



# Media Release

December 9, 2009

Page 1 of 2

Contact:

Len Kennedy

Executive Director

Hastings Children's Aid Society

613-962-9291 ext. 2305

## **Santa and Hastings CAS say... safety first this holiday season!**

This time of year, when we're all caught up in the Christmas spirit, it's important to take time to think about the not-so-small matter of making sure our homes are safe for the season.

"As the season approaches, we should all take a minute to think about safety," says HCAS Executive Director, Len Kennedy.

Here are a few quick tips to help you, your family and friends have a safe, enjoyable holiday season:

- ✓ Keep candles, lighters and matches out of the reach of children and do not place candles near a Christmas tree or furnishings and never leave candles burning unattended.
- ✓ Make sure your smoke detectors and fire extinguisher are in good working order.
- ✓ Make sure the Christmas tree is anchored to prevent a child from pulling it over.
- ✓ Avoid decorations that are sharp or breakable and keep trimmings out of the reach of young children.
- ✓ Check tree lights for frayed wires, broken bulbs and loose connections and never run electrical cords under carpets or rugs, in traffic areas or where there is a chance of water.
- ✓ Unplug lights and decorations when you go to bed or leave the house.
- ✓ To prevent burns and electrical shocks, don't give young children a toy that must be plugged into an electrical outlet. Instead, buy toys that are battery-operated.
- ✓ Pay attention to the labelling on packages and buy age appropriate toys. Toys too advanced may pose safety hazards for younger children.

# Media Release

December 9, 2009

Page 2

- ✓ Watch for pull toys with strings that are more than 12 inches in length – they could be a strangulation hazard for babies.
- ✓ For children younger than three, avoid toys with small parts which can cause choking.
- ✓ For children under six years of age, avoid building or play sets with small magnets. If magnets or pieces with magnets are swallowed, serious injuries can occur.
- ✓ Include helmets and other protective gear when giving bicycles, skates, skis or skateboards as a gift.
- ✓ Homes you visit over the holidays may not be childproofed so keep an eye out for danger spots.
- ✓ Keep holiday plants away from young children (and pets) – mistletoe, holly berries and Christmas cactus are poisonous if swallowed.

Hastings Children's Aid Society will be opened as usual during the holidays, with the exception of December 25, 28 and January 1. If assistance is needed in an emergency when the office is closed, a worker and supervisor will be on call and can be reached at the Belleville number, 613-962-9291 or the Society's toll-free number, 1-800-267-0570.