

Home Safety Checklist for Families with Young Children

This safety checklist is designed to help you protect your children - and everyone else in the family - from unintentional injuries. It is designed to be an easy, room-by-room survey that will quickly point out possible dangers. When you find a hazardous situation, change it - now!

Of course, no checklist will identify all the possible dangers, so use this process to look for other hazards. After you have read through the listed items for a room, take a few minutes to look at the room from the viewpoint of a child.

- Get down at toddler level and survey the room.
- Remember that anything that fits in a child's mouth will probably be put in.
- Look for climbing opportunities and things that can be pulled down from above.
- Watch for sharp corners, protrusions, and objects a child might fall upon.
- And keep in mind whatever special talents your children have shown - from prying off air vent covers to spotting loose carpet tacks.
- If you answer "no" to any item in the following checklist, you have found a dangerous situation that you should change.

- ___ knives and other sharp objects?
- ___ hot food, beverages, and glassware?
- ___ serrated boxes of plastic wrap, aluminum foil and plastic bags?
- Is the tablecloth folded or secured so that it can't be pulled down?
- Do you keep hot food and beverages out of the hands of adults who are holding children?
- Do you keep pot handles turned away from the stove so children can't reach them?
- Do you test the temperature of foods (especially microwaved foods) before serving them to your child?
- Do you keep your child in a safe place while cooking?
- Do you keep toys and play activities out of the kitchen?
- Does your child's high chair have a wide base, a harness and a safety strap?
- Do you avoid serving your child peanuts, grapes, hot dogs, popcorn, and carrots?
- Are matches and lighters kept out of your child's reach?

Bathroom

- Is the Poison Control # (1-800-222-1222) posted in your home?
- Are medicines and cleaning supplies stored:
 - ___ in a locked cabinet?
 - ___ out of your child's reach?
 - ___ in clearly marked and original containers?
 - ___ in containers with child-resistant caps?
- Are razors, scissors, and other sharp utensils stored out of your child's reach?

- Are electric appliances:
 - ___ unplugged when not in use?
 - ___ positioned away from all water?
 - ___ out of your child's reach?
- Do you keep the bathroom door locked?
- Is your child always watched while in the bathtub?
- Is there a nonskid mat in the bathtub?
- Is your water heater turned down to 120 degrees Fahrenheit?
- Do you check the temperature of the water in the tub before you put your child into it?

Your Child's Bedroom

- Does your child's crib have:
 - ___ slats that are no more than 2-3/8 inches (6 cm.) apart?
 - ___ a mattress that fits snugly against the frame (no more than two finger-widths between slats and mattress)?
 - ___ sides that are 22 inches (56 cm.) above the mattress?
 - ___ secure, child-proof side locks?
- Have you made sure that the crib has:
 - ___ no sharp corners or edges and no projections, such as posts?
 - ___ no broken, cracked, or loose parts?
 - ___ no loose plastic sheeting?
 - ___ no cords or drapery in the crib?
 - ___ no low cradle gyms or mobiles that the child can use to crawl out?
 - ___ no objects that could help your child climb out, such as a hamper, pillows, or stuffed animals, which should be removed once the child can stand?

- Have you placed the crib at least one foot from furniture, radiators, heating vents, and windows?

Toddler Bed

- Is your toddler older than 15 months and weigh less than 50 pounds?
- Does the guardrail on your toddler bed meet minimum standards?

Play Areas

- Does the toy chest have no lid, a lightweight lid, or a safe-closing mechanism?
- Are the toys appropriate for your child? Are they:
 - ___ without small pieces that can break off to be choked on?
 - ___ without sharp corners or edges?
 - ___ without any joints that can pinch fingers?
 - ___ without any projections that could injure an eye?
 - ___ of appropriate size and weight for your child?
 - ___ painted with nontoxic paint?
- Do you routinely inspect and dispose of damaged or unsafe toys?
- Do you routinely clean and sanitize the toys?

Windows

- Do windows have screens and locks?
- Are drapery/blind cords secured and out of reach for children?

Stairs and Railings

- Are there safety gates (not the accordion type) at the top and bottom of all stairways?
- Is there firm footing on the stairs (no loose carpeting, uneven steps)?
- Are the stairs well lit?
- Are the protective walls and

railings on stairs, porches, and balconies sturdy and in good repair?

Electric Outlets and Fixtures

- Do all electrical switches and outlets have cover plates?
- Do all unused outlets have no-shock, child-proof covers?
- Are electric cords:
 - ___ out of your child's reach and out of traffic flow?
 - ___ neither frayed nor cracked?
 - ___ neither under rugs nor stapled to baseboards?
- Is the use of extension cords kept to a minimum, and are the unused outlets on the cord covered?
- Are space heaters:
 - ___ properly grounded and connected directly to an outlet?
 - ___ inaccessible to your child?
 - ___ at least 26 inches from curtains, towels, carpets, papers, and furniture?
 - ___ used according to manufacturer's instructions and local fire ordinances?

General Living Areas

- Are dangerous items out of reach:
 - ___ plants (poison danger)?
 - ___ cigarettes and butts?
 - ___ loose change (choking danger)?
 - ___ purse and pocketbook contents (poison and choking dangers)?
 - ___ balloons?
 - ___ matches and lighters?
- Are small rugs and runners tacked down or slip resistant?
- Are high-traffic areas well lit and free of obstructions?
- Have you checked to make sure there are no loose paint chips around the house?
- Are guns stored unloaded in locked cases and drawers, and

the ammunition stored separately?

- Is there at least one working smoke detector on each floor, and is there one in the hallway by the bedrooms?

- Are the smoke detectors checked and cleaned regularly?
- Are the batteries changed once each year?
- Do you have a home fire escape plan?

Does it have two exit routes?

Do you have a designated meeting place?

Do you practice it in the dark, on your hands and knees?

Do you turn on the smoke detector's alarm for your child to hear?

- Does your child know how to "stop, drop, and roll" to put out clothing that is on fire?
- Is there a working fire extinguisher to handle small fires, especially in the kitchen?
- Are there screens or safety rails on any fireplaces, wood-burning stoves, or heaters?
- Are emergency numbers posted by the phone:
 - ___ Family physician?
 - ___ Poison control center?
 - ___ Ambulance?
 - ___ Police?

Basements and Garages

- Do child-proof latches control access to the basement and garage?
- Are volatile liquids, such as cleaning solvents, tightly capped and away from the furnace, hot water heater, and other ignition sources?

HOME SAFETY CHECKLIST

for Families with Young Children

Add to this checklist any hazards you spotted that were not listed above.

- _____ surrounded by a soft landing space?
- _____ free of projections, sharp edges, loose parts, entrapment spaces, hard swings, and moving parts?
- Do swimming pools have:
 - _____ fences on all four sides that are at least four feet high?
 - _____ no openings, holes or gaps larger than four inches except for doors and gates?
 - _____ gates or doors that are self latching or self-closing?

Have you checked that all the used and hand-me-down baby equipment has not been recalled? Go to the Consumer Product Safety Website: www.cpsc.gov.

*Now you have a complete list of the dangers in your home.
Your next step should be to eliminate these dangers.*



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In Cooperation With:
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