A Parent’s Guide To
A Safe Home

Children’s Hospital
of The King’s Daughters
CHKD.org/ParentingResources
CHKD Parent Education

Partnering with Parents

CHKD provides parenting education and resources to assist parents in creating safe and stable homes, where children can grow into happy, healthy, productive adults in our community.

Parent Education Classes
CHKD.org/classes

Parent Resources
CHKD.org/ParentingResources

Community Resources
CHKD.org/HRPEN

Helpful Safety Links

Car seat safety handouts and information
CHKD.org/carseat

Safe Kids
safekids.org/safetytips

Consumer Product Safety Commission
cpsc.gov/en/safety-education

Like CHKD on Facebook and follow us on Twitter for important safety announcements.
A Parent’s Guide To

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At Children’s Hospital of The King’s Daughters, we’re committed to helping families stay safe. This guide for parents is full of helpful information to keep your home safe for everyone.

Table of Contents

Important Phone Numbers ............................................................................................................ 2
Home Safety Misconceptions ........................................................................................................ 2
General Safety ............................................................................................................................. 3
Kitchen Safety ............................................................................................................................ 6
Bathroom Safety .......................................................................................................................... 8
Nursery Safety ............................................................................................................................ 10
Child’s Bedroom and Playroom Safety ..................................................................................... 12
Living Room Safety ................................................................................................................... 14
Hallway and Stairwell Safety ..................................................................................................... 15
Playground Safety ..................................................................................................................... 16
Pool and Yard Safety ................................................................................................................ 18
Garage Safety ............................................................................................................................ 20
Emergency or Disaster Home Safety Tips .............................................................................. 21
Important Numbers

Emergency 911  
Doctor  
Poison Control 1-800-222-1222  
Police  
Fire  
Mom’s work/cell  
Dad’s work/cell  

Home Safety Misconceptions

Myth: Once you have safety-proofed you never have to do it again.
Fact: Safety-proofing is an ongoing task. As children grow and develop, it is important to re-evaluate the environment.

Myth: Young children can be taught to avoid safety hazards, so there is no need to change the environment.
Fact: Young children are naturally curious and don’t understand the dangerous consequences of their actions. Register for one of our parenting classes at CHKD.org/classes, or listen to one of our webinars at CHKD.org/ParentingResources to learn about typical childhood development.

Myth: Safety concerns are consistent over time, so it’s not necessary to keep up to date with new trends.
Fact: Many new products are available to parents as consumers every day. It is imperative that parents stay up to date on safety hazards and product recalls.
General Safety Guidelines

Properly place smoke detectors throughout your home and test the batteries each month. Replace smoke detectors every 10 years.

Install a carbon monoxide detector on every level of your home. Check it once a month to make sure the batteries work. (NOTE: Mount alarms on the ceiling or wall at least 4 inches from doors, windows, fireplaces or forced-air registers.)

Learn CPR.

Keep flashlights handy and make sure they are in good working condition.

Make sure electrical cords are in good condition and out of sight.

Cover unused electrical outlets, including power strips, with protective devices.

Post 911 and other emergency phone numbers near landline telephones for local medical services, the Poison Control Center and your child’s physician. Program emergency telephone numbers into your cell phone.

Make sure there are no accessible cords on the front, side or back of curtains or window blinds. All cords should be out of the reach of children. Visit cpsc.gov for updated window covering safety alerts.

Don’t let children under age 5 play with objects small enough to fit inside a toilet paper tube.
Keep matches and lighters out of your child’s reach, preferably in a locked cabinet. Teach your child that these items are not toys.

Keep medicines, vitamins, alcohol and perfumes in a locked drawer or cabinet.

Keep electronic devices that contain coin-sized “button” batteries – such as key fobs, hearing aids, calculators, toys and greeting cards – out of your child’s reach.

Keep pocketbooks or handbags containing medicines or sharp objects out of your child’s reach.

Don’t smoke in your home or allow smoking around infants and children.

Make sure your household plants are non-toxic.

Make sure all space heaters in your home are UL-approved, in good condition and surrounded by a protective barrier or screen.

Keep wood-burning stoves and fireplaces in good condition and surrounded by a protective barrier.

Make sure stairs, walls, railings, porches and balconies are sturdy.

Make sure hallways and stairwells are well lit and free of clutter.
Keep your playground equipment and home, inside and out, free of any peeling or chipping paint.

Keep basement and attic doors closed and locked.

Lock up rifles and guns, and keep them unloaded.

Lock up ammunition in a cabinet separate from guns.

Determine your best escape routes in the event of a fire or other emergency. Make sure escape ladders are available on every floor. Practice the fire escape plan with your family.

Teach your children to “stop, drop and roll” if their clothes catch on fire. Practice together.

Open windows from the top – not the bottom – whenever possible. Never open a window unless window guards are installed or window stops are engaged to keep windows from opening greater than 4 inches. Screens will not keep a child from falling out of a window.

Surround exercise equipment with protective gates or barriers.
Lock up household cleaning products and other poisonous substances in their original containers.

