOTERS, SKATEBOARDS, HOVERBOARDS**



<p><b>COVID-19 IMPACT:</b></p>	<p>During the onset of the pandemic, March to September 2020, estimated injuries for scooters, skateboards and hoverboards increased significantly by 39% from the previous year.<sup>lxxvi</sup></p>
<p><b>HAZARD:</b></p>	<p>Potential for fall, head and impact injuries</p>

<b>W.A.T.C.H. OUT!</b>	While most product-related injuries, tracked by visits to hospital emergency departments, were down this past year (probably due to a combination of families seeking care outside of hospitals, families isolating near home, and sports and group activities being limited), <b>injuries related to scooters, skateboards and hoverboards took off.</b> Toys with wheels remain a convenient way for kids to stay active outdoors, but make sure to consider whether a scooter, skateboard or hoverboard is right for your child. Know the facts. It's not fun when time together outdoors turns into a hospital visit. <b>Traditional non-motorized scooters earned a place as one of this summer's top hazards because, for another year in a row, this popular toy is responsible for the most toy-related injuries.</b>
<b>REAL LIFE, MORE THAN STATISTICS:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five children, 2- to 13-years old, died in nonmotorized scooter-associated incidents. Four were struck and killed by motor vehicles while riding nonmotorized scooters, and one died after falling from a nonmotorized scooter. Incidents included:<sup>lxxvii</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A 2-year-old boy, turning a corner while being pushed on a ride scooter by an older child, fell off and hit his head. He was not wearing a helmet. He was transported to a hospital, where he later died. .</li> <li>• A 3-year-old boy, riding his scooter in a marked crosswalk, died after being hit by a commercial van.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>FACTS:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2020, <b>sales of sports toys</b>, which includes skates, skateboards and scooters, <b>grew more than 31%.</b><sup>lxxviii</sup> In one month alone, sales grew 107% versus the same time the previous year.<sup>lxxix</sup></li> <li>• Emergency department visits for injuries associated with scooters, skateboards and hoverboards jumped to 140,465 between March and September 2020, as compared to 100,797 visits in the same time period the previous year. <b>Young children, 0-9 years old</b>, accounted for a large portion of the injuries, tallying a <b>149% increase</b> in reported emergency department visits.<sup>lxxx</sup></li> <li>• Nonmotorized scooters is the category of toy that continues year-to-year to be associated with the most estimated toy-related injuries for children 14 and under.<sup>lxxxi</sup> In 2019, an estimated 35,600 children under 15 years old were treated in emergency rooms for injuries associated with non-motorized scooters.<sup>lxxxii</sup></li> <li>• Hoverboards were associated with an estimated 71,100 injuries treated at emergency departments from 2017 through 2019.<sup>lxxxiii</sup></li> <li>• In addition to <b>injuries from falling</b> or, in the case of some hoverboards, batteries catching on fire, children have been fatally injured when hit by <b>cars in driveways and on roads.</b></li> </ul>
<b>TO DO:</b>	<i><b>Know the history of injuries associated with wheeled activities and, if you decide that it is suitable for your child, be familiar with all appropriate safety measures. The number of injuries from certain wheeled activities, such as nonmotorized scooters, may be a compelling reason to avoid these toys altogether. But if your child is allowed to use non-motorized scooters, skateboards, or hoverboards, never let the child ride near traffic or without the proper safety gear approved for that particular activity (such as helmets and other protective padding). For more information about toy safety, go to <a href="http://www.toysafety.org">www.toysafety.org</a>.</b></i>

## TRAP #7

### MORE POOLS, FEWER LIFEGUARDS: DROWNING



<b>COVID-19 IMPACT:</b>	The pandemic has exacerbated a serious lifeguard shortage, negatively impacting training and hiring, at a time when more families may be spending time around pools and on beaches. <sup>lxxxiv</sup> Since COVID-19, there has been an increase in some popular water activities ( i.e. water tubing) <sup>lxxxv</sup> and a surge in backyard pool purchases. <sup>lxxxvi</sup>
<b>HAZARD:</b>	Potential For Drowning

