

Safe kids Healthy kids
Happy kids



Lawnmower Safety

Each year, mowing injures about 74,000 people. More than 9,000 of them are children younger than 18. Lawnmower injuries can be serious, even fatal. A lawn mower blade can eject an object up to 100 miles per hour. Both the teen and the kids in the yard are at-risk. Common injuries include:

- Deep cuts,
- Loss of fingers, toes, hands and feet,
- Broken and dislocated bones,
- Eye injuries,
- Burns, and
- Death.

Parents can help prevent lawn mower injuries. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children should be at least:

1. 12 years of age to operate a hand mower or walk-behind mower, and
2. 16 years of age before operating a riding lawnmower.

All children operating a lawnmower should be mature, show good judgment and have the strength and ability to use the mower.

Know the lawn mowing safety rules.

- *Keep other children away while the teen mows the lawn.* Do not ask a teen to mow the lawn while babysitting young children.
- Read the lawnmower manual with your teen before he mows the first time. Talk about safety.
- Mow when the grass is dry, it is daylight, and the weather is good. Wet grass, stormy weather and dim night light are dangerous.
- Get rid of objects in the yard like twigs, rocks, glass, wires and toys. Lawn mower blades can pick up and throw small objects.



- Make sure the lawnmower is in good condition. Never remove any safety guards and shields.
 - Wear sturdy closed-toe shoes with slip-proof soles. Never mow in sandals.
 - Do not pull the mower backwards. Never mow in reverse unless absolutely necessary. Carefully look for kids before putting a riding mower in reverse.
 - If the mower hits an object, stop.
 - Never put hands or feet into the mower to remove grass or debris. The blade could still be turning even if the mower is off. Use a stick to knock grass or debris off.
 - Start and refuel mower outdoors — not in the garage.
 - Never fill a tank when the mower is hot.
 - Do not smoke or light a flame around gasoline.
 - Be very cautious when mowing on slopes. Mow across the face of the slope. *Do not mow up and down a slope with a **walk-behind mower**.* You could slip under the mower. The mower could also fall back on top of you or your feet. If you use a **riding mower** on a slope, *mow up and down, not across.* This will help prevent the mower from tipping.
 - Turn the mower off to cross a gravel path or road, remove a grass catcher, unclog a discharge chute or walk away from the mower.
- Riding lawn mowers *are not toys*. Children should *never* be allowed to ride with someone on a riding lawn mower. Children like to be around mowers, so watch for them while you mow.

Call the Parent Help Line. We listen. We can find you help.
544-5808 or 1-888-727-5889 from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., 7 days a week.