***Newsletter/Blog Article***

**Amusement Rides: Following the Rules Really Does Matter**

As the weather gets warmer, more families are making plans for a day at an amusement park, state fair, carnival, or church festival. A big part of the fun is the thrill of the rides. Unfortunately, every year thousands of children are treated in emergency departments for amusement ride-related injuries. While most of the injuries are minor, serious injuries requiring hospital stays do happen.

While you may think it is ok to stretch the rules and let little Johnny ride if he isn’t quite tall enough, or run through the line without paying attention to things like who is supposed to get on the ride first, these things really do matter. Following the ride rules can help prevent many of these injuries from happening.

It is important for people to realize that there are no federal regulations for amusement rides. Oversight of the safety of amusement rides is different for rides at fixed locations like amusment parks and mobile rides that are moved to various locations such as the ones you see at fairs or carnivals. Oversight also varies widely by state – ranging from no requirements at all to strict guidelines on how often and by whom rides are inspected. Many people assume that the rides have been inspected recently but that may not be the case. Don’t rely on the park or the event organizers alone for your safety.

Taking a few steps before you get on each ride can help prevent injuries and keep your family out having fun.

* **Do a quick check:**Before your child gets on a ride, take a quick look around. If anything doesn’t seem safe, choose a different activity.
* **Read the sign:** Only let your child get on the ride if they meet ALL of the listed requirements such as height, age, weight, and health restrictions.
* **Obey the rules:** Follow any special seating order and/or loading instructions and always use seat belts and safety bars.
* **Know your child**: If you think your child won’t be able to follow the safety guidelines or will be too afraid, keep them off of the ride.

More amusement ride safety tips are available at: <https://www.preventchildinjury.org/toolkits/amusement-ride-safety>