



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

**NORTH SUBURBAN
YMCA**
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Prepare for a Happy, Active Summer with Safety Tips from the YMCA

Northbrook, IL: April 2015 – With Chicago’s “blink-and-you-miss-it” spring seasons, it’s a sure bet that summer weather is just around the corner. Brilliant sunlight, green grass, and sparkling swimming pools will draw kids and parents outside for fun-filled hours of activity. To keep the fun rolling and avoid accidents and health risks, the North Suburban YMCA offers these safety reminders that become extremely important in the summer months.

Water Awareness = Water Safety. Everyone loves a day at the pool or the lake, but the water can be treacherous for young children. Twenty percent of people who die from drowning are age 14 or younger, and most could be prevented by simple safety steps:

- *Swim Lessons Save Lives.* Even children who are well supervised need to learn essential independent swim skills. Accredited swim lessons, like those offered at the North Suburban Y in Northbrook and other YMCA’s nationwide, emphasize floating and other techniques to help children protect themselves.
- *Put Down the Phone and Watch the Water.* Attentive adult supervision is crucial to safety. Choose swim venues with lifeguards, and designate parents in your group to be “on duty” watching kids without distraction. No one should ever swim alone.
- *All Hands on Deck in Life Jackets.* Boat owners need to have sufficient floatation devices readily available for all their passengers. Children must wear well-fitting life vests at all times.

Sun Protection, Head to Toe. You’re probably already using sunscreen, but chances are you aren’t using enough. Dermatologists recommend a full ounce – about enough to fill a shotglass -- of SPF 30 or more lotion applied to all exposed skin. Put it on 15 minutes before going out and reapply every two hours, more often when swimming or sweating heavily. Hats and UV filtering sunglasses protect your eyes and head too.

Hydrate First. Active kids may not stop for a drink until they’re already dehydrated. Stay a step ahead by serving plenty of water before they start playing, and keep extra bottles on hand for breaks in the action. Avoid excessive sugary juices and sports drinks.

Beating the Bugs. Mosquito and tick bites are more than annoying: they can transmit serious diseases including West Nile Virus and Lyme Disease. To drive off mosquitos, consistently use an insect repellent containing 30% DEET, and avoid wearing bright colors and scents that attract the bugs. When in wooded areas, wear long sleeves and pants to avoid picking up ticks. If a tick does attach itself, remove carefully with fine-tipped tweezers and thoroughly wash the bite area (as well as your own hands).

Helmets, Every Time. With growing awareness of the long term effects of head injuries, helmet use is – pardon the pun – a no-brainer. Whether your kid rides a bike, skateboard, scooter, or skates, a helmet provides the best protection against devastating injury.

These common sense tips are easy to apply – but sometimes easy to forget in the midst of summer excitement. Parents need to take time to supervise children and model healthy habits for a lifetime of happy summers together.

Registration is now open at the North Suburban YMCA for a wide range of programs in aquatics, CPR, babysitting, and other safety-related areas. For a complete program guide and more information, visit www.nsymca.org or call 847 272 7250.

About the North Suburban YMCA

The YMCA is a not-for-profit entity and relies on donations to make services available for all families and individuals in its 15-city region. All board members are volunteers, who donate their time, talents and financial resources. Located at 2705 Techny Road in Northbrook, the YMCA has served the northern suburbs of Chicago for over 45 years. The Y is about youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility, providing programs and services that address the needs of our diverse community and are accessible to all. For more information or to make a donation, contact Barb Flanagin at 847-272-7250 or bflanagin@nsymca.org, or visit www.nsymca.org.