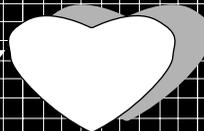


PROTECTING YOUR FAMILY



Lawnmower Safety Starts With Help From Shriners Hospitals

(NAPSA)—The snow has melted and soon enough, the long blades of grass underneath will need to be cut. To ensure a safe lawnmowing experience, a few safety precautions should be followed.

Shriners Hospitals for Children treat many children each year who have been seriously injured as a result of power lawnmower accidents. Many of these incidents result in the loss of fingers, toes, limbs and even eyes. Tragically, some lawnmower accidents can result in permanent brain damage or even death. In 2001, about 275,000 people were treated in hospital emergency rooms for injuries related to lawn and garden tools, and about 35,000 of those injured were under 15 years of age.

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, each year about 75 people are killed and about 20,000 are injured on or near riding lawnmowers and garden tractors. One out of every five deaths involves a child. The Commission estimates that most of the deaths occur when a child is in the path of a moving mower. Although tragic, these unfortunate situations could have been avoided, if adults had taken the proper precautions.

To prevent injuries to children and adults from lawnmowers, please follow these safety tips from Shriners Hospitals and the



Stefanie meets with Dr. John P. Lubicky who operated on her leg nearly 5 years ago.

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission:

- Do not allow passengers on a riding mower.
- Keep children out of the yard and indoors while mowing the lawn.
- It is recommended that children under the age of 14 not be allowed to operate a lawnmower.
- Always prepare your lawn for mowing. Check your lawn for items such as sticks, rocks, toys, etc. Make sure nothing is hidden in the grass.
- Handle fuel with care. Wipe up spills. Never fill the tank on a mower that is hot. Never smoke or use any kind of flame around gasoline.
- Wear appropriate clothing

and shoes. Wear long pants, long-sleeved shirts, eye protection and heavy gloves. Wear sturdy, close-toed shoes with slip-resistant rubber soles.

- Check guards and shields. Be sure to read the owner's manual and know how to operate the equipment. Don't remove or disable guards or other safety devices.

- Use a mower with an automatic blade cut-off. Stay behind the handle until the blade stops. Never reach under a mower while it is still operating. If you need to remove debris or check the blade, disconnect the wire from the spark plug.

- Don't cut grass when it's wet.
- On slopes, mow up and down rather than across the slope.

For more information on lawnmower safety, or Shriners network 22 hospitals that provide medical care and services totally free of charge to children with orthopaedic problems, burns and spinal cord injuries, write to: Shriners International Headquarters, Public Relations Dept., 2900 Rocky Point Dr., Tampa, FL 33607, or visit the Web site at www.shrinershq.org. Treatment is provided to children under age 18 regardless to race, religion or relationship to a Shriner.

If you know a child Shriners can help, call 1-800-237-5055 in the United States or 1-800-361-7256 in Canada.