Perspective and Real Threats To Life and Limb

Every day, thousands of families are devastated by tragedy, by the loss of a child. Most of these deaths are from injuries that occurred in preventable accidents. It is believed by many experts that simply making a concerted effort to take some precautions could cut this number in half.

Young children are more worried about bad guys coming to get them or monsters in the closet than they are about realistic dangers. They leave their toys on the stairs, climb up bookcases, and blindly run into traffic.

In all frankness, the world is filled with naïve adults as well. Most parents are more terrified of germs than exposure to toxic chemicals, more terrified of the measles than the MMR vaccine's side effects. The active ingredients in antibacterial soaps (chemicals such as triclosan) are far more dangerous than germs on your hands. The risk of vaccine injury is much higher than the risk of contracting measles. Americans are far more likely to die from prescribed pharmaceuticals than by terrorists. The worst terror attack in American history resulted in nearly 3,000 deaths. Every year, more 100,000 Americans die from prescribed pharmaceuticals.

Danger is everywhere, but many of us are scared of the wrong things. Our fears are often fueled by the media, which is driven by corporate greed. We need to separate fact from fiction to understand the greatest threats to our children.

Dying by Accidents

According to the CDC, fatal injuries are the leading cause of death for children 0-19 years of age in the U.S. According to the World Health Organization, the global trend is similar,

with accidental injuries being the leading cause of death for children over five years of age.

It doesn’t benefit us as parents to become paranoid about childhood injury, but the opposite attitude of “Oh well, accidents happen,” attitude doesn’t serve us well, either. In the reports, some efforts were noted to have made a difference. Innovations such as car seats, helmets, child resistant containers for medications, and fencing around pools have helped prevent accidental injuries and death.

Facing Facts

Most of the time, accidents don’t just happen. They are the result of unsafe acts, poor habits, or carelessness. That means that many of these injuries are preventable. Each year, more than 12,000 children die from accidental injuries, and more than 9 million children receive emergency medical care for non-fatal, but serious injuries.

Boys are also more likely to be injured than girls and boys account for twice the fatalities. Most of the fatal injuries to children were transportation related. Most of the children killed from transportation-related accidents were occupants in vehicles, but many children were pedestrians or cyclists.

Many of these deaths can be prevented by wearing seat belts, wearing helmets, and practicing defensive driving. It is widely known that driving while intoxicated is unsafe, but distracted driving and drowsy driving (driving while sleepy) are also high risk.

Injuries due to falls were the most common injury for children 14 and under. The next most common causes of injury were being struck by an object, bitten by animals, or stung by insects.

Better Not to Over Do It

Many kids ages 10-14 landed in the emergency room due to overexertion. That's right, kids in the U.S. are so out of shape that exercising too hard can put them in the hospital.

The CDC listed suffocation, drowning, burns, and poisoning as other common injuries. The risk for these types of injuries varied somewhat by age and location. Common sense precautions like childproofing your house, wearing safety gear (like helmets), and closely supervising your kids are known to be some of the best preventative measures.

The next time someone accuses you of putting your children at risk by refusing vaccines, ask them if they know what is most likely to kill their children. It isn't germs.

Recommended Reading:

- *Doctor's Against Vaccines – Hear From Those Who Have* Done *the Research*
- *Scientists Against GMOs – Hear From Those Who Have* Done *the Research*
- *The Fascinating Bacteria in our Gut, and How it Affects Our Whole Lives*

Sources:

- *Protect the Ones You Love: Child Injuries are Preventable* – CDC
- *World Report on Child Injury Prevention* – WHO