

# AIRMAN & FAMILY READINESS NEWSLETTER

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## Special points of interest:

- Helpful tips to have a safe and happy summer for everyone
- Summertime activities for kids

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## CRITICAL DAYS OF SUMMER

The Air Force designates **May 25 through September 4** of every year as the **101 critical days of summer**. Warm weather and longer days bring many people outdoors for cookouts, aquatic activities, road trips, camping, travel and more. With these longer weekends the risk for issues like heat-related illness, drowning, and car accidents go up during the summer months and can lead to more trips to urgent care or even the emergency room.

Summer is the season for relaxing, having fun and spending time with your family and friends. This month's issue is all about summer safety with simple precautions to keep yourself and your loved ones safe.



## Heat Safety

Extreme heat is responsible for the highest number of annual deaths among all weather-related hazards. On average, there are about 700 heat-related deaths occur in the United States each year. Heat related deaths and illnesses are preventable.

### Preparation is key!

- ♦ Learn to recognize the signs of heat illness.
- ♦ Identify places in your community where you can go to get cool such as libraries and shopping malls or cooling centers.
- ♦ Covering your windows with drapes or shades or use window reflectors designed to reflect heat.
- ♦ Add insulation to keep heat out.
- ♦ Use a powered attic fan to clear out hot air from your home.
- ♦ Install window air conditioners and insulate around them.

### Be Safe DURING!

- ♦ **NEVER** leave people or pets in a closed car on a warm day.
- ♦ Take **cool** showers or baths.
- ♦ **Wear** loose, lightweight, light-colored clothing.
- ♦ Drink plenty of **fluids**.
- ♦ **Avoid** high-energy activities or work outdoors.

- ♦ Consider **pet safety**. Make sure they have cool water and shade. Asphalt can burn their paws!
- ♦ **Check on** family members, seniors and neighbors.

Heat Exhaustion	vs.	Heat Stroke
Faint or dizzy		Throbbing headache
Excessive sweating		Confused, may lose consciousness
Rapid, weak pulse		Rapid, strong pulse
Nausea or vomiting		Nausea or vomiting
Cool, pale, clammy skin		Body temperature above 103°
Muscle cramps		Red, hot skin
Help the person get to a cooler, air conditioned place. Encourage them to drink water if they're fully conscious.		Call 911. Get the person cool rapidly by laying them in cool water or dousing them with it.



## Water Safety

The National Safety Council statistics point to drowning as a leading cause of death for young children. Here are some water safety tips to keep you and your family safer in the water this summer.

- ◆ Do not go in the water unless you know how to swim. Swim lessons are available for all ages.
- ◆ Never swim alone!
- ◆ Swim in areas supervised by a lifeguard.
- ◆ If you do get caught in a current, don't fight it— stay calm and float with it or swim parallel to the shore.
- ◆ Never drink alcohol when swimming; alcohol is involved in about half of all male teen drownings.
- ◆ Get training in **CPR**!

### Things to remember for young children...

- ◆ **Never leave your child alone!** If you have to leave, take your child with you.
- ◆ **Lifeguards aren't babysitters**— always keep an eye on your child.
- ◆ **Never swim around** drains or suction fittings.
- ◆ **Don't underestimate** the power of water— even rivers and lakes can have undertows.
- ◆ If a child is missing, **check the water first!**

## Things to Remember Outdoors

With all the summer fun activities out there, follow these safety tips to make sure your vacation is a safe and happy one.

- ◆ **Hydrate!** Hydrate!! Hydrate!!! If you feel thirsty, you are already dehydrated.
- ◆ Always wear **sunscreen** outside and frequently reapply.
- ◆ If you do get a sunburn, stay out of the sun! Use **Aloe Vera** to help soothe the skin and do not pop blisters or peel the skin.
- ◆ If you're going hiking, **let someone else know your plans** where you're hiking and what time you'll be back.
- ◆ If you're outside in an area with bugs, use a **bug spray** made with DEET or a naturally derived product. Mosquitoes can cause Zika and West Nile infection and disease.
- ◆ If ticks are a problem, wear long pants and long sleeves. **Check for ticks** when you remove your clothes. Ticks can cause a number of diseases.
- ◆ **Be aware** of your surroundings- people or wildlife - in any areas you're exploring.
- ◆ **Check** the local weather where you're going and pack accordingly.
- ◆ **Learn basic first aid.**



## Staying Safe on the Road

For many of us, summertime usually means road trips. Prevention and planning may take a little time up front but will spare you from dealing with the consequences of a breakdown— or worse, a crash— later. Here are some summer driving tips to remember this summer when you hit the open roads.

- ◆ **Never leave children or pets in a car alone!** Vehicles heat up very quickly and cracking a window is not helpful. If it is 80° outside, after just ten minutes it is 99° inside your vehicle. After 30 minutes that temperature jumps to 114°.
- ◆ **Get your car serviced** and checked for any recalls before your trip. Make sure your battery, lights, cooling system, fluids, belts and hoses, wipers, and tires get inspected before leaving.
- ◆ **Plan your travel**, give yourself plenty of time, review your route and bring printed directions in case GPS doesn't work.
- ◆ Have a **roadside emergency kit!**

For more safety tips visit <https://www.nhtsa.gov/> or scan the QR code



## Special Concerns for Your Furry Friends

We all love spending the sunny days of summer outdoors with our furry friends, but being over-eager in hot weather can spell danger. To prevent your pet from overheating, take these simple precautions:

- ♦ **Visit the vet** for a spring or early summer check-up. Make sure to get them tested for heartworm if they aren't on year round preventative.
- ♦ Pets can dehydrate quickly, so give them **plenty of fresh, clean water**. Be careful not to over-exercise them.
- ♦ **Do not leave pets unsupervised around a pool**—not all dogs are good swimmers.
- ♦ Keep all unscreened windows or doors in your home closed so pets can't accidentally fall out.
- ♦ **Know the symptoms of overheating in pets**, which include excessive panting or difficulty breathing, increased heart and respiratory rate, drooling, mild weakness, stupor or even collapse. Symptoms can also include seizures, bloody diarrhea and vomit along with an elevated body temperature of over 104 degrees.
- ♦ Feel free to **trim** your dogs hair, but **never shave** it. The layers of fur protect them from sunburn and overheating.
- ♦ **Most food and drinks** commonly found at BBQs **can be poisonous** to pets.

For more info please scan the QR code



## Food Safety for Gatherings

Summer brings warmer temperatures and plenty of outdoor gatherings with BBQs and picnics. The increase in temperatures also brings an increase in potential food poisonings. Read on for tips on how to keep food safe at your family gatherings this summer.

- ♦ **Use a thermometer**—studies show that checking the color of the food isn't an accurate way to tell if your food is cooked through.
- ♦ **Monitor leftovers**—When the weather gets above 90° perishable foods like meats and salads only have a 1 hour window. Toss out any unrefrigerated foods if they surpass the time limit.
- ♦ **Don't re-use marinades**—Be sure to discard used marinades that raw meat has been in. If you want to use the marinade as a sauce, **reserve some before adding your raw meat**.
- ♦ **Wash your hands**—Make sure you are washing your hands properly and after touching raw meat.
- ♦ **Defrost meats properly**—Plan ahead and defrost meat 1-2 days in advance in the fridge. Never leave frozen meat out on the countertop to thaw; this allows dangerous food bugs to grow.
- ♦ **Wash produce thoroughly**—Use cool tap water to rinse your produce to eliminate dirt and bacteria.
- ♦ **Separate raw and cooked foods**—Be sure to have a plate for your raw meats and a separate clean plate for your cooked meats.



## Summer Precautions for Seniors

Summer is a time to celebrate being with family and friends, but it also brings unique challenges and dangers for seniors. It's important to be aware of potential dangers so you can make the most of the season.

- ♦ **Talk to your doctor** about the upcoming heat and how your **medications might be affected**. Some medications become less potent with heat or require users to stay out of the sun.
- ♦ Proper sun protection is vital. Wearing light colored loose fitting clothing, **hats, sunglasses** and **sunscreen** can protect everyone from the heat.
- ♦ **Be aware of the temperature**. Even a small increase in temp can shorten the life expectancy for seniors with chronic medical conditions.
- ♦ Certain medications and a lowered intake of water are factors that can put elderly at **risk for dehydration**.
- ♦ **Don't be alone**. The dangers of summer are exacerbated when nobody is around in case of emergency.




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**RESOURCE NUMBERS**

**Military OneSource**   
 1-800-342-9647  
 militaryonesource.mil

**American Red Cross**   
 1-877-272-7337  
 redcross.org

**TRICare**   
 1-844-866-9378  
 tricare-west.com

**Air Force Aid Society**   
 (703) 972-2650  
 afas.org

**Employer Support of Guard  
 and Reserve**   
 1-800-336-4590  
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## Summertime Kids Activities

Helping your children stay engaged academically and physically throughout the summer helps set them up for success in the new school year. It's beneficial to maintain a routine during the summer as a way to keep your child learning and developing healthy habits. Here are some ideas to help your child have a happy and healthy summer.

- ◆ Seek out a summer program— Check with your local schools, recreation centers and other community based organizations for programs that might interest your child.
- ◆ Crack open a book— Summer reading can help keep brains engaged and study habits fresh.
- ◆ Take a field trip— Visit parks, museums, zoos or nature centers for low-cost educational opportunities for your entire family.
- ◆ Count, track and measure— Find fun ways to incorporate numbers into everyday tasks.
- ◆ Think ahead— Check with your child's school to see if there are summer packets of math and reading skills activities to help prepare for the next school year.
- ◆ Get moving— Don't forget to schedule time for your child to play and burn off energy with some sunshine and exercise.
- ◆ Snack healthy— A healthy diet is just as important in the summer as it is during the school year. Keep plenty of fruits and vegetables on hand to encourage good snacking habits.
- ◆ Recharge— Keep a regular summer bedtime to make sure your child is getting enough sleep.
- ◆ Camp in your yard— No campground? No problem! Pitch a tent in the backyard and spend the night under the stars.
- ◆ Take a tour— Ask if your local fire or police station offers tours. If your city has historical landmarks, you can check those out and learn about your cities history too.



## Resource spotlight...Families OverComing Under Stress

FOCUS (Families OverComing Under Stress) provides resilience training to military children, families, and couples. It teaches practical skills to help families and couples overcome common challenges related to a military life. It helps build on current strengths and teach new strategies to enhance communication and problem solving, goal setting and creating a shared family story.

Developed by a UCLA-Harvard team, FOCUS teaches Military children and families to understand their emotional reactions, communicate more clearly, solve problems more effectively, and set and achieve their goals.

For more information please visit:

<https://focusproject.org/>

Or scan the QR code

