

Having Fun On The Slopes This Winter!

No matter which winter sport you choose to do, staying warm is important. The right clothing and equipment will help you to enjoy yourself a whole lot more. Some of the newer fabrics for cold weather give you the warmth of layers without all the bulk. Did you know that staying warm isn't just about feeling comfortable? Your body needs to stay warm to work properly. When your body is at the right temperature, it won't need to spend as much energy. If you're dressed properly, it also means you can stay outside longer without worrying about frostbite. Ask an adult if you're not sure what to wear outside to protect yourself from the weather elements.

Before you hit the slopes to ski or snowboard, make sure you have the right equipment - and that it fits you properly. Many kids have problems because the equipment they use is too big for them. It may have belonged to an older brother or sister. The equipment has been kept in hopes that the next child can "grow into it." Sometimes that works out just fine and sometimes it doesn't. Equipment that is too big will make it hard to keep in control.

The same goes for boots and bindings - make sure these are the right size for your feet before getting on the slopes. Ski boots that are designed just for kids are great because they are more flexible than boots for adults, and they have buckles that are easier to manage too - making it quicker for you



to put on and help you avoid injuries too!

HELMETS ARE A MUST for skiing and snowboarding. They will help you avoid a head trauma if you fall! Also, wear goggles. They will protect your eyes from bright sunlight and objects that could get in the way and poke you in the eyes (like tree branches). Snowboarders also need kneepads and elbow pads. Some snowboarders who are just learning wear specially padded pants to cushion their falls!

Another important factor! It's an excellent idea to take at least one skiing or snowboarding lesson BEFORE you take off on your own. This can keep you from getting frustrated or getting hurt before you have a chance to enjoy this new sport. For instance, your instructor can teach you how to stop! Even after a lesson, it's good to have an adult near by in case you need help. Grownups can choose the right trails and hills for you to match your skill level.

Skiing and snowboarding can be a little like driving a car... you need to learn to share the trail! Watch out for others to avoid collisions. It's important to know where the other skiers and snowboarders are.

