

Raising Safe Kids: One Stage at a Time



Babies (0 to 12 mos.)

- Don't leave them unattended on furniture. Always place one hand on your baby so he/she doesn't roll over or fall off a changing table, bed or piece of furniture.
- Use a rear-facing, semi-reclined car seat until your baby is at least age 1 and 20 lbs. This is the safest option to support their weak head, neck and back and prevent spinal cord injuries. Use a rear-facing car seat longer if the seat has higher weight and height limits.
- Install smoke alarms. Babies breathe more quickly putting them at risk of breathing in harmful gasses faster.
- Set your water heater at 120 degrees or lower. Test the bathwater with your wrist or elbow before putting your baby in it. Your baby's skin burns more deeply and quickly at lower temperatures than an adult's skin.
- Be safe when giving them medicines. Read the labels and give them the proper amount. Their metabolisms are faster and their slow digestion increases their risk of poisoning.

Fire: 911 or _____
Police: 911 or _____
Poison Control Center: 1-800-222-1222
Our phone number: _____



Little Kids (1 to 4 yrs.)

- Supervise them at playgrounds. Look for a playground with 12 inches of safe surfaces like shredded rubber, hardwood fiber/mulch or sand below the equipment. Children enjoy running, climbing and jumping, but still lack balance.
- Use a forward-facing car seat until the harness no longer fits and then move your child to a booster seat. The five-point harness will protect your child and keep him/her in place.
- Use child-resistant packages. While they don't guarantee that your child won't open the container, it may slow him/her down long enough for an adult to step in.
- Practice an escape plan with your child. Young kids don't have the cognitive skills to escape a fire on their own. Instead, they may hide in a closet or under the covers.
- Set your water heater at 120 degrees or lower. Children's skin burns more deeply and quickly at lower temperatures than adults' skin.

Family doctor: _____
Other important numbers:

Keep this checklist and list of emergency numbers on your fridge. Visit www.usa.safekids.org for more information.



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Big Kids (5 to 9 yrs.)

- Provide them safe places to play and teach them proper playground behavior: no pushing, shoving or crowding. Look for playgrounds with 12 inches of safe surfaces like shredded rubber, hardwood fiber/mulch or sand below the equipment. Children enjoy running, climbing and jumping, but may still lack balance.
- Make sure they wear a helmet and protective gear every time they bike, ski, skate, skateboard or ride a scooter. Kids are spending more time away from home where they may try dangerous tricks. They still have less coordination for pedaling and trouble recognizing and avoiding obstacles.
- Talk to them about the importance of booster seats. A booster seat is recommended for children under 4' 9" tall and 40 to 80 or 100 lbs. A seat belt alone isn't designed to match the physical and developmental needs of young children. Seat belts generally don't fit children properly until they're between 8 and 12 years old.
- Install and test smoke alarms. Test smoke alarms at night to see if your child can awake to them. If he/she doesn't wake up, try using prerecorded-voice or strobe light alarms.
- Don't let them use a microwave until they're tall enough to reach the items in it safely. Make sure they understand that steam can burn. Children at this age are at higher risk of cooking-related scald injuries.



Pre-Teens (10 to 14 yrs.)

- Don't negotiate helmet use. Children need to wear a helmet and protective gear every time they bike, skate, skateboard, ski or ride a scooter. They may not want to wear protective equipment because they think it doesn't look good or because their friends aren't wearing it.
- Talk to them about car safety. Teach them to use a booster seat or seat belt in a back seat in every car, on every ride, whether or not a parent is there.
- Don't let them use candles in the bedroom. Pre-teens are more likely to be killed by candle fires than adults. Also, their lack of sleep may cause drops in attention.
- Teach them to never play with matches, lighters or fireworks. If your child sets a fire intentionally, seek out counseling. Firesetting can be a sign of a mental health or behavioral issue that needs to be addressed.
- Talk to them about the dangers of poisonous items like gasoline, spray paint and medicines. Peer pressure and risk-taking behaviors may lead them to experiment with inhalants or prescriptions medicines.

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