

With summer right around the corner, residents and visitors in North Carolina will be taking to the skies in record numbers with their personal drones.

Around 30,000 North Carolinians now own and operate drones for personal and recreational use. As this number grows, the N.C. Department of Transportation is reminding drone pilots to follow safety precautions because drones can be dangerous to others if they are not operated properly.

"Drones are an amazing new technology, and the applications are almost limitless," said NCDOT Director of Aviation Bobby Walston. "But with something so new comes a lot of challenges. We need to make sure people don't treat these as just a toy, and know how to operate them in a safe manner."

As such, NCDOT's Division of Aviation has provided the following eight tips to help pilots make sure they're flying safely and legally:

- Always fly below 400 feet above ground level,
- Never fly near airports,
- Avoid flying over events or crowds,
- Don't fly at night, even if your drone has lights,
- Never fly directly over people,
- Don't fly near or above prisons,
- Respect people's privacy, and
- Always keep the drone within your visual line of sight.

By following these guidelines, drone pilots can be more confident that their flights are safe and legal. Pilots should also take the time to learn about the state and federal laws governing drones, as well as local restrictions in their area, before taking off.

North Carolinians interested in flying a drone for commercial or government operations must obtain a permit from the N.C. Division of Aviation. Before applying, prospective users must pass NCDOT's UAS Knowledge Test ([aviation.ncdot.gov/UAS](http://aviation.ncdot.gov/UAS)). The permitting system began in 2016 and is designed to help drone owners better understand restrictions on drone use through a simple and efficient online process.

**Providing Emotional Support... a Vital Need**

Beyond satisfying a toddler's basic physical needs, such as good nutrition and providing a healthy, safe environment, their most important need as a toddler is for a dependable, affectionate relationship with at least one significant adult in their life. This relationship provides them with the essential element of stability they need as they move onward toward higher stages of intellectual, emotional and social development. It is the secure anchor toddlers need as they experience waves of sometimes baffling new experiences. When a toddler can count on the faithful love of someone special, whether in success or in failure, in accomplishment or adversity, their feelings of trust and positive self esteem are nourished and developed.

On the other hand, children who fail to develop this important bond become apprehensive and mistrustful of themselves and of others.

One of the great challenges of good parenting is in letting your child know they are loved without being either overly protective of them or overly intrusive into their own private world. It involves being sensitive and responsive to their inner emotional needs rather than imposing affection on them in ways they do not want. This demands insight, flexibility and self-control on the part of the parent, and at times may seem almost impossible to accomplish.

Let's face it, it is impossible to be a perfect parent all the time. A more realistic goal is just to strive to be a good parent most or at least part of the time.

Striving to be a good parent involves trying to find a balance, a happy medium, between letting your child go in order to experience independence, and holding on to them with affection whenever they need your emotional support.

By Roshunda Blount, County Extension Director



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