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"treating the cause of your problem, not just the symptoms"

Avoid Injuring Your Child

A portion of my Chiropractic practice has always included working with children. They make my day more interesting because the problems that they come in with are generally a little different than what I am accustomed to addressing each day with adults. However, I have come across a few young children that were injured in a manner that was completely preventable.

One such injury occurs more often than we think and it is usually unintentionally inflicted by one of the child's parents. If you have children, I am sure at one time or another you have been walking with them while holding their hand. There may have been some steps that they could not navigate quickly enough so you simply lifted them up by their one hand that you are holding. Another example is when you held your child's hands and swung them around in circles, known in my time as an "airplane ride". You may be just trying to help them up the stairs or simply having fun, but injuries to their shoulder can occur.

The shoulder joint is basically a ball and socket joint. However, the socket is not very deep. This gives the joint a great range of mobility but much less stability. Because the socket is not very deep, most of the stability of the joint comes from the surrounding ligaments and muscles. In small children, these muscles and ligaments are small and relatively weak compared to an adult. Also, when a child has their arm lifted over their head, their shoulder joint is in an even more vulnerable position. So, if your son or daughter is being lifted or jerked upwards by one arm, the body weight of the child plus the sudden force of the lift is transmitted directly through the shoulder joint. I have seen children of distraught parents who have had their shoulder joint dislocated. This causes extreme pain, the shoulder will look more concave than the other one, and they are not able to move the joint much at all. On some occasions the child may experience numbness and a change in the color of the skin in the hand.

If you recognize any of these signs, take your child to the hospital right away. The shoulder joint will need to be "put back into place" or reduced. This may require your child to be sedated if the process is causing them too much pain. As with any injury, the best form of treatment is prevention. Simply try to avoid doing activities that put a pulling or traction force on your child's arm.

