Mowing made easy
Your guide to practicing lawn Mower safety

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, 200,000 people are injured in lawn mower-related accidents each year, and 16,000 of them are children.

Never allow children to play on a lawn mower, even if it is turned off, or be passengers on a riding lawn mower. Instead, have children play indoors, and do not allow other kids to play near where you are mowing. Children should be at least 12 years old to operate a push lawn mower and at least 16 years old to operate a riding lawn mower.

Below are some additional rules to follow to keep you and your loved ones safe while mowing the lawn.

• Always wear sturdy shoes while mowing. Do not wear sandals.
• Always wear eye and hearing protection.
• Pick up stones, toys and debris from the lawn to prevent injuries from flying objects.
• Use a lawn mower with a control that stops it from moving forward if the handle is released.
• Never pull backward or mow in reverse unless absolutely necessary. If you have to mow in reverse, carefully look for others behind you.
• Start and refuel lawn mowers outdoors and not in a garage. Refuel with the motor turned off and cool.
• Blade settings should be set by an adult only.
• Wait for blades to stop completely before removing the grass catcher, unclogging the discharge chute or crossing gravel roads. (As a safety feature, some newer models have a blade or brake clutch that stops the blade each time the operator releases the handle.)

The facts

• A lawn mower projects objects with three times the force of a .357 magnum pistol.
• Objects ejected from a lawn mower can travel at speeds of 200 miles per hour.
• Lawn mower-related injuries are the leading cause of traumatic amputations in children.
• Nearly 300 million dollars is spent each year on medical care for lawn mower-related injuries.

Always remember: no child operators, no bare feet, no one in the yard and no extra riders.

Contact us
For more information, contact Helen DeVos Children’s Hospital Injury Prevention Program at 616.391.SAFE (7233) or visit helendevoschildrens.org/injuryprevention
If you have questions, email: injuryprevention@helendevoschildrens.org