



Autumn Safety 2022

Cold Weather

The upcoming autumnal and winter months can increase the chance of your child falling ill with certain illnesses including:

- **Bronchiolitis**, a common respiratory tract infection that normally causes cold symptoms but can sometimes worsen. Seek medical advice your child shows the following symptoms: difficult breathing, eating less, passing less urine, vomiting, high temperature or if their symptoms seem to be getting worse.
- **Influenza** is another common respiratory tract infection, causing cold symptoms but can lead to complications including bronchitis and pneumonia. The flu vaccine can help protect your child and others vulnerable to flu, such as babies and older people. It is given as a quick and painless spray squirted up each nostril. It is free on the NHS for children aged 2-3 years, all primary school children, some secondary aged children and children with long-term health conditions.

Asthma

Asthma is a common respiratory condition with symptoms that can be triggered by the cold weather. Management of asthma is important and it is controlled easily.

- Ensure that your asthmatic child has an up to date action plan with their GP / asthma nurse and takes their medications as advised.
- The [MySpira App](#) can help teach your child the correct inhaler technique through mini-games and augmented reality.
- Also visit the [Suffolk Learning](#) website to learn more about how asthma can be managed in schools.
- Seek medical advice if your child has worsening symptoms like coughing at night or using the reliever inhaler more than 2 to 3 times a week.

Safer Sleeping

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS – Often referred to as Cot Death) is the sudden, unexpected and unexplained death of an apparently healthy baby, accounting for 300 infant deaths each year in the UK. It can be prevented through:

- Keeping your baby smoke free
- Placing your baby to sleep in a cot avoiding soft-sided sleep pods / products
- Breastfeeding your baby
- Putting your baby to sleep on their back with their feet to the foot of the cot
- Keeping your baby's head and face uncovered and ensuring they don't get too hot
- Not laying down with your baby after drinking alcohol or taking medications that may make you drowsy
- Download the [Baby Check App](#) to learn checks you can do if your baby shows signs of illness, and when to seek medical advice.



Shaken Baby Syndrome

A crying baby can be distressing, though shaking babies in response can lead to serious injury.

Tips to help calm your baby down include:

- Checking your baby's temperature
- Cuddling or carrying your baby
- Seeing if your baby needs a nappy change
- Feeding your baby if they are hungry
- Going for a walk with the pram, or taking them on a car or bus ride
- Singing, playing soft music or talking gently
- Moving to a calm space

Visit the Suffolk [Keep Calm](#) website for more tips on what your baby may be telling you and places to get support.

Safety at Home

Here are some tips to ensure the safety of your children at home:

- **Stairgates** can be hazardous when used incorrectly. Fit screw-fit stairgates at the top and bottom of the stairs and check their safety features. Ensure you read the instructions and fit them as directed. Do not stack two of them on top of the other and do not be tempted to make your own!
- **Button batteries** are used to power certain household objects but can be hazardous when swallowed. Keep them away from young children and babies and seek medical advice if you suspect your child of swallowing one.
- **Falls** are a leading cause of accidental injury at home, but can be prevented through well lit stairs and rooms, clearing tripping hazards, securing furniture to the wall, locking medicine and household cleaning materials

Cycle safety – cycling is a healthy and eco-friendly way to get around.

- **DO** wear helmets and high visibility clothes when possible
- **DO NOT** use your phone and airpods while cycling

Vaping

Current evidence suggests that the prevalence of smoking in children and young people is falling, but use of vaping is on rise. Vaping is not risk free, and research discourages it in children and young people who have never smoked.

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

The unprecedented time of the rising cost of living and COVID-19 can result in young people becoming more stressed, which might affect their mental health.

- **DO** encourage your child to eat and sleep well and exercise
- **DO** listen and acknowledge the signs that your child might be in distress, including losing interest in daily life, talking about death, or being upset, anxious angry or agitated.
- Various resources are available in hand, including:
 - [Every Mind Matters](#) has advice and tips on how to support children with their mental health and spot the signs that they may be struggling.
 - The [Suffolk Emotional Wellbeing Hub](#), providing more tips on how to manage emotional wellbeing difficulties and a helpline to call if needed.
 - [Kooth](#), a platform to explore children and young people's mental health concerns and seek professional help
 - [MindEd](#) is a free online educational resource on children and young people's mental health for all adults, which can support parents and carers through these exceptional circumstances.

