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SAFE SUMMER CELEBRATIONS

Celebrating the Fourth of July should be fun and safe for the entire family. Unfortunately, consumer fireworks are not only dangerous enough to spoil the fun, they are dangerous enough to take lives. You can have a great time celebrating Independence Day if you remember to keep your eyes on safety!

To help keep your Fourth of July safe this year, Prevent Blindness America offers these safe suggestions.

Fireworks Free

You can ensure your children's safety by supervising their activities and their environment. Instead of worrying about what might be going on in your neighborhood, you can be what's going on in the neighborhood.

Host a Fourth of July party for your kids and their friends.

- Let your guests make the decorations. Kids make cute decorations from crepe paper, construction paper, stickers and glue. These will provide fun and make the party look festive. Local craft or hobby shops have the supplies and lots of good ideas.

- Kids love to help in the kitchen, so plan on food-creating activities. Decorate your own pizza, make fun desserts (blueberries, strawberries and whipped cream provide a basis for lots of fun, patriotic desserts), grill vegetables they've skewered themselves, etc. This plan has a bonus, as if kids help make it, they are more likely to eat it!
- Let the kids decorate T-shirts or hats with paint and decals that glow in the dark. When evening rolls around, their new night-bright clothes will be dry and ready to model.
- Take the kids to a professional fireworks show. Check your local paper for times and locations of displays in your area.
- Provide safe sounds and sparkles (see lists below).

Safe Sounds

Part of fireworks' attraction to children is the big noise that goes with them. Kids love making noise and there are lots of safe ways for them to do this.

- Step or sit on inflated balloons until they pop.
- Inflate small bags (lunch bags are a good size). Popping the bags makes a nice, loud "BANG".

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness America is the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight. Focused on promoting a continuum of vision care, Prevent Blindness America touches the lives of millions of people each year through public and professional education, advocacy, certified vision screening training, community and patient service programs and research.

- Buy noisemakers from a party store. Different brands and types of noisemakers make many unique, and loud sounds.
- Bring out your old pots, pans and pie plates. The kitchen cacophony should be quite satisfying to the noise-making set.
- Horns, whistles, bells and cymbals will also serve as sound fun.

Safe Sparkles

The other attractive part of fireworks is the glitter. Here are some safe, fire-free tips.

- Glo-sticks, glo-ropes and glo-jewelry provide safe and fun ways to brighten an evening.
- Flashlights, plain or with filters made by wrapping the flashlight in colored cellophane, can light the night in fun, safe ways.
- Neon and glow-in-the-dark paint can provide both a fun afternoon project and a special evening display. Kids enjoy watching their art take on a special glow as the sky darkens.
- A jar of fireflies or lightening bugs can provide lots of fun. Nature’s little sparklers provide a fun challenge to young insect hunters. Just remember to release the bugs before the hunters go to bed!
- Novelty flashlights can be extra fun. You can buy flashlights that have mirrors to bounce the light, and changeable colored filters or optic fibers that look like sparklers but are much safer.

Neighborhood Safety

While there are lots of advantages to hosting a party on Independence Day, it is important to remember that most fireworks accidents happen during the entire month surrounding the holiday.

- Explain to your children why you don’t want them around non-professionals who are shooting off fireworks: Neighbor “Fred” may

be a great guy, but he isn’t a professional at pyrotechnics.

- “I wasn’t going to shoot off anything, I was just going to watch.” Because bystanders are more frequently injured than those doing the lighting, this isn’t a good solution. Be sure your child knows that you don’t want him/her anywhere around consumer fireworks.
- It is important that you discuss fireworks with your children. Be sure they understand how you expect them to act around consumer fireworks. A little role-playing may help give your child the confidence to say “No”. There will be many times that your child will need to say no to friends and peers. Help him/her practice now.

Should the worst happen . . .

If a child’s eye is injured in a fireworks accident, what should you do?

If there are specks in the eye...

- **DO NOT** rub the eye.
- Use an eye wash or let tears wash out the speck.
- Lift upper eyelid outward and down over the lower lid.
- If the speck doesn’t wash out—keep the eye closed, bandage lightly and see a doctor.

Cuts and punctures of eye and eyelid...

- **DO NOT** wash out the eye with water.
- **DO NOT** try to remove an object stuck in the eye.
- Cover the eye with a rigid shield without pressure. The bottom half of a paper cup can be used. See doctor at once.

For more about Fireworks, Call the
PBA Vision Health Resource Center
at 1-800-331-2020.

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