

Home Safety Checklist for Families with Young Children

Use this checklist to make your home safer for you and your children. The checklist concentrates on one-time changes you can make in your home environment to prevent accidents and injuries, particularly childhood accidents.

How to use the checklist:

- Go through every room, hallway and other areas in and around your home. Look at the yard, storage sheds, basements and any place a child might go.
- Consider each item for every room. Use a plus (+) to indicate that you have followed the recommendation in all relevant rooms. Make a minus (-) if you need to work on that suggestion.

Checklist for Home Safety

- 1. Check that all medications are in original containers with child-proof caps.
- 2. Discard old prescription drugs.
- 3. Have 1 ounce of Syrup of Ipecac on hand. Check expiration date.
- 4. Separate household cleaners from food and put out of children's reach.
- 5. Check for poisonous plants at child's level.
- 6. Check all drawers and cabinets within toddler's reach for sharp, small (swallowable), toxic or other dangerous objects. This includes matches, lighters, pins, buttons, scissors, knives, razors, alcohol or medications.
- 7. Label flammable liquids and store in tightly capped, non-glass safety containers, away from heat and out of children's reach.

Checklist for Home Safety (continued)

- 8. Store paint, thinner and gasoline away from the house.
- 9. Check every room for poisons. Write the emergency number for local poison control center by the phone (see the local phone directory).
- 10. Locate pilot lights for furnaces and water heaters; remove all flammable liquids from rooms with pilot lights.
- 11. Install smoke detector in hall or near bedrooms. Place one detector on every level of the house. Inspect monthly.
- 12. Adjust water heater to 120 degree range. Wait 2 hours and check tap water with candy thermometer or contact the public works department for assistance.
- 13. Have an inspected fire extinguisher mounted in the kitchen.
- 14. Clean chimney annually.
- 15. Fasten drapes away from fireplaces/heaters.
- 16. Ensure that screens or guards are in front of fireplaces, wood stoves and open heaters.
- 17. Place non-skid mats or decals in the tub/shower.
- 18. Tack down carpets/rugs.
- 19. Ensure that there are no loose/broken stairs or walkways.
- 20. Secure wobbly railings on stairs or porches.
- 21. Attach safety gates at top and bottom of stairs to protect infants and toddlers.
- 22. Unplug and store electrical appliances (radio, hair dryer, razors) in bathroom when not in use.

Checklist for Home Safety (continued)

- 23. Examine doors and windows to ensure that there are at least two unblocked exits from the house.
- 24. Safeguard swimming areas with precautions including gates, adequate adult supervision, four-sided fencing and a child-proof door lock if children have direct access from the house to the swimming pool.
- 25. Secure window screens to prevent intruders from breaking into the house.
- 26. Install child car seats or booster seats correctly and use properly.
- 27. Check neighborhood for water hazards, construction, unfenced pools, irrigation canals, storm drains.
- 28. Store tools and power equipment out of child's reach.
- 29. Store firearms unloaded in locked cabinets with shells in separate locked area.
- 30. Post 911 or emergency phone numbers on or near the phone.
- 31. Examine toys for sharp edges and removable small parts. No part should not be smaller than 1-5/8 inches across.
- 32. Check toy boxes for safe closing, lightweight lids or no lid. All toy boxes should be ventilated in case a child crawls inside.
- 33. Anchor home playground equipment firmly in the ground; cover exposed bolts, screws or sharp edges with plastic caps or tape; install play equipment at least 6 inches from fences and walls and on soft or grassy ground.
- 34. Check infant furniture and equipment for recommended safety features (2-3/8 inches width between baby crib slats, snug mattress fit).
- 35. Place plastic safety plugs in unused electrical outlets and extension cord sockets.

Checklist for Home Safety (continued)

- 36. Secure extension cords out of child's reach and not under rugs. Check cords and wiring for fraying and wear.
- 37. Keep first aid supplies well stocked and easily available.
- 38. Plan and practice family fire escape routes and procedures.
- 39. Install locks or safety latches on doors and screens.
- 40. Review home safety rules with children.
- 41. Store covered trash and recyclables out of child's reach.
- 42. Take a moment to look around. Can you see anything else that might be dangerous? Keep in mind that children can usually do a little more than we realize. Try to look at each room from their eye level and point of view.

These items on this checklist were developed from national information about injuries compiled primarily by the U.S. Consumer Products Safety Commission by Karen DeBord, Ph.D., University of Missouri Human Development Extension State Specialist.

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