

# What's the New Prevention Invention?

**There was a time not too long ago when children didn't wear bicycle helmets, smoke detectors were uncommon, and 911 was just a wrong number. Innovations and inventions have made life much safer, but dangers and hazards have yet to go the way of the dinosaur.**

- First, ask students to identify recent innovations and inventions that make their lives safer.
- To “warm up” the students, you might start by suggesting a few, such as automobile air bags, protective sports gear or even high-tech gadgets like motion-detecting lights and security systems.
- Next, create “invention companies” featuring 4-5 students.
- Explain the goal of their new creation is to improve safety, whether it's safety at home, on the road, in sports or any daily situation.
- Have students begin the invention “process” by talking about the things they do every day. Hopefully, this will ignite ideas for a whole range of activities.
- Give students as much classroom time as you can for the “ideation” portion—remember, the first ideas aren't always the best ideas (think about Thomas Edison, who invented the incandescent lightbulb after hundreds of attempts).
- If it helps their invention, students can illustrate what the idea does.
- After students have sufficient time to complete the exercise, have each company “share” their inventions with the class.
- Invite questions from the other students and encourage the others to “build” on the idea, if possible.
- You can be a supportive “boss” by endorsing each idea and making some constructive suggestions as well.
- As a special bonus assignment, ask students to look in magazines, hunt around the house or find advertisements featuring products that claim to improve safety.