<p><b>W.A.T.C.H. OUT!</b></p>	<p>Whether you are looking for a lifeguard for a child’s backyard birthday pool party, or counting on the lifeguard chairs to be filled at your local beach, <b>lifeguards may be in scarce supply</b> due to delays in training and other <b>pandemic-related trickle effects</b>. With the warm weather, families will be flocking to both private and public swim areas. The <b>pool- and spa-buying frenzy</b> brought on by families social distancing means there are more options than ever for kids to cool down in their or a neighbor’s backyard; however, <b>a lifeguard shortage is raising red flags when it comes to water safety</b>. Nothing can replace the expertise of a trained professional, but the onset of the swimming season is a good time to proactively review water safety guidelines and beware of some common safety traps that may be in your own backyard. <b>The number of children that drown in backyard pools each summer highlights the importance of raising awareness about water safety.</b></p>
<p><b>REAL LIFE, MORE THAN STATISTICS:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A 2-year-old boy drowned after he entered a residential, in-ground swimming pool in an attempt to get an inflatable toy. No one else was in the pool area.<sup>lxxxvii</sup></li> <li>• A 2-year-old died in his family’s swimming pool in Cape Coral on May 7, officials said. The child was able to pull a section of the pool gate apart and squeeze through, investigators said. The boy did not know how to swim. (Cape Coral, Fla)<sup>lxxxviii</sup></li> <li>• Recently, A 12-year-old boy was in critical condition after a near-drowning. He was found unresponsive in a pool and transported to a Nashville hospital. Metro police said the 12-year-old boy was playing with three friends in the complex’s pool, where there was no adult supervision. (Nashville, TN)<sup>lxxxix</sup></li> </ul>
<p><b>FACTS:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lifeguards are in shorter supply than usual due to pandemic-related factors, such as cancelled certification classes. With many unguarded pools and beaches, The Boston Globe reports that The American Lifeguard Association has concerns about an increase in <b>drownings,<sup>xc</sup> the leading cause of unintentional injury-related death among children ages 1 to 4.<sup>xcii</sup></b></li> <li>• <b>More pools:</b> More pools have been purchased since the onset of COVID<sup>xcii</sup>, and this could mean more pool parties and more opportunities for children to be around pools.</li> <li>• <b>More water sports:</b> Many product-related activities saw a downturn in hospital treated injuries, but not some water sports: Emergency department visits for <b>water skiing, tubing and surfing</b>, all sports that lend themselves well to social distancing, increased by 15% during the first seven months of the pandemic.<sup>xciii</sup></li> <li>• <b>Fewer lifeguards:</b> A sharp decline in lifeguard retention plagues some municipalities and private pools.<sup>xciv</sup> COVID-19 impacted both the recruiting and training of lifeguards.<sup>xcv</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• According to one Aquatics Manager at a Minneapolis Park and Recreation, normally the retention rate is 55 to 60% of lifeguards each year, <b>but this year the retention rate is 12%</b>. Instead of 150 lifeguards, as of June 1st, they had 70 lifeguards.<sup>xcvi</sup></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>It’s important to remember that most fatal drownings take place at homes during the summer.</b> Beware of common and lesser known backyard water safety traps to help keep kids safe. There are many, here are a few: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Inflatable water toys:</b> Water rings, tubes and other inflatable pool toys are not life saving devices. Water rings can tip over trapping a child’s head under water. Inflatable arm bands can provide a false sense of security that a child is safe in the water. Rafts can block the view of a child in need of help. Diligent supervision is required around water whether or not a child is using inflatable pool toys.</li> <li>• <b>Shallow water:</b> Young children can drown in less than 2 inches of water. Watch out for baby pools, buckets and pool covers filled with rainwater.</li> <li>• <b>Broken or Defective Pool and Drain Covers:</b> Suction and circulation from pool and spa drains can be powerful enough to trap swimmers and bathers underwater. Victims can also become entrapped on broken outlet covers.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>TO DO:</b></p>	<p><b><i>Water safety procedures are important, can save lives, and should be revisited regularly. A child can go from having fun in the water to being trapped underwater in an instant— so remain vigilant. Check water safety procedures regularly, always supervise children, use multiple barriers of protection to prevent access to pool areas and guard against accidental drowning, and remove toys from the water that could attract children to the area. For more information about toy safety, go to <a href="http://www.toysafety.org">www.toysafety.org</a></i></b></p>

