

X. SAFETY

Providing a safe environment for your children to live and play in is crucial. Your house, both inside and out, is chock-full of dangers to naturally curious and impulsive children. It is your responsibility to ensure the necessary preparations involved in making your home and family as safe as possible. A good way to start is to take Red Cross certified first aid and CPR classes, which will provide potentially life saving skills in event of an emergency.

PRECAUTIONS FOR INFANTS

- Lay babies on their backs for naps and sleeping.
- Be careful where you leave your baby in the car or bouncy seat. Never place on top of tables or counter tops.
- Never leave baby unattended while in a swing.
- Don't use baby walkers – they're very dangerous around stairs and thresholds.
- Always supervise infants when around older siblings and pets.
- Don't let your baby lie in a beanbag chair.
- Don't let baby nap on a couch or armchair.
- Always use a safety strap when changing a baby on a changing table, or keep a firm hand on the baby at all times. Never leave the baby unattended, and have supplies within your reach.
- Keep changing supplies out of baby's reach. Don't allow baby to grab powder or baby oil, as their lungs can become severely injured if powder is inhaled or oil is swallowed.
- The First Candle/SIDS Alliance promotes infant health and survival during the prenatal period through 2 years. (www.firstcandle.com)

CRIBS

- Slats of crib should be no wider than 2 3/8 inches apart.
- Be weary of older cribs which may not meet current safety standards and may have been painted with lead paint.
- Never lay the baby on a pillow to go to sleep.

- Make sure baby cannot reach mobiles hanging from above.
- Use a crib bumper for babies, making sure ties hang outside the crib and aren't longer than 6 inches.
- As soon as your child can sit or stand, lower the mattress to the lowest possible level. Keep things out of the crib that they could stack to climb on top of and fall out, including crib bumpers, large toys, and stuffed animals.
- When your child can climb out of the crib, put them on a mattress on the floor, in a toddler bed, or in a regular bed with bedrails.
- If you're having trouble keeping your child contained in their room, put a gate in the doorway.

IN THE KITCHEN

- Remove stove dials from the burners if they're on the front, and keep pot handles turned in while cooking.
- Keep all household cleaners in a cabinet with a childproof lock.
- Keep cooking oils locked up as well, as children can become dangerously sick if oil is swallowed and enters the lungs.
- For cabinets that aren't locked, store safe things like Tupperware and pots and pans.
- When you're finished using your oven, don't leave the door open to let the heat out.
- Don't get distracted while you're cooking, as you can easily burn pots and dinners you just worked hard on. If you need to leave the stove while cooking, turn off the burners.
- Never hold a child while cooking by a stove or drinking a hot beverage.