



# HOME SAFETY

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development • Office of Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control



*“ There are simple steps you can take to help keep your loved ones safe in and around the home.”*

Home Safety Council

## Did you know...?

- **Home accidents** kill one person every 16 minutes and injure one person every four seconds in the U.S.<sup>1</sup>
- More than 1.2 million **poisonings** among children under age 5 were reported to U.S. poison control centers in 2002<sup>2</sup>
- Nearly 40,000 children under age 14 are injured by **fires** each year<sup>3</sup>

### **Home Safety includes preventing unintentional injuries.**

Unintentional injuries in the home include poisoning, fires and burns, choking, drowning, suffocation, strangulation, firearms, and falls, and they are all **preventable**.

## What you can do

There are many small and easy things you can do to protect your family from injuries in the home, some of which are listed below. **Post emergency telephone numbers next to all phones** to make it as easy as possible to get help if someone gets hurt.

### Poison

- **Read warning labels and follow storage directions on household products.** Poisonous products can include medicines, cleaning supplies, hair spray, and home repair materials.
- **Keep poisonous products out of children’s sight and reach** on high shelves. Install child-proof latches on cabinets that do not have locks.

*continued on back*

**¡AVERTENCIA!** Este producto contiene plomo y puede ser tóxico. Evite el uso de este producto en áreas de juego de los niños. Mantenga este producto fuera del alcance de los niños. Evite el uso de este producto en áreas de juego de los niños. Mantenga este producto fuera del alcance de los niños. Evite el uso de este producto en áreas de juego de los niños. Mantenga este producto fuera del alcance de los niños.

**AVVERTENZA** Questo prodotto contiene piombo e può essere tossico. Evitare l'uso di questo prodotto in aree di gioco dei bambini. Mantenere questo prodotto fuori dal campo di vista dei bambini. Evitare l'uso di questo prodotto in aree di gioco dei bambini. Mantenere questo prodotto fuori dal campo di vista dei bambini. Evitare l'uso di questo prodotto in aree di gioco dei bambini. Mantenere questo prodotto fuori dal campo di vista dei bambini.



U.S. Department of Housing and  
Urban Development

Office of Healthy Homes and  
Lead Hazard Control

# HOME SAFETY

- **Store food and non-food products separately** to prevent confusion and protect your family from container contamination and toxic spills.
- **Always choose non-toxic alternatives when possible** and use products with child-resistant caps.
- **Never mix cleaning products together;** they may produce dangerous fumes (ammonia and bleach should never be mixed).
- **Install Carbon Monoxide (CO) detectors** in your home.
- **Flush expired medicines down the toilet** rather than throwing them in the garbage.
- **If it is necessary to use harsh chemicals, use them when children are not at home,** or at least are in a different room. Always wear gloves when handling products that could be toxic and follow all manufacturers' instructions.

## Fires and Burns

- **Install smoke detectors on every floor of your home near every bedroom.** Test detectors every month and change their batteries every year. Never disable smoke detectors.
- **Develop a family escape plan.**
- **Keep matches, lighters, and candles out of children's reach.** Never smoke in bed. It is the leading cause of fire-related deaths.
- **Keep anything that can catch fire away from fireplaces, heaters, and radiators.** Replace frayed electrical wires.
- **Take care to avoid kitchen fires and burns.**
  - Stay in the kitchen while cooking.
  - Turn pot handles toward the inside of the stove so children cannot grab them.
  - Install ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) in kitchens and bathrooms.
- **Set water-heater thermostats below 120° F (50° C).** Always test the water before bathing yourself or your child.

## Drowning, Choking, Suffocation, and Strangulation

- **Never leave children alone near water,** including bathtubs, buckets, swimming pools, rivers, and the ocean. Learn and practice First Aid and CPR.
- **Use child-proof fencing** around all swimming pools and hot-tubs.
- **Avoid toys for children under 3 years of age that are smaller than 2 inches long and 1 inch wide.** Toys for young children should never have small or removable parts that could be choked on.
- **Avoid window blinds with looped cords,** which may cause strangulation if not stored out of children's reach.
- **Keep plastic bags and drawstring cords away from children.**

## Falls and Other Injuries

- **Keep your floors free of anything that may cause tripping,** such as toys, shoes, or magazines.
- **Use stools, ladders and stepladders carefully.**
- **Make sure that your home is well lit.**

- **Use guards on windows and safety gates near stairs** to keep children from falling
- **Follow manufacturers' instructions for storing and using lawn equipment or chemicals.**
- **Wear protective gear on eyes and ears when using power tools.**
- **Keep sharp or electronic kitchen and bathroom items out of children's reach.** Keep electric appliances away from water.
- **Always keep firearms well secured.** Firearms should always be locked, unloaded, and stored out of reach. Store ammunition in a separate, locked location.

## For more information . . .

Visit HUD's website at [www.hud.gov/offices/lead](http://www.hud.gov/offices/lead) for more information about addressing health and safety hazards in homes or to learn if HUD has a Healthy Homes program in your community. From this website, you can download a copy of "Help Yourself to A Healthy Home" for more practical steps you can take to make your home a healthy home.

## Other Federal Resources

US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[www.cdc.gov/od/oc/childhealth](http://www.cdc.gov/od/oc/childhealth)

US Environmental Protection Agency

[www.epa.gov/children](http://www.epa.gov/children)

## Other Resources

National Safe Kids Campaign

[www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org)

National Safety Council

[www.nationalsafetycouncil.org](http://www.nationalsafetycouncil.org)

Home Safety Council

[www.homesafetycouncil.org](http://www.homesafetycouncil.org)

## Emergency Resources

National Poison Control Center hotline: 1-800-222-1222.

For other emergencies (fire, drowning, choking, falls, etc.) call 911. In areas without 911 service, memorize your fire department's emergency phone number. In case of fire, dial 911 from outside your home.

<sup>1</sup>National Safety Council "Report on Injuries in America, 2002"  
[www.nationalsafetycouncil.org/library/report\\_injury\\_usa.htm](http://www.nationalsafetycouncil.org/library/report_injury_usa.htm) August 25, 2004

<sup>2</sup>National Safe Kids, "Poison" [www.safekids.org/tier2\\_rl.cfm?folder\\_id=176](http://www.safekids.org/tier2_rl.cfm?folder_id=176) August 25, 2004

<sup>3</sup>National Safe Kids, "Fire" [www.safekids.org/tier2\\_rl.cfm?folder\\_id=171](http://www.safekids.org/tier2_rl.cfm?folder_id=171) August 25, 2004