

In the Bathroom:

- Turn your home's water heater down to 120 degrees to reduce the risk of burns.
- Check bathwater temperature with your wrist or elbow before putting a baby in (it should be 100 degrees or less).
- Never leave a child unsupervised in the bathtub. Don't leave a small child alone with any container of liquid, including wading pools, scrub buckets, and toilets.
- Don't allow children in a whirlpool, Jacuzzi or hot tub. Their bodies are more sensitive to hot water.
- Install toilet seat locks to prevent drowning.
- Place all medications and cleaners out of your child's reach.
- Unplug hair dryers, razors, and other devices when not in use; store out of reach.
- Put safety latches on drawers and cabinets; toddlers can use the drawers to climb onto countertops.



In the Bedroom:

- Infants, when placed on an adult bed of any kind, can get stuck in bedding and pillows and suffocate. If rolling, they can slip into the space between the wall and the mattress where they can get stuck and suffocate.
- Exercise caution if sleeping in the same bed with an infant.
- Babies should sleep on their backs.
- Never place a crib near windows; cut looped chains or blind cords in half to avoid strangulation.
- Remove bows or strings on bed pads. Both can cause strangulation or choking.
- Crib bars should be no more than 2 3/8 inches apart to prevent infants from getting their heads stuck.
- Cribs manufactured before 1974 need extra inspection for safety: they may have lead-based paint or wide bars that a child can get stuck in. Also check for loose screw or boards.
- A crib mattress should fit tightly so there are no gaps for an infant to fall into. Don't use too much or ill-fitting bedding, and remove stuffed animals from cribs as they are a suffocation danger.
- Never leave your baby unattended on the changing table to prevent falls.
- Keep toys with long strings or cords away from infants and young children. A cord can become wrapped around an infant's neck and cause strangulation. Don't hang toys or pacifiers with long strings, cords, loops or ribbons in cribs or playpens after a baby is 4-5 months old or can sit up to reach them.

In the Kitchen:

- Use the back burners instead of front burners for cooking; always turn pot handles inward, toward the stove.
- Store knives, glassware, and appliances in cabinets with child-safety locks.
- Avoid using placemats and tablecloths. Toddlers can pull these cloths down along with whatever is on top of the table.
- Keep floors, tables and cabinet tops free of small objects that could be swallowed. Such objects include coins, button-sized batteries, rings, nails, tacks and broken or deflated balloons.
- Avoid all foods that could lodge in the throat for children less than 1 year old (examples: popcorn, grapes, foods with pits, raisins, nuts, hard candies, raw vegetables, and large pieces of hotdogs).
- Never let children of any age eat or suck on anything, such as hard candy, while lying down.

Remember that baby-proofing is an ongoing process; the gate put at the top of the stairs for your 8-month-old today may become a favorite climbing toy as he or she gets older. Baby-proofing is an important part of caring for your little one. It takes effort and diligence, but it's worth it to keep your child healthy, happy, and safe.

To find out more about baby-proofing your home, contact The Family, Infant and Preschool Program.



**Family, Infant and
Preschool Program**

**800-822-3477
828-433-2661**

Please visit us online at
www.fipp.org

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Baby-proofing Your Home: A fact sheet. Retrieved on 9/3/06 from <http://www.nsc.org/library/facts/babyprf.htm>

Web MD presents *Baby-Proofing Your Home*. Retrieved on 9/3/06 from http://www.webmd.com/content/tools/1/slide_baby_proof.htm

Baby-Proofing Your Home



**Family, Infant and
Preschool Program**



safety first

Baby-Proofing Your Home

Babies and young children learn and grow so fast! For new parents, it's great to see how soon they begin moving and exploring. But quickly, infants who were squirming on a blanket are soon crawling, and then walking across the room; reaching for everything they find in their path.



Children are naturally curious. Infants and toddlers learn about the world around them by tasting, touching and feeling everything that interests them. Each home is unique, so there's no one list to protect you from all potential hazards, but it pays to think ahead. Before you place your child on the floor, or even before you have your baby, take time to increase the safety of your home. Suffocation by strings, cords or swallowed objects cause the most injury and death among children 0-4 years of age. Here are some places to consider:



In All Rooms
In the Family Room
In the Bathroom
In the Kitchen
In the Bedroom

In All Rooms:

- Cover all outlets to prevent shock.
- Store power strips and cords behind furniture and out of reach.
- Remove all heavy, small, breakable, or valuable objects that may be toppled off tabletops; and any space heaters, fans, or other hazards that can be reached.
- Move houseplants out of reach.
- Keep medications and cleaning supplies out of reach. Even if cleaning bottle sprayers are in the off position, toddlers may put the sprayers in their mouths. Many cleaners contain hazardous substances; consider purchasing organic, non-hazardous cleaners available at larger supermarkets.
- Never leave mopping supplies unattended. A child can drown in even an inch of water.
- Don't smoke, use matches, or hold hot drinks while holding an infant. Don't leave burning cigarettes unattended.
- Remember that radiators, heating vents, space heaters, fireplaces, stoves and hot water taps are not always hot. Children can touch them once safely and the next time receive a severe burn.
- Use child safety gates at the top and bottom of all staircases and be sure they are installed correctly. Carpeted stairs will help prevent slipping. Avoid accordion-style safety gates with large openings that children could fit their heads through.



In the Family Room:

- Check floors constantly for small objects that a baby might swallow, such as coins, buttons, beads, pins, and screws.
- Use broad-based, non-wheeled carts and tables for televisions, fish tanks, and other equipment. Tall, narrow furniture can topple over onto children who are pulling up to stand. Consider securing bookcases, shelving, and tall, heavy furniture to the wall or floor with brackets to prevent them from falling over.
- Regularly test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors, replacing outdated batteries and alarms. Many alarms are designed for ten years of use; check with the manufacturer if you are unsure about your alarm's effectiveness.
- Place heavy artwork and framed pictures out of reach and away from furniture to prevent children from climbing on furniture to pull them down.
- Babies and toddlers can pull down electronics by their cords as well as chew on stray cords or pull on power plugs. Place cords behind furniture or purchase cable organizers to encase and protect cords from little hands.
- Throw away toys that become worn or broken. Loose parts are a major choking hazard.
- Use toy chests without lids or with supports that hold a lid open in any position.



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