

Home Safety Checklist

Having a safe care environment is crucial to your child's growth and development. Today your care provider did a safety checklist, similar to the following, in her care setting. You can use the list below to do the same in your home.

- _____ Is your home poison-proof? (This includes house plants.)
- _____ Is the bathroom safety proofed? (Keep bathroom door closed.)
- _____ Are all sharp objects out of children's reach? (Knives, pins, scissors, etc.)
- _____ Are all small objects out of reach for younger children? (Buttons, marker lids, barrettes.)
- _____ Are electrical plugs covered?
- _____ Have you removed easily overturned lamps/tables, and electrical cords?
- _____ Are there guards in front of open heaters, fireplaces, furnaces, etc.?
- _____ Are hot liquids, curling irons, irons, toasters, and coffee pots out of children's reach?
- _____ Are medications stored out of children's reach?
- _____ Is there any chipping or flaking paint in a home built before 1978?
- _____ Do you have emergency numbers posted?
- _____ Are drills such as fire, earthquake, tornado practiced with the children on a regular basis?
- _____ Are smoke detectors placed properly and checked monthly?
- _____ Are healthy practices such as hand-washing modeled?
- _____ Is a well-stocked first-aid kit within quick and easy reach?

Parents,
This information is provided to you today on behalf of a special visiting program your care provider is taking part in. If you would like to receive similar visits and learn more about how your child grows and develops, please contact your local Parents as Teachers program or call 1-866-PAT4YOU to find a program in your area, or visit our website at www.patnc.org



Guard Against Choking

A common hazard for young children is choking. Some foods can be a problem for your child because she may have biting teeth but not grinding teeth. When eating, she may talk, jump, laugh, or simply not chew thoroughly. Since your child may explore things with her mouth, small toys or household objects may also cause choking.

Be selective with the types of food you offer your child. Foods similar to the following could be dangerous, especially to children under 2:

- Hard candy
- Raw carrots
- Stringy foods such as celery
- Whole grapes
- Raisins
- Popcorn or peanuts

Be safe when preparing and supervising your child's meals and snacks. Attention to the following safety precautions could prevent your child from choking:

- Remove peelings from fruits.
- Spread peanut butter thinly.
- Cut hot dogs lengthwise.
- Make sure your child sits while eating.
- Sit with her and share in the conversation.
- Encourage her to take small bites and chew them well.

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Be aware of your home and places you visit. Your child may be fascinated with shiny or small objects. Check to see that:

- Small toys, such as legos get cleaned up.
- Chairs and sofas are free of loose change.
- Pet food is out of reach.
- Lids from beverages and other bottles are not accessible.
- Purses and billfolds are put away.

If your child is showing signs of choking and can cough hard, let him try to cough up the piece of food by himself. If you can see the food in his mouth, take it out with your fingers. Don't put your finger in his mouth when you can't see the food. The food could get lodged more deeply. Call 911 and follow their directions.

Be sure to post emergency numbers by your phones. Take a certified course in first aid and CPR to learn how to handle choking and other emergencies.



Exploring the Community

Children learn from their world. Children learn when something is real and meaningful to them. A child's world is their home, their care setting, and anything on the way from home to child care. Taking outings in the community to local exhibits, museums, parks, or the grocery store are wonderful ways for children to explore the world around them. Safety and taking precautions needs to be part of planning when taking children out of their familiar surroundings. Use caution when choosing a route for a walk or an outing.

The US Department of Transportation suggests the following guidelines:

- Young children should always be properly secured in child safety seats. It is the law in most states that all children under the age of 4 are secured in an approved child restraint seat or vest. These seats **must** be installed correctly. Please install your child's seat in the care provider's van the day of the trip.
- Children ages 4 through 15 must wear safety belts. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends children 40-80 pounds use a booster seat with a lap/shoulder belt.
- Children over 80 pounds should use a lap/shoulder belt fitted correctly. Ask the child to sit deep in the vehicle seat with his back straight against the seat back. His knees should bend over the edge of the seat before he stops using a booster seat.
- No one, especially children, should ever ride in the bed of a pick-up truck.
- Children on bikes should always wear helmets.
- Children should stop at the curb, look left, right, and left again before crossing the road. At intersections, they should pay special attention to turning vehicles.
- Children should never play near railroad tracks or platforms, or near a street or curb.
- Children should always wear life jackets when boating or around water.
- Children should always be visible when walking or biking. They should wear light, brightly-colored clothing. At night, they should wear markers that reflect light.
- When riding on an escalator, children should stand facing forward, always hold the handrail, and never touch the sides or sit on the stairs.

When traveling, talk, sing, and play tapes of favorite stories or songs. A travel bag with books, stuffed animals, and activities help prevent boredom.

Your child wants to be like you. Show your child you buckle up every time. Teach your child safety for life.

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