

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.