

## Poison Prevention

Here are some important ways to help prevent kids from ingesting a poisonous substance.

### Medications

- Don't rely on packaging to protect your kids. Child-resistant packaging does not mean childproof.
- Never prepare or give medication to a child in the dark. You may give the wrong dosage or the wrong medication.
- Never leave vitamin bottles, aspirin bottles or other medications on kitchen tables, countertops, bedside tables or dresser tops. Small children may decide to try to copy adults and help themselves.
- Never tell a child that medicine tastes like candy.
- Store all medications — prescription and nonprescription — out of sight and out of reach of children, preferably in a locked cabinet. Even items that seem harmless, such as mouthwash, can be extremely dangerous if ingested in large quantities by children. Just because cabinets are up high doesn't mean kids can't get in them. They'll climb up (using the toilet and countertops) to get to items in the medicine cabinet.
- Make sure purses and bags — yours and guests' — that could contain poisonous items such as medications are kept out of reach.
- Always keep pills and liquids in their original containers.
- Try to keep a record of how many pills are left in a prescription container.
- Be aware of all medications in your home and in homes your kids spend a lot of time at.

### Cleaning products and other household chemicals

- Never put cleaning products in bottles or containers that were used for food.
- Never put roach powders or rat poison on the floors of your home.
- Store household cleaning products and aerosol sprays in a high cabinet.
- Don't keep any cleaning supplies, including dishwasher detergent and dishwashing liquids, under the sink.
- Use safety latches for all cabinets containing hazardous substances.
- Keep hazardous automotive and gardening products out of reach in a securely locked area (ideally, in a

garage or shed).

- When you're cleaning or using household chemicals, never leave the bottles unattended around kids.

### Alcohol

- Don't leave alcoholic drinks where kids can reach them. Take special care during parties and clean up promptly after the party.
- Keep bottles of alcohol in a locked cabinet far from kids' reach.
- Keep mouthwash out of the reach of kids, because many brands contain substantial amounts of alcohol.
- Food extracts, such as vanilla and almond, may contain alcohol and can be harmful to kids.

### Lead paint

- Don't use cribs, bassinets, highchairs, painