



**Monday, 22 December, 2008**

## **Alarming rise in trampoline and bike related accidents**

Doctors are warning parents to be particularly vigilant this summer, as they have seen an alarming rise in accidents involving trampolines, bikes and scooters in the lead-up to Christmas. Neurosurgeons and nursing staff at The Children's Hospital at Westmead are concerned that parents are becoming far too relaxed when it comes to supervising their children during playtime.

With Christmas fast approaching, many children will be lucky enough to get the trampoline, bike or scooter that they have asked Santa for. With many trampolines now including safety features, such as nets and spring-free mechanisms, parents assume this is enough to keep their children safe. The Children's Hospital at Westmead has seen an increase in the presentation of children who have been injured while playing on the trampoline, such as by falling out of the trampoline and onto the ground beneath.

This Christmas keep a few important safety tips in mind:

- Supervise children while they are on the trampoline - the net is not enough to keep them safe
- Place the trampoline onto a soft surface, such as grass, not on concrete or on the driveway

In addition to trampolines, many children are hoping to see a bike or scooter among their Christmas gifts on Thursday morning. Please be sure that when riding a bike, scooter or skateboard, your child wears a helmet at all times, even if they are riding in the safety of their street, yard or driveway. By wrapping a helmet to place under the Christmas tree and ensuring your child wears it while out and about on wheels, many children could avoid serious head injuries.

Dr Tom Pitham, Neurosurgical Registrar at The Children's Hospital at Westmead says, "Supervising your children with their new gifts over summer can make all the difference to their health and safety. We have seen a significant increase in accidents involving trampolines, bikes and scooters, most of which could have been prevented by supervising the child more closely."

"This Christmas, ensure your child is wearing a helmet. It could save their life."

"Many of the new trampolines are spring free, or have a net to provide further safety for children. This is not enough to keep your child safe. Be extra vigilant this Christmas and supervise your children."

The Children's Hospital at Westmead is the largest paediatric centre in NSW, providing the most advanced care and treatment options for children from NSW, Australia and across the Pacific Rim.

Established in 1880, The Children's Hospital at Westmead is a stand-alone public Hospital and registered charity with 3,000 staff working in 150 departments. Over 60,000 sick children and their families are cared for each year in a family-focused, healing environment. Funded by the NSW Government, The Children's Hospital at Westmead provides significant enhancements to services aided by the generosity of individual and corporate donors. For more information visit [www.chw.edu.au](http://www.chw.edu.au)

**For further information contact:** Julie Law, Media Assistant, T: 02 9845 3572

E: [juliel1@chw.edu.au](mailto:juliel1@chw.edu.au) a.h. 02 9845 0000