Kitchen Safety Checklist

☐ Poison Control Center and emergency numbers for fire, EMS and your child’s physicians are posted near the telephone.

☐ Knives, scissors and other sharp objects are stored in a cabinet or drawer with a safety latch or lock.

☐ When in use, sharp objects such as knives, scissors and the cutting surface on plastic wrap and foil dispensers are well out of reach.

☐ Small parts and objects such as safety pins, coins, paper clips, button batteries and needles are out of reach or in a locked cabinet or drawer.

☐ Household cleaning products and other poisonous substances are in their original containers and in a cabinet with a safety latch or lock.

☐ Potholders, dish towels and other flammable objects are stored away from the stove.

☐ Small appliances are unplugged and put away.

☐ There is a fire extinguisher in the kitchen.

☐ The dishwasher and oven doors are locked with a built-in mechanism or with an add-on appliance lock.

☐ A stove guard and knob covers have been installed on the stove.

☐ The garbage can and recycle bin are securely covered.
Supervise children around microwaves and other heating sources.

Test the temperature of all food before giving it to a child.

Secure children in highchairs with restraining straps, and never leave them unattended.

Don’t give children under 3 small pieces of food they can choke on.

Never carry a child while holding hot food or liquids, including coffee or tea.
Bathroom Safety Checklist

- Appliances are unplugged and out of reach.
- Toilet lids are closed, and locks are installed.
- Bathroom doors have locks that can be opened from the outside.
- A non-skid mat or strips have been adhered to the bottom of the bathtub or shower.
- A non-skid rug or mat with non-slip backing has been installed on all bathroom floors to prevent falls.
- Water heater is adjusted to 120 degrees Fahrenheit or lower to prevent scalds.
- All medicines, vitamins, mouthwashes and perfumes are in their original, child-resistant containers, locked and out of reach of children.
- First-aid kit is stored out of reach of children in a closet or medicine cabinet.
Test the temperature of bath water before children get in the tub. Teach children to test the temperature of the water.

Always supervise young children when they are in the bathroom.

Never leave young children unattended when they are bathing, even if you’re using bath rings, seats and other baby bathing aids.

Don’t use electrical appliances (including radios, hair dryers and space heaters) near water.
Nursery Safety Checklist


- The crib has a JPMA safety certification label, to ensure its quality safety performance and functionality.

- Check with the crib manufacturer about certificate of compliance (for cribs purchased prior to June 28, 2011).

- There’s less than the width of two fingers between the mattress and crib sides. The crib has firm, tight fitting mattress with no missing, loose, broken or improperly installed screws or bolts on crib or mattress support brackets.

- The headboard and footboard of the crib don’t have any decorative cutouts or openings.

- Crib gyms and mobiles have been removed for infants who can push up to hands and knees.

- No corner posts over 1/16th inch high to prevent baby’s clothing getting caught.

- Baby supplies, diapers and toiletries are out of reach. Avoid using baby powder.

- Toy chest has removable or spring-loaded supports that will keep the lid open in any position.

- The sides of mesh playpens and portable cribs are in the locked position.

Select toys that are developmentally appropriate.
Never use cribs with sides that go up and down. They have been recalled.

Never share a bed with an infant.

Make sure no cords – such as electrical, blind or curtain cords – are hanging near the crib.

Never leave an infant unattended on an elevated surface such as a changing table, couch or bed.

Keep one hand on your baby at all times when changing diapers, dressing or bathing.

Never use a baby walker. They are a common source of serious injury.

Don’t let children under age 5 play with objects small enough to fit inside a toilet paper tube.

Always put your baby on his back to sleep. For more information on safe sleep, visit nichd.nih.gov/sts.
**Child’s Bedroom and Playroom Safety Checklist**

- Gaps on the wooden frames of bunk beds are less than 3 1/2 inches wide.
- All furniture, beds or cribs, on which a child may climb, are away from windows or balconies.
- Windows identified for emergency escape are accessible and easy to open by everyone in the family, including children.
- An emergency escape ladder is located near each upper level escape windows. (See the reference to drills and practice mentioned in general safety section.)
- Windows that aren’t used for emergency escape are safely secured with window guards that keep them from opening more than 4 inches.
- There are no accessible cords on the front, side or back of curtains or window blinds. All cords are out of the reach of children.
- Rooms are free of clutter to prevent falls and injuries.
- Bookcases and dressers are anchored to the wall with furniture guard brackets to keep them from toppling onto children.
- Unused electrical outlets, including power strips, are covered with protective devices.
- Toy chest has removable or spring-loaded supports that will keep the lid open in any position.
Choose well-made toys for your child according to age, interests and skill level. Follow safety information warnings.

Supervise children when they play. A toy intended for an older child may be dangerous in the hands of a younger child.

Don’t let children under age 5 play with objects small enough to fit inside a toilet paper tube.

Don’t let children under age 6 sleep on the top bunk bed.

