

# Briggs and Counsel

L a w O f f i c e s

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## PERSONAL INJURY PRACTICE

- Medical Malpractice
- Auto Accidents
- Wrongful Death
- Slip & Fall
- Products Liability

## PROTECTING your CHILDREN

As a parent, you have a challenging and complicated job: raising your children.

Your life is hectic. Even so, you still cherish seeing your children grow from crawlers curiously exploring their small worlds to college seniors seriously questioning their global responsibilities.

You do your best to educate your children and keep them from harm. So you provide immunizations, healthy nutrition, and medical checkups. You make a safe and secure home.

You're deeply involved in their homework, sports, and after-school activities.

You set a good example. You set rules and boundaries, but still foster independence and assertiveness.

You talk with other parents, buy parenting books, and go online to find guidance on health, behavior, growth, and safety.

You listen...to extend trust. But you discipline, trying to be clear about how rules were broken.

Most of all, you show tenderness and love.



## Kids get hurt

But children are children, and they can get hurt. According to Safe Kids USA®:

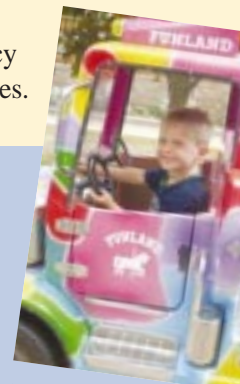
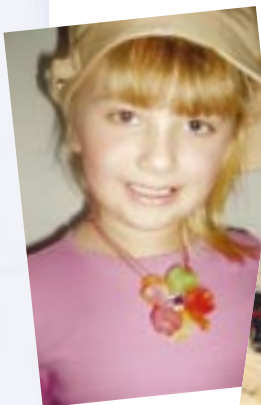
- 3.4 million youngsters visit hospital emergency rooms for injuries that occurred at home.
- 2.2 million children age 14 and under are injured annually while at school.
- In 2003, more than 208,000 children were treated in hospital emergency rooms for playground injuries.

## When negligence is to blame

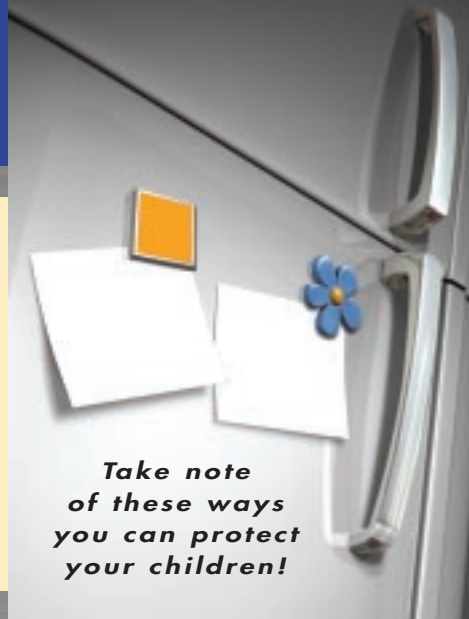
Every day, thousands of children are harmed by products, people, and places they trust—through no fault of their own.

When injury occurs, our civil justice system offers the hope and promise of understanding, fair treatment, and accountability.

© Safe Kids Worldwide



# HOW YOU CAN PROT



Take note of these ways you can protect your children!

Although you want to foster independence and assertiveness in your children, there are many steps you can take to protect them by anticipating and preventing harm. Suggestions on this page are only part of the story. You can find many good books to help you at libraries or bookstores. See page four for some online resources. Here are some suggestions. Some are actions you can take. Others require earnest conversations with your children. We hope they help you with your important job of being the best parent you can be in raising your children.

## Bullies

Bullies persistently harass other students. Bullying can cripple a child's desire to learn, to enjoy school, and make friends. Some schools change their "climate" to confront and reduce bullying.

### What a child can do

- ✓ Show confidence and just walk away.
- ✓ Never get angry.
- ✓ Never physically strike back.
- ✓ Tell parents, who should notify school administrators.
- ✓ Seek out friends.



## PLAYGROUNDS

The National Program for Playground Safety suggests precautions parents can take to make sure their children can climb, slide, swing, and have fun safely at home, public, and restaurant playgrounds:

- An adult should supervise all play and assist in emergencies.
- Encourage children to play on equipment designed for their ages.
- Safety-inspect ground surfaces for hardness or hazards such as broken glass or sharp objects.
- Monitor ladders, steps, platforms, handrails, ropes, barriers, and swings, slides, seesaws, and merry-go-rounds for condition, looking for sharp edges, loose connections, missing parts, and other dangers.
- Report and repair all hazards.

## FIRE

You can help protect your family with simple precautions:

- Install and test smoke alarms.
- Store 911 as an emergency autodial on all household phones.
- Handle and store ignition and flammable materials carefully.
- Teach children about fire safety.
- Plan fire-escape routes from each room and an outside meeting place.
- Avoid smoking in bed.
- Purchase homeowner's or renter's casualty and fire insurance.

## Home poison control

Young children are curious and may place everything in their mouths. To minimize potential risk, you can take several preventive steps:

- Keep all toxic substances and medications locked and out of reach. Household cleaners, paints, insecticides, and other dangerous products may be everywhere—in kitchens, baths, basements, and garages.
- Keep emergency medical service numbers and the poison control center number (800-222-1222) near a telephone.
- Purchase ipecac syrup for use only with the approval of a poison control center or your physician.
- Ask for childproof caps and keep prescriptions and over-the-counter medications out of the sight and reach of children.
- Use children's medications only as prescribed.
- Investigate your residence for lead-based paint exposure if it was built before 1978.
- Install carbon-monoxide detectors and have furnaces, fireplaces, and woodburning stoves inspected and cleaned annually.



