

Safety Checklist for Home

Use this checklist to help make your home a safer place for children. Share it with your child's caregivers, family and friends so their homes will be safer to visit.



Water and bath safety

- Never leave a child alone in or near water, including in the bathtub.
- Place a non-skid mat or non-slip strips in the bathtub or shower.
- Keep the toilet lid closed, and use a lid lock.
- Store buckets empty and out of reach.
- Empty kiddie pools when not in use.
- Have your child wear a life jacket on boats, on docks and around lakes, rivers and the ocean.
- Fence all sides of swimming pools and hot tubs.

Poisons

- Store medicine, cleaning products, dishwasher soap, detergent pods, makeup, button batteries, nicotine vials and other unsafe products out of reach or in a locked cabinet.
- Keep products in the bottles they came in.
- Buy products with child-resistant caps.
- Keep houseplants out of reach.
- Install a carbon monoxide detector on every level of your home, especially near all sleeping areas.
- Add the Poison Center number as a contact in your mobile phone and post it on your refrigerator or family board in your home: **800-222-1222**.

Fire and burn safety

- Install a smoke detector on each floor and outside each bedroom. Change the batteries twice a year.
- Make a fire escape plan. Practice it.
- Place guards around heaters and fireplaces.
- Buy flame-resistant sleepwear for children.
- Keep matches and lighters out of reach.
- Make sure 1 window in each room is easy to use as a fire escape.
- Use “cool” night-lights. Keep them away from drapes and bedspreads.

To Learn More

- seattlechildrens.org/health-safety
- Your child's healthcare provider



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- Set your hot water heater at 120°F (49°C) or lower, or between low and medium.
- Use a cool-mist humidifier (not a vaporizer).
- Keep hair dryers, curling irons and straighteners unplugged and stored out of reach.
- Never hold your child when you are drinking hot liquids or cooking on the stove.
- Keep cups and dishes with hot contents away from the edges of tables.

Electrical cords and outlets

- Put plastic plug covers in unused outlets.
- Protect outlets with ground fault circuit interrupters.
- Repair frayed cords and loose plugs.
- Keep cords and power strips out of reach.

Falls

- Never leave your baby alone on a changing table, sofa, bed or other high place.
- Keep changing supplies within reach when changing your baby.
- Place a carpet or a non-skid rug under the crib and changing table.
- Use approved safety gates at the tops and bottoms of stairs. Attach them to the wall when possible.
- Do not use a baby walker with wheels.
- Keep cribs, playpens, beds, chairs and other furniture away from windows.
- Use window guards, stops or safety netting on windows, balconies, decks and landings. Window screens do not keep kids in.

Doors and windows

- Use doorknob covers on doors so toddlers can't enter unsafe rooms or leave the house alone.
- Use cordless window coverings if possible. If not possible, cut window blind or drapery cords, and use safety tassels. Keep cords well out of the reach of children.
- Use safety glazing on glass doors, tabletops and panels.

Choking

- Keep balloons and plastic bags away from children ages 3 or younger.
- Choose Mylar (foil-type) balloons instead of latex. Latex balloons are a choking risk to kids of all ages because latex material can stretch and stick to a child's throat, blocking their airway.
- Avoid smaller toys and toys with small parts for babies and young children. If an item can fit inside of a toilet paper tube, it is too small for them.
- Remove crib gyms and hanging toys from the crib when your baby can get up on their hands and knees.
- Don't serve these items to children less than 4 years of age: chunks of hard fruit or vegetables, grapes, hot dogs, sausages, popcorn, chunks of cheese or meat, round candies or nuts.

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- Know which devices in your home use button and coin batteries and keep those items out of reach or ensure the battery compartment is secured. These batteries are found in games and toys, remote controls and many more common items. In addition to being a choking hazard, they can be very harmful to your child. If you think that a child has ingested a battery, call the 24-hour National Battery Ingestion Hotline at 800-498-8666 right away or take them to an emergency room immediately.

Toys

- Choose toys that are right for your child's age and skills.

Furniture

- Cover sharp edges and corners.
- Mount flat-screen TVs to the wall. Place box-style TVs on low, stable furniture. Secure bookshelves and other heavy furniture with wall brackets.
- Make sure furniture is not painted with lead paint.
- Check to see if used baby furniture and gear has been recalled. Contact the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission at cpsc.gov or **800-638-2772**.
- Cribs and playpens should be sturdy, with bars no more than 2-3/8 inches apart. Check that cribs are in good repair, with mattresses fitting closely against the sides. Don't use bumper pads, sheepskins, pillows or quilts. Only use a tight-fitting sheet and place babies to sleep on their backs for naps and at night.
- Use a sturdy, stable high chair with a secure locking tray and a belt with a crotch strap. Always be near and watch babies and toddlers in high chairs.
- Use baskets or boxes without lids to store toys.

Healthy families

- All parents feel stressed at times. Use the 10-foot rule. If you are angry, make sure the baby is in a safe place and stay 10-feet away until you calm down. Never shake a baby.
- Have a plan for when you are feeling too much stress. Include a list of 3 people or places you can call when the stress of parenting is getting to you.

Kitchen

- Use the stove's back burners, and turn pot handles toward the back.
- Use knob covers or a stove shield to keep children from turning the oven on.
- Put scissors, knives and other sharp objects in latched or high cabinets.
- Keep hot foods, liquids and appliances out of reach.
- Keep chairs and step stools away from counters and the stove.
- Make sure heavy appliances (stove, refrigerator, etc.) can't be pulled over.
- Keep a working fire extinguisher nearby. Make sure older children and adults know how and when to use it.
- Remove refrigerator magnets small enough to fit in a child's mouth.
- Keep children away from the front of the oven when it is on.

Firearm safety

- Always store firearms unloaded.
- Store firearms locked up using a firearm safe, lock box, trigger or cable lock.
- Store and lock ammunition separately from firearms.
- Avoid locking devices that use keys if possible. If your locking device has a key, keep it with you or in a safe place that children and others cannot access.
- Remove firearms from your home if a family member is depressed, suicidal or is abusing drugs or alcohol. See the Washington Firearm Safe Storage Map at hiprc.org/firearm-storage-wa to find local options for temporary, voluntary firearm storage.

Prepare for emergencies

Keep a well-stocked first aid kit and disaster supply kit in your home. Refresh expired products each year.

Put the numbers for emergency response, the Poison Center, the crisis line and your doctor in your cell phone and post them on the refrigerator or family board in your home. Also post your name, address and phone number there.

- **911**
- **Washington Poison Center: 800-222-1222**
- **King County's 24-Hour Crisis Line: 866-427-4747 (toll-free)**. Visit hca.wa.gov/free-or-low-cost-health-care/i-need-behavioral-health-support/mental-health-crisis-lines to get the number for crisis lines in other counties in Washington state.