Toys need to be put away when they aren’t being used. Keep the room free of clutter.
Living Room Safety Checklist

- Wood-burning stoves and fireplaces have been inspected and are in good working condition.
- Fireplace doors are locked.
- Fireplaces are surrounded with protective barriers and/or gates.
- Safety cushions are installed on edges of the hearth.
- Space heaters are UL-approved, in good condition and/or surrounded by a protective barrier or screen.
- There are no accessible cords on the front, side or back of curtains or window blinds. All cords are out of the reach of children.
- Unused electrical outlets, including power strips, are covered with protective devices.
- Bookcases, TV stands and freestanding shelves are anchored to the wall with furniture guard brackets to prevent them from tipping over.

Keep curtains and window blind cords out of reach.
Rough or pointed furniture corners are covered with corner guards.

Matches and lighters are out of reach, in a locked cabinet.

There are no table runners or tablecloths that a child can pull on.

There are no tip-over hazards; including TVs; fish tanks; furniture that is taller than it is wide; OR furniture that rocks when tugged. Be aware that many pieces of furniture become easier to tip when drawers are pulled open and climbed/stepped upon.

Hallway & Stairwell Safety Checklist

- Hallways and stairwells are well lit.
- Slats on balconies and stairs are less than 3 inches apart.
- Sturdy handrails run the entire length of the stairs. They are wide enough that a child can grasp them easily and completely.
- Rugs or runners are tacked down or have slip-resistant mats under them.
- Toddler gates have been installed at the top and bottom of staircases and steps for homes with children under the age of 3.
- Toddler gates are JPMA-certified and mounted to the wall securely. (Don’t use a V-shaped or accordion style gate.)

Reminder

Never leave young children alone when candles are burning. Keep candles, lighters and matches out of the reach of children. Teach children that these items are not toys.

Keep hallways and stairwells free of clutter.

Supervise children on the stairs to prevent falls.
The surface under playground equipment is made from energy absorbent material – such as rubber, sand, sawdust at least 12 inches deep, wood chips or bark – and is well maintained.

Playground equipment is put together correctly, sits on a level surface and is securely anchored to the ground to keep it from tipping over.

There are no sharp corners, edges or pinch points on play equipment, or anything that could snag on loose clothing.

All screws, nuts and bolts are secure and capped. There are no projecting bolts, nuts or s-links.

There aren’t any openings on playground equipment that your child could stick his head in and get stuck.

The yard is free of clutter and debris.

Playground equipment and the house are free of peeling or chipping paint, inside and out.
Always supervise children on the playground. Do not allow pushing, shoving and fighting on equipment.

Don't leave standing water or other solutions in buckets and wading pools.

Provide proper hydration on hot days. Water is best.

Provide proper outdoor clothing on cool days.

Never let a child play on playground equipment with dangling drawstrings on a jacket or shirt.

Check for hot metals, such as slides, to prevent burning.

Ensure that children always wear approved helmets and other protective equipment such as elbow and kneepads when they skate, skateboard and ride bikes and scooters.

Always use sunscreen protection starting at 6 months old.
### Pool and Yard Safety Checklist

1. A 4-foot fence that cannot be climbed by children has been installed around all sides of the pool. (Per state of Virginia regulations)

2. Gates and fences self-close and latch. Latches are higher than children’s reach.

3. Pool cover completely covers the pool.

4. Rescue equipment, such as a shepherd’s hook or life preserver, and a phone are near the pool.

5. Children know the rules of water and diving safety.

6. Everyone who watches children around the pool has been trained in CPR and lifesaving techniques.

7. Grills are at least 10 feet away from structures.

8. Spas and hot tubs are covered and locked when not in use.

Be sure your child knows the safety rules of water, swimming and diving.
Use a power mower with a control that stops when the mower handle is let go.

Never let a child younger than 12 mow the lawn. Make sure your older child wears sturdy shoes, with good traction, while mowing the lawn and that objects such as stones and toys are picked up from the lawn before it is mowed.

Wear goggles to protect your eyes from flying debris when mowing the lawn.

Never have a child on your lap while operating a riding lawn mower.

Never grill indoors or near garages or porches.

Never leave a grill unsupervised while cooking.

Teach your child never to pick and eat anything from a plant.

Be sure you know what’s growing in your yard, so that if your child accidentally ingests a plant, you can give the proper information to your local Poison Control Center.

Never leave children alone in or near a pool, even for a moment.

Do not allow young children in the yard while you are mowing or edging.

Pool and Yard Safety
REMINDERS
Garage Safety Checklist

☐ Cleaning products and other poisonous and flammable substances are in the original containers and stored in a locked cabinet, away from heat sources and out of reach.

☐ All tools and dangerous objects are in a locked cabinet.

☐ Automatic garage door has a sensor that prevents it from closing on a child or object.

Never store gasoline indoors.

- Close and lock garage doors when not in use.
- Take doors off old refrigerators and freezers.
- Keep keys to electrical equipment out of children’s reach.
Emergency or Disaster
Home Safety Tips

- Be informed – know what to do before, during and after an emergency.
- Make a plan and share it with your family.
- Build an emergency kit to include water, food, battery-powered radio, flashlights, extra batteries, whistle, manual can opener, etc.
- For more information, go to www.ready.gov.