



## Childproofing Your Home

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Childproofing your home is an important part of protecting your children and all who enter your home. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), nearly nine million unintentional injuries occur each year in the home, and approximately six children die each day from injuries resulting from fire, burns, drowning, poisonings, choking, suffocation, strangulation, and falls. In addition, nearly 70 percent of children who die from these injuries are four years old and younger. These are staggering statistics and taking the steps to childproof your home can help reduce your risk of a tragic incident occurring. The CDC has determined the following to be the leading causes of unintentional injuries in the home:

### Heat or Flames

Potential areas of danger include the kitchen, near the oven, a fireplace, a barbeque grill, around candles, or any other place in your home where there is heat or flames. To prevent this danger:

- ☐ Have smoke alarms installed on each level of your home and in each bedroom to help alert your family to potential danger.
- ☐ Teach family members about the dangers of open flames and keep candles, lighters and other flammable substances out of the reach of children.

### Water

Water hazards are in multiple areas of your home, including the bathroom, kitchen and any pool or spa you may have outside. Never leave your child unattended around water, and do the following:

- ☐ Install locks on the lids of your toilets, as well as the outside of your bathroom door.
- ☐ Install anti-scald devices in the bathroom to help regulate the water temperature.
- ☐ Set the water heater temperature to 120 degrees Fahrenheit to help prevent water burns.
- ☐ Install proper fencing, a self-latching gate, a safety-cover for the pool, and an alarm to alert you to any danger around all pools and spas.

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## Toxic Substances

Cleaners, soaps, gardening materials, medicines, alcohols, or any other substance that could be harmful to children if it were ingested should be locked away. This includes products with child resistant lids, as these lids are not always childproof. These toxic materials can oftentimes be found under kitchen sinks, in medicine cabinets, garages, garden sheds, bathrooms, or even purses. Here are a few other helpful tips:

- ☐ Invest in a sturdy safety latch; one that can be easily operated by adults, but can withstand the tugs and pulls of children.
- ☐ Use door knob covers and door locks to prevent children from entering rooms that contain substances which could be harmful to them. Make sure the locks are strong enough to keep children out, but allow adults quick and easy access in case of an emergency.

## Falls

The potential for a fall or tumble is everywhere in a home – on the stairs, slippery floors, unstable furniture or loose rugs. Remember to do the following:

- ☐ Use safety gates to help prevent falls down stairs. Ensure the gates are up to safety standards and that a child isn't able to fit their head between the bars.
- ☐ Install corner and edge bumpers to prevent injuries from falls onto sharp edges of furniture or other household items.
- ☐ Anchor any furniture to the floor or wall that has the potential to tip or fall if a child were to pull on it.

## Other Helpful Safety Tips

- ☐ Protect little fingers from getting shocked by using outlet covers and plates.
- ☐ Prevent falls from windows, decks and other high places by installing window guards and safety netting.
- ☐ Test your home for carbon monoxide by installing a carbon monoxide detector. Be sure to check your batteries and change as needed twice a year.



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- ☐ Purchase a crib that is up to current safety standards by looking for the Juvenile Products Manufacturers Association (JPMA) certification. If using a second-hand crib, check with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) to ensure that the crib has not been recalled.
  - ☐ Prevent strangulation injuries by cutting all window blind loops or replacing them with tassels.

Providing a safe environment for those you love is an important part of creating a happy and healthy home. Ensure that all of these childproof devices are properly installed and up to current safety regulations. Keep in mind that no device is completely childproof and constant supervision is the most important safety precaution.