# PROTECT YOUR CHILDREN

## Online

The millions of children who go online to view social networking sites, e-mail friends, visit chat rooms, and surf the Internet need protection.

### Protect your child online

- ✓ Get computer literate—know what's out there.
- ✓ Place a computer in the kitchen, not a child's bedroom.
- ✓ Spend computer time with your child.
- ✓ Set service provider safety features to block objectionable sites.
- ✓ Learn to monitor your child's e-mail.
- ✓ Teach children appropriate online courtesy and behavior.
- ✓ Explain predatory, threatening, or obscene online risks to your child.
- ✓ Examine phone and credit-card billing for unusual account charges.
- ✓ Report inappropriate contact with your child to law enforcement and your service provider.

## School buses

Parents of children who take bus transport to school should be aware of safety suggestions:

- ✓ Escort your child to the bus stop, if you can.
- ✓ Tell your child to let the bus come to a complete stop before walking to it.
- ✓ Once on the bus, the child should sit in an assigned seat and not move around.
- ✓ Try to meet your child at the bus stop after school.
- ✓ Teach your child to get off the bus safely. When it has fully stopped, walk about ten feet in front of the bus, be sure the red lights are flashing, that the driver indicates it is safe, and be sure vehicular traffic has stopped.
- ✓ Have a backup plan for your child when he or she misses the bus or stays after school.
- ✓ Tell your child to report harassment, fighting, accidents, or anything unusual to you.



## TOYS

Children love toys, but toys sometimes hurt children. You can reduce the risk of injury from toys by following some simple procedures:

- Study and select toys carefully. Good design and manufacture will eliminate small parts, sharp points or edges, projectiles, and loud noises.
- Match toys to a child's age, abilities, and interest, particularly if older children have toys younger children may use.
- Read labels for safety information about paints, materials, washability, and uses.
- Understand any parental supervision requirement for chemistry sets, shooting toys, riding toys, or electrically operated toys.
- Underwriters Laboratories seals on electrical toys show parts have been safety-tested.

## SPORTS

Participating in sports teaches children the values of trying hard, teamwork, courtesy, courage, and self-worth. Parents can help their children get the most out of sports:

- ✓ Encourage your child to play in organized sports at school or in community organizations.
- ✓ Monitor adult supervision of teams for warm-up exercises, skill development, fairness, and injury prevention.
- ✓ Be sure your child wears appropriate protective gear for the sport to protect head, eyes, mouth, and other body-contact areas.
- ✓ Support your child's commitment and efforts.



## Others' negligence

*What can you do if you feel your family has suffered an injury because of a toxic toy, a negligent school bus driver, or bully at school?*

**TALK WITH AN ATTORNEY TO HELP YOU STAND UP FOR YOUR RIGHTS.**

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The information included in this newsletter is not intended as a substitute for consultation with an attorney. Specific conditions always require consultation with appropriate legal professionals.

## HOW OUR FIRM CAN HELP

The smallest children merit the closest watching and protection. No matter how many precautions parents take, children may still receive injuries caused by schools, manufacturers, businesses, or others' negligence.

When children are injured in seemingly larger-than-life situations, our firm can offer them and their parents the hope and promise of fair treatment and compensation for harm. Parents and young victims of negligence may be so injured, upset, confused, or traumatized that they cannot speak out for themselves. That's when we become their voice.

We will bring our experience, resources, and, most importantly, our passion and heartfelt concern to bear for those harmed by insensitive wrongdoers to correct the harm they have suffered.

If you believe that negligence is responsible for your child's injury, please call **Briggs & Counsel** for legal counsel.



### PARENT RESOURCES

Clip and save!

Administration for Children and Families	<a href="http://acf.dhhs.gov">acf.dhhs.gov</a>
Bicycle Helmet Safety Institute	<a href="http://bhsi.org">bhsi.org</a>
Children's Defense Fund	<a href="http://childrensdefense.org">childrensdefense.org</a>
Child Welfare League of America	<a href="http://cwla.org">cwla.org</a>
Children's Safety Network	<a href="http://childrenssafetynetwork.org">childrenssafetynetwork.org</a>
Connect for Kids	<a href="http://connectforkids.org">connectforkids.org</a>
Educational Fund to Stop Gun Violence	<a href="http://csgv.org">csgv.org</a>
GetNetWise	<a href="http://getnetwise.com">getnetwise.com</a>
Injury Free Coalition for Kids	<a href="http://injuryfree.org">injuryfree.org</a>
Lawyers for Children	<a href="http://lawyersforchildren.org">lawyersforchildren.org</a>
National Center for Missing & Exploited Children	<a href="http://missingkids.com">missingkids.com</a>
National Program for Playground Safety	<a href="http://playgroundsafety.org">playgroundsafety.org</a>
National Safe Kids Campaign	<a href="http://safekids.org">safekids.org</a>
Safe N Sound Kids	<a href="http://safesoundkids.com">safesoundkids.com</a>
Violence Policy Center	<a href="http://vpc.org">vpc.org</a>