

SAFETY AND INJURY PREVENTION



THE NATIONAL CENTER ON
Health

Tips for Families from the Head Start National Center on Health

Safety and Injury Prevention for Young Children Is:

- Making sure children have safe places to grow and learn
- Protecting children from danger
- Teaching children what to do to be safe

Why Is It Important?

Children Like to Explore But Need:

- Safe places to play
- Adults who watch and listen so they can prevent an injury before it happens
- Opportunities to practice new skills safely

When Children Are Safe, They Are More Likely To:

- Be injury-free
- Focus on learning
- Explore new situations with confidence



Things You Can Do to Help Your Child

● **At Home:**

- Keep all medicine, cleaning and harmful products away from children.
- Use cabinet locks and electrical socket covers.
- Use safety gates on stairs.
- Use cribs with secure sides rather than drop sides.
- Keep cribs away from windows and blind cords.
- Lift blind cords out of reach from children.
- Put babies to sleep on their backs in a crib with no soft blankets, pillows or bumpers.
- Keep children away from hot foods and liquids.
- Turn pot handles to the back of the stove.
- Set your water-heater thermostat to 120 degrees or less.
- Keep children away from heaters or fires.
- Have a smoke alarm on every floor. Replace batteries in the spring and fall.
- Get a carbon monoxide detector, if you do not have one.
- Check with your local fire station to see if they can help you find a smoke alarm or carbon monoxide detector.
- Ask your pediatrician about foods and small objects that can cause choking.
- Make and practice an escape plan.

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Things You Can Do to Help Your Child

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● Outside:

- Use sunscreen.
- Teach your child to stay out of the street.
- Look for playgrounds with soft surfaces instead of dirt or grass.
- Watch your child closely on the playground.
- Remove drawstrings from clothing.
- Keep shoelaces short and tied.

● Water Safety

- Know that a child can drown in any amount of water that covers his mouth and nose.
- Always stay within arm's reach of your child if he is in or near water.
- Learn to swim, and take your child to professionally supervised swim lessons.
- Use four-sided fences with self-latching gates around pools.
- Learn cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

● Car and Truck Safety

- Choose a car seat that is right for your child's age, height and weight.
- Choose a seat that fits in your car or truck and use it all the time.
- Ask your Head Start staff where you can go in your community to have your child's car seat installed safely.
- Be sure that children under age 12 only sit in the back seat.
- Never leave your child in a car without an adult.
- Teach children that vehicles are never safe places to play. Even if the windows are open, young children can become dangerously overheated within the first 10 minutes.

