

Keeping children safe in the cold weather



[www.derbyshire.gov.uk/
staywellthiswinter](http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/staywellthiswinter)

Did you know that children are more vulnerable to the cold?

Children's bodies are smaller and they lose heat quicker than adults so here are some top tips to keep children warm and safe in the cold weather.

Be prepared !

Sign up to the Met office Health alerts at www.metoffice.gov.uk and watch the weather forecast to help you prepare for colder weather.

Ensure you are aware of the procedures that your child's nursery or school has in place in case of bad weather.

Get winter tyres fitted to your car and keep a items such as jump leads, warm clothing and a blanket in the car in case of break downs.

Flu vaccination

Most children are eligible for an annual flu vaccine which is often given by a nasal spray.

Speak to your GP, practice nurse or health visitor about this if your child has an underlying illness, as they may be eligible for a vaccine from six months old.

Children who catch flu after vaccination are less likely to be seriously ill or admitted to hospital.

Outside safety

Keep an eye on children playing outside in the cold weather - if they are not moving around much or start to shiver, bring them inside to warm up.

Watch out for symptoms of hypothermia such as shivering, lips going blue, slurred speech and unusual clumsiness. Find out more at www.nhs.uk/conditions/hypothermia

Ice can be a big risk to children. Be aware of any ponds, rivers or lakes that may have frozen over and never attempt to go near or walk on them. It is important to teach children the dangers of frozen water.

Clothing

Dress children in layers - a few light layers will keep them warmer than one heavy layer

Start with a vest and then a t-shirt and another layer on top. These can be taken off throughout the day

Dress babies and young children in one more layer than an adult would wear.

Keep their head, neck and hands covered - put gloves or mittens and a hat on them.

It's also important that they do not wear any clothing that might get caught on branches or play equipment, such as scarves or clothes with drawstrings.



Stay safe and well

In drier winter air children lose more water through their breath. So keep them hydrated and offer plenty of water - try giving them warm drinks and soup for extra appeal.

Remove outside clothes when indoors, even when babies are asleep. Pull back carrycot hoods and remove rain covers when inside

In the car make sure babies and toddlers are not wearing thick coats or snowsuits. Too many layers or thick coats are dangerous because it can leave their car seat harness too loose to be effective in a crash.

Remind children to wash their hands regularly to reduce the spread of bugs like norovirus and Covid-19.

Night time

During the night it's important that babies do not get too warm.

The chance of SIDS (sudden infant death syndrome) is higher in babies who overheat. Check your baby's temperature often by placing a hand on their tummy or the back of their neck.

You don't need to keep your heating on at night, just add an extra layer. If you do decide to keep the heating on, make sure the temperature is between 16-20°C.

Other useful information

If you are struggling to pay your energy bills then we recommend that you talk to your energy supplier as early as possible.

Ofgem rules say that your supplier has to help. This will usually be by negotiating a payment plan with you. In addition some suppliers have financial help funds.

Welfare Rights

Our Derbyshire Welfare Rights team can check if you are claiming all the benefits that you are entitled to.

Call: 01629 531535.

Visit: www.derbyshire.gov.uk/welfarebenefits

Marches Energy Agency

Warmer Derbyshire (MEA) can give advice on energy costs. MEA can also visit your home to advise you on insulation and draught proofing.

Call: 0800 6771332

Email: wdd@mea.org.uk

The Derbyshire Discretionary Fund

If you are in financial hardship, you may be eligible for an emergency cash payment from the DDF.

Call: 01629 533399.

Citizens Advice

Citizens Advice can offer support and information around debt and energy costs. Find your nearest branch at www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Mental health support

Visit: www.derbyshire.gov.uk/mentalhealth

[www.derbyshire.gov.uk/
staywellthiswinter](http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/staywellthiswinter)