**HEAD FIRST: USE HELMETS WITH BIKES**



<p><b>COVID-19 IMPACT:</b></p>	<p><b>In high-demand due to increased consumer interest and supply shortages at the onset of the pandemic, bikes sold out at many stores. With more biking activity came more injuries. From March to September 2020, injuries climbed an estimated 39% (from 14,742 to 20,431 injuries) for bikes and accessories from the previous year.</b><sup>xcvii</sup></p>
<p><b>HAZARD:</b></p>	<p><b>Potential for head and impact injuries</b></p>
<p><b>W.A.T.C.H. OUT!</b></p>	<p><b>Bicycles are hot.</b> This spring, if you are on the hunt for a new bike or a part for an old one, expect to pay more. Demand is sky high, and with shipping slowdowns, bikes and parts could cost 15% to 25% more — if there’s even inventory to sell.<sup>xcviii</sup> Many parents looking to keep kids active and socially distanced rediscovered biking as a family activity. Biking continues to be a popular pastime as we emerge from COVID restrictions. Riding a bike is a fun way for children and adults to enjoy the warm weather this summer, but biking also comes with many safety risk factors. <b>The summer has the highest number of bicycle-related deaths.</b> Help keep kids safe and make sure they adhere to appropriate safety measures when biking, such as always wearing a properly fitted helmet.</p>
<p><b>REAL LIFE, MORE THAN STATISTICS:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In May, a boy, thrown from his bicycle after he was struck by a hit-and-run driver, credits his helmet with saving him from significant injuries. (Mountain Brook, AL) <sup>xcix</sup></li> <li>• This month, a 12-year-old boy, after a collision with a moving vehicle while he was riding his bike, was rushed to the hospital by the fire department with serious injuries.(Tallmadge, OH) <sup>ci</sup></li> </ul>
<p><b>FACTS:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After the onset of COVID-19 and the halt of many group sports and community activities, hospitals reported a <b>rise in injuries from biking</b> and other activities taking place near home.<sup>ci</sup></li> <li>• <b>Bicycle sales numbers reflect an unprecedented spike and emphasize the extreme market and behavior change when it comes to outdoor sporting activities brought on by COVID-19. According to the NPD Group, bike sales were up 78% between January and March in 2021 from the same period the year before. Significantly, the year before sales were up 38%.</b><sup>cii</sup></li> <li>• If past summers are an indicator, beginning in June, bicycle-related deaths are expected to peak.<sup>ciii</sup></li> <li>• Wearing bike helmets can reduce the risk of head injury by 60% and brain injury by 58%.<sup>civ</sup></li> <li>• A helmet that is cracked or has been in a crash should be replaced.</li> <li>• In 2020, there were an estimated 425,910 bicycle and bicycle accessory-related injuries. <b>Children 5 to 14-years-old had the highest injury rate.</b><sup>cv</sup></li> <li>• Keep kids away from cars and other traffic while biking. In 2019, there were 1,089 bicycle-related deaths, 846 people were killed in traffic crashes, and 712 of the deaths were motor-vehicle related.<sup>cvi</sup></li> <li>• <b>Head injury</b> is the leading cause of death in bicycle crashes and is the most important determinant of bicycle-related death and permanent disability.<sup>cvii</sup></li> <li>• <b>Nearly half (47 percent) of children ages 14 and under hospitalized for bicycle-related injuries are diagnosed with traumatic brain injuries.</b><sup>cviii</sup></li> <li>• Head injuries account for more than 60 percent of bicycle- related deaths.<sup>cix</sup></li> </ul>
<p><b>TO DO:</b></p>	<p><b><i>Wearing a properly fitted helmet when biking can reduce the risk of injury from a fall and save lives. Wear a bike helmet even if you're going for a short ride. Never wear a damaged helmet -- it is recommended that you replace your helmet after any fall or crash where you hit your head or if the helmet has been dropped on a hard surface. These are only a few of the safety tips to consider when your children are biking. Adhere to all appropriate safety measures when biking so that everyone can enjoy their ride and avoid injuries. For more information about toy safety, go to <a href="http://www.toysafety.org">www.toysafety.org</a></i></b></p>

