**N E W S R E L E A S E**

*For more information, contact:*INSERT YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION HERE

**Preparation is Key for Sledding Safety**

(CITY, STATE) For many families, sledding is an easy way to get outside in the winter—all you need is snow, a hill, and a sled. But for too many children, the fun of sledding is ruined by injuries that could have been prevented. With winter already here, child advocates are asking parents to think about sledding safety before heading out into the cold.

Like many other winter activities, sledding creates some risk of injury. Sliding down ice and snow on a plastic or wooden sled creates more energy than our bodies are designed to handle, so the chance for injury is high. Data from hospitals show that tens of thousands of children are injured while sledding every year, with many suffering head injuries and broken bones. Many of the more serious injuries happen when the child on the sled runs into something in the environment (tree, fence, light pole, another sledder, etc.). Sledding near streets or highways also leads to increased risk of injuries. Fortunately, there are ways to reduce these dangers so that everyone can enjoy sledding and stay on the hill.

“INSERT OWN QUOTE HERE,” said INSERT NAME, TITLE OF PERSON BEING QUOTED HERE, a member of Prevent Child Injury. “INSERT ADDITIONAL QUOTE HERE.”

The time to prepare for safe sledding is well before the kids hit the hill. Follow these tips to prepare now for the next sledding adventure and help you keep your children on their sleds, not in the emergency department.

Equipment Check:

**Sled**: Buy a sled that can be steered, not snow tubes or round disks. Check for and fix sleds with broken or missing parts.
**Helmet**: Make sure your child has a helmet they can wear. A snow sports helmet works best, but if your child doesn’t have one, a bicycle helmet is the next best choice. If your child needs to wear a hat to keep warm, make sure to readjust their helmet.

Environment Check:

**Hill**: Pick the right hill before the snow falls. Look for hills that do not have any trees, fences, posts, or other objects children could run into. Make sure there is plenty of space for the sled to come safely to a stop at the bottom of the hill, away from roads and water (ponds, rivers, etc.).
**Parent Present:** If your child is younger than 12 years, prepare to join them at the sledding hill. Adults see dangers that children might not see and can quickly help if an injury does happen.

On the Hill:

**Sled Basics:** Show your child how to sit feet-first and steer the sled. Practice on a small hill before moving to larger hills. **Space:** Teachyour child how to stay out of the path of other sledders.

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

Prevent Child Injury is a national group of organizations and individuals, including researchers, health professionals, educators, and child advocates, working together to prevent injuries to children and adolescents in the U.S. Prevent Child Injury promotes coordinated communication to the public about prevention of child injury, which is the leading cause of death of our nation’s youth. To become a member of Prevent Child Injury or for more information and resources on this and other child injury topics, please visit [www.preventchildinjury.org](http://www.preventchildinjury.org).

 [PARAGRAPH ABOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION HERE]

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Ideas for quotes: local stories or data, parents supervising children at the sledding hill, family story of child injured while sledding, dangers of sledding