



making your home a safe place for children

Your child needs love and attention in order to grow and succeed. They also need parents who take steps to ensure their safety both in and out of the family home.

Parents often worry about protecting their children from stranger abductions and violence, but many overlook one of the biggest dangers to their children's safety – their own home. Research shows that children between the ages of one and four are more likely to be killed by fire, burns, drowning, choking, poison, or falls than by a stranger's violence. That is why it is so important to carefully childproof your home.

One of the best things you can do is to get down to your child's level and explore your house. Though it may feel silly to crawl around your home, it is the best way to see all the potential hazards your child could reach.

Steps Every Parent Can Take to Keep Children Safe

- To avoid choking, keep all small objects out of the reach of young children.
- Wash dishes and properly store food to avoid poisoning and illness.
- Keep electrical, curtain, and window blind cords out of young children's reach.
- Block staircases and the kitchen with gates. Put safety latches on toilets, drawers, and cabinets.
- Put garbage in containers, away from children.
- If pets are kept in the house, clean up after them. Always supervise interaction between pets and young children.
- Always wash produce before giving it to a child.
- Never leave young children alone in a bathtub. Keep the toilet lid closed and cleaning buckets away from children.
- Set your water heater at 120 degrees or less. Test the water temperature with your hand before bathing a child.
- Keep matches, medications, and cleaning supplies safely stored away from children.
- Make sure infant care items – cribs, strollers, safety fences – meet current safety regulations.
- Cover all electrical outlets, sharp edges, and fireplaces with safety covers.
- Keep guns unloaded and locked away from children.
- Learn infant and child CPR and basic first-aid.
- Keep a list of emergency numbers posted. This list should include your child's doctor, emergency services, and Poison Control.
- Never carry a baby or child and something hot at the same time.
- Make sure you have smoke detectors in every room and carbon monoxide detectors in place in your home. Replace their batteries at least twice a year.
- Disconnect electric rollers, curling irons, hair dryers, and other appliances when they are not in use.
- Never leave young children alone, even for a few moments.

Remember, childproofing is an ongoing process. What works to protect infants may not be the best solution for protecting older children. As your child grows, you will need to be vigilant about ensuring your child's safety.