**EVERYONE IS OUTSIDE: PLAYGROUND ENTANGLEMENT**



<p><b>COVID-19 IMPACT:</b></p>	<p>As more people are vaccinated and the warmer weather is here, many children are excited to play outside after a focus on home-based indoor activities this past year. 1 out of every 3 adults feel comfortable returning to public playgrounds.<sup>cx</sup></p>
<p><b>HAZARD:</b></p>	<p>Potential for strangulation, injury and bodily harm</p>
<p><b>W.A.T.C.H. OUT!</b></p>	<p>This summer, with the re-opening of public spaces, playgrounds may be busier than ever. During a year with an extraordinary increase in cycling (see Trap #8), W.A.T.C.H. reminds parents and caregivers that straps from bicycle helmets worn on playgrounds can get caught on equipment leading to death or near strangulation. Similarly, drawstrings, typically on the neck or waist of children’s clothing, scarves and ropes can catch on slides and equipment leading to entanglement and other serious consequences.</p>
<p><b>REAL LIFE, MORE THAN STATISTICS:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On May 10, 2021, A 3-year-old girl was killed when a rope became tangled around her neck on a playground at a daycare facility, according to reports. The CT Scan at the hospital showed a brain injury with no possible chance of recovery. The child died two days after the incident. (Sioux Falls, SD)<sup>cx</sup></li> <li>Last year, a 4-year-old boy died when a rope from his toy got tangled around his neck as he went down a slide on a playground, according to the coroner. (Auckland, New Zealand)<sup>cxii</sup></li> </ul>
<p><b>FACTS:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Playground entanglement</b> is a risk whether at a public playground or a home playground.</li> <li><b>Playground Equipment sales had an 81% increase in April 2020.</b><sup>cxiii</sup></li> <li>The CPSC has <b>reported deaths when straps from children’s helmets snag on playground equipment</b> or other objects. There were 34 playground-related deaths reported from 2009 to 2014. 19 deaths were from hanging or asphyxiation, 12 of which involved a second product such as a jump rope, drawstring, or helmet.<sup>cxiv</sup></li> <li><b>Drawstrings from children’s clothing and playgrounds</b> can be a hazardous combination.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There have been 26 reports (January 1985 to June 2019)) of children who died when drawstrings from their clothing became entangled on playground slides, school bus doors, or other objects.<sup>cxv</sup></li> <li>Many children’s clothing with drawstrings have been recalled due to the risk of strangulation; however, clothes with similar hazards can still be found in stores and online.</li> <li>In May, <b>JCPenney recalled 3,700 girls’ puffer jackets</b> because the drawstring in the lining could become “entangled or caught on playground slides, handrails, school bus doors or other moving objects, posing an entanglement hazard to children”.<sup>cxvi</sup></li> </ul> </li> <li>Falls are the most common cause of injuries on playgrounds, but <b>entanglements</b> are the major cause of death and debilitating injuries.<sup>cxvii</sup></li> <li><b>Improper clothing.</b> Clothing entanglement is a major cause of strangulation injuries, particularly on slides. A child caught by the neck at the top of a slide may be unable to fight the force of gravity, requiring immediate help to avoid serious injury.</li> <li><b>Protrusion hazards.</b> Even when children are outfitted properly, an exposed nail, hook, or vertical post may catch clothing and lead to strangulation. Open “S” hooks from swings can also entangle a child’s hair or loose clothing.</li> <li>Playground injuries are one of the leading causes of unintentional injury to children. <sup>cxviii</sup> 154,292 children ages 5 to 12 made trips to the emergency room each year because of playground injuries. 8 children die in playground-related injuries each year. <sup>cxix</sup></li> </ul>

<b>TO DO:</b>	<i>Remove bicycle helmets while on playground equipment. With more kids biking this summer, helmet safety procedures are as important as ever. Also, avoid children's clothing with drawstrings. Beware of many other playground safety traps such as improper ground covering, hot surfaces, and tripping hazards to name a few. For more information about toy safety, go to <a href="http://www.toysafety.org">www.toysafety.org</a></i>
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**TRAP #10**

**JUMPING OUT OF FAVOR: BACKYARD TRAMPOLINES**



<b>COVID-19 IMPACT:</b>	As parents rushed to keep their kids active, there was an 80% + growth in playground equipment, playsets, trampolines and play houses/bouncy houses from Mar to May of 2020. <sup>cxx</sup>
<b>HAZARD:</b>	<b>Potential for impact and other catastrophic injuries.</b>
<b>W.A.T.C.H. OUT!</b>	This past year, COVID-19 kept kids closer to home and closer to at-home hazards. Many backyard products, including trampolines, saw a surge in popularity as families looked for ways to keep kids active near home. Nonetheless, when it comes to backyard trampolines, parents may decide the risks outweigh the benefits. At-home trampolines, popular among children and a fixture in many backyards, have been associated with potentially catastrophic injuries. Injuries associated with trampolines have skyrocketed in recent years. Incidents include fractures, cervical spine injuries and paralysis. Injuries can be permanent and devastating for both children and their families. Netting, padding and adult supervision have not prevented the numerous injuries relating to trampoline use and may provide a false sense of security
<b>REAL LIFE, MORE THAN STATISTICS:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Pennsylvania mom is warning of the dangers of trampolines after her 13-year-old daughter was paralyzed from the chest down last summer. While jumping on a trampoline and doing flips unsupervised, according to the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review and the Today show, the girl fell and landed funny on her head and neck last year. The trampoline had a safety net to keep her from falling to the ground.<sup>cxxi</sup></li> </ul>
<b>FACTS:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2019, there were an estimated 123,029 trampoline-related injuries.<sup>cxxii</sup></li> <li>The first seven months of the pandemic in 2020, there was a 6% increase in injuries as compared to the same time the previous year<sup>cxxiii</sup></li> <li>The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) warns that home use of trampolines is dangerous for children and should be strongly discouraged<sup>cxxiv</sup></li> <li>Over 85% of trampoline injuries take place at home.<sup>cxxv</sup></li> </ul>
<b>TO DO:</b>	<i>Do not have a false sense of security that a toy is safe because it is popular. Trampolines are not toys and home-use is strongly discouraged by the AAP. Know the facts and what injuries may have been reported before choosing toys and activities for children. For more information about toy safety, go to <a href="http://www.toysafety.org">www.toysafety.org</a>.</i>

**Photos/ Visual Representations:** Regarding toy/recreational activity photos available on the W.A.T.C.H., Inc.'s website ([www.toysafety.org](http://www.toysafety.org)), please note: The photos and images relating to the summer safety press release and press conference are used for visual aid purposes only, and are not intended to focus on a specific manufacturer, distributor, retailer or product. Rather, these images and photos represent categories of potential summer safety traps. The Summer Safety list of hazards differs from W.A.T.C.H.'s annual "10 Worst Toys" List released in November for the holiday season, which identifies specific products that are representative of types of hazards in the marketplace. **Products:** Any reference to, or photographic representation of, specific products herein neither constitutes nor implies a recommendation or a criticism of such products, but rather is used only as visual examples to aid in the discussion of the types of potential hazards discussed.

**W.A.T.C.H., Inc.** is a non-profit organization working to educate the public about child safety. W.A.T.C.H. helps raise awareness about the dangers lurking in many toys, children's products, and recreational activities. Noted trial attorneys, authors and consumer advocates, Edward Swartz (1934-2010), James Swartz, Joan Siff and W.A.T.C.H. have been responsible for the "10 WORST TOYS" nominees released for over 46 years as well as a **Summer Safety Report** addressing summer hazards for children. For more information on W.A.T.C.H. and the press conference, please visit [www.toysafety.org](http://www.toysafety.org) or follow us @WATCH safety on Twitter and Facebook.

**Joan E. Siff**, President of W.A.T.C.H. & Board Member, Franciscan Children's.

**James A. Swartz**, Director of W.A.T.C.H., noted trial attorney, author and consumer advocate.

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