**8 Reasons Children of the 1970s Should All Be Dead**

The way things are going, every kid is going to go to school wearing bubble wrap and a helmet. Back in the 1970s (and earlier), parents didn’t stress about our health and safety as much as they do today. It’s not that they cared less – they just didn’t worry compulsively about it.

Parents of 2014 need to be reminded of how less restricted, less supervised, less obsessively safety-conscious things were… and it was just fine.

**1. JARTS: IMPALING ARROWS OF DEATH**

Can your mind comprehend a more deadly toy than a weighted spear that kids hurl through the air like a missile? No one ever obeyed the actual manufacturer’s rules, we just flung these damn things everywhere. We threw them. They stuck where they landed. If they happened to land in your skull, well, then you should have moved.

After roughly 6,700 emergency-room visits and the deaths of three children between 1978 and 1988, they finally outlawed Jarts on December 19, 1988. I suppose it needed to be banned, but a part of me is sad that kids today won’t have the battle scars and Jart survival stories we had. Goodbye Jart – you were an impaling arrow of death, but I loved you anyway.

**2. LOST AND NOT FOUND: SEAT BELTS**

Cars came with seat belts in the 1970s, but no one used them except maybe out of curiosity to see what it was like to wear one. Of course, you’d have to fish them out of the deep crevice of the backseat cushion where they often came to rest, unwanted and ignored.

The only “click” heard in the 1970s automobile was your dad’s Bic lighting up a smoke with the windows rolled up. (cough!)

I should also mention that, not only were there no seat belts, child seats were nowhere to be found. Whether it was the front seat of your mom’s station wagon or her bicycle, chances are, you were entirely untethered.

**3. SEMI-LETHAL PLAYGROUNDS OF HOT METAL**

Remember when playgrounds were fun? Sure, there was a pretty good chance you’d be scalded by a hot metal slide, or walk away with tetanus, but that’s what memories are made of.

The ground wasn’t coated with soft recycled rubber or sand as most are today – they were asphalt. Remember being hurled from a spinning merry-go-round, then skidding across the gravel at full speed? Good times.

I remember my school playground had a metal ladder “wall” that I swear went up three stories – it didn’t connect to a slide or anything. It was literally a ladder to the sky. I remember fully believing the oxygen was thinner at the top. One false move and I’d have been a flesh colored stain on the asphalt.

According to the New York Times we are making playgrounds so safe that they actually stunt our kids’ development. So, while blood was spilt and concussions were dealt on the playgrounds of the 1970s, we were at least in a developmentally rich environment – and we had the bruises and scabs to prove it.

**4. PRECIOUS LITTLE SUN PROTECTION**

 “Tanfastic lets the sunshine in. It’s not loaded up with sunburn protection like old folks and kids want. Tanfastic’s for you 15-to-25 year olds who can take the sun. Especially if you want to get superdark. Superfast.”

Back in the 70s, your goal was to get as brown as your skin would permit. Sun BLOCK or sun SCREEN was basically nonexistent. You wanted to AMPLIFY your rays, so women typically lathered on Crisco and baby oil to get that deep baked look.

For the kids, SPF numbers hovered around 2, 4 and 8. The idea that you would spray an SPF of 50 or even 30 wasn’t even an option, except perhaps from medical ointments prescribed for albinos.

**5. HELMETS: FOR THOSE WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS ONLY**

Whether you were riding a bike, roller skating, or skateboarding, one thing was for certain: you were not wearing a head protection.  You would have been looked at as a sideshow freak by other kids, and parents would assume you had some kind of medical condition.

#### 6. IGNORED AND  UNATTENDED ON THE REGULAR

Hey, who’s watching the kid in the stroller?  YOU MUST HAVE YOUR EYES ON THE KID AT ALL TIMES OR ELSE HE WILL DIE!

My mother routinely left me alone in the car at a young age while she ran errands.  Today, this will literally get you arrested.  You see, once upon a time it was okay to leave your kids for long periods without supervision (remember the so-called “latch-key kids” of the 70s?), or let them free roam without constant surveillance.  Today, parents won’t let their kids go out to get the mail alone, and any fun with friends has to be scheduled, closely monitored “play dates”.

On summer break or weekends in the 1970s, parents kicked their kids out the front door and didn’t let them back in until the sun went down.  “Go play,” were their only words, and you were left to your own devices for hours upon hours.  Neighborhoods looked like Lord of the Flies.

#### 7. ROUTINELY ALLOWED TO GET SERIOUSLY HURT

As hard as this is to believe, but when kids got hurt back then, adults didn’t come running with first-aid kits.  More than likely you’d be left alone with your pain, with no alternative but to get over it.

In the 70s, parents watched their offspring fall from trees and fall off bikes with a smile.

#### 8. SECONDHAND SMOKE EVERYWHERE

From airplanes to your family car, it seemed the world of the 70s was shrouded in a haze of cigarette smoke.  It wasn’t just the fact that many more people smoked, it was the absolute 100% lack of concern for those that didn’t, including children.  Teachers smoked, doctors smoked, your parents smoked…. and they didn’t take it to a secluded smoking area, they did it right in your face.

Please don’t interpret this as condoning it.  There’s no question that engulfing your child in a thick carcinogenic cloud isn’t a good idea.  I’m just stating facts – this is the world we lived in.  It was full of adults who didn’t seem to have anxiety attacks over our safety, and we turned out just fine…. right?