**Gift a Safe Diwali to your Children**

**Source: Debashree Bhattacharya, Parenting Blogger & Mother**

Every year we celebrate Diwali with great pomp and purity. It is a festival of lights symbolizing the end of all negative energies and the birth of all positive energies around us. And for our children, it is a festival of new clothes, lamp lighting, fireworks, and delicious sweets. The preparation for Diwali generally starts a few weeks prior to the actual day of celebration. We as a parent, often forget to take enough precautions for the safety of our child in the festival of light.

Here’s to share with you some tips for a safe Diwali so that this auspicious festival brings only joy and happiness for all of us.

●**Do not leave kids unattended**:

Our toddlers suddenly become hyperactive and fearless witnessing many diyas and candles around them. Never leave your toddler alone with crackers, diyas, and candles. Always keep an eye on them and try to stand close to them as much as possible. Sometimes you simply need to hold your kids’ hands while they make circles with “Phuljhari”. Even a simple 'phuljhari' can cause tremendous damage if we don’t take care of our child properly.

●**One firecracker at a time**:

We can never predict anything about the nature of firecrackers. So it is advisable not to allow your kid to use more than one firecracker at a time. Parents should also avoid this practice.

●**Rules of Lighting**:

Do not light diyas on the passageways in the house or near any curtains or electrical items. Buy good lighting equipment to avoid any short circuits and other electrical accidents. Make sure the lights are installed above the height of your kids and all extensions are well secured. Let there be no lights, candles or diyas on the doors and hallways where kids would be running around. Strictly avoid the use of diyas in your children's bedroom.

●**Keep a bucket of water and a blanket handy:**

It is a harsh reality that an unwanted accident may occur at any time with anyone. So always keep a bucket of water, a good ointment for burn and a thick blanket handy. In case of fire simply pour ample water or use the blanket to extinguish the fire.

●**Train your children beforehand:**

It is better to train your kids beforehand regarding how to light up a firecracker from a safe distance. You can show it to them by holding agarbattis or candles while lighting crackers from a distance.

●**Ensure proper clothing:**

Any kinds of flowing clothes are a big no-no. They are simply more susceptible to catch fire! Change the clothes of your children before lighting up diyas or firecrackers if they are wearing ghagra or dupatta. For small boys, use body fitting cotton clothes with shoes covering their feet and avoid sherwanis. Long hair for girl children should be tied up properly.

●**Inspect your surroundings:**

It would be great if you choose the terrace of your house for lighting up crackers. And if you have decided to do it outside of your house, make sure that vehicles are not parked nearby. Be careful about live wires also. The area should have plenty of air and there should be enough space to run after lighting the crackers.

●**Buy stuff from reputed and known shops:**

This is applicable for both firecrackers and all kinds of food items, especially sweets. Before offering a sweet to your child, don't forget to taste it first. Do check the expiry date if it is mentioned in the box. Never buy any food items from any cheap unknown shop to avoid the use of spurious materials.

●**Careful handling of firecrackers:**

Do not let your kids carry firecrackers in their pockets. Store firecrackers safely in a place and hand them to your kids one by one. Impose this strict rule that all kinds of firecrackers should be lit only at the designated place. The upholstery, cylinder, and vehicles can increase the chance of accidental fire.

●**No re-trials with fused firecrackers:**

Discourage your child firmly if they tend to light up a fused firecracker to avoid any sudden burst. It would be great if you pour water on a fused firecracker and then move it in a particular corner.

●**Be sensitive to noise:**

Exposure to smoke and such loud noise is not good for our young children. They are still developing and such exposure may impact their development or even hurt their listening capability. It is good to let your kid enjoy for a while and then take them inside for other fun activities like making 'rangolis' or playing card games. You can organize a cultural family function too.

●**No playing with firecrackers:**

 Teach your kids that firecrackers are not toys and they may appear very lethal if handled carelessly. Ask them not to hurl the firecrackers on others or on their stuff. This may hurt them and damage the property too. Do not let your kids experiment with the firecrackers. The crackers should be lit as per the instructions printed on it.

● **A cotton mask is a must:**

Help your child to put on a simple cotton mask just to avoid the smoke that emits from firecrackers. Many children are allergic to sulfur, which is an essential ingredient of all firecrackers.

●**No cruelty on animals:**

Instruct your child not to throw firecrackers on stray dogs and cows as they can attack back. Besides this, it is also cruel.

**SOME TIPS FOR POST CELEBRATION:**

♡ Clean the hands and feet of your toddler with mild soap and apply some baby cream.

♡ Clean their eyes with cooled boiled water with a pinch of salt to avoid and eye irritation.

♡ Give a little bit of light diet to your children for just 2/3 days as there can be a chance of indigestion problem due to no restriction on sweets, candies and other yummy dishes.

**Wishing you all a very happy and safe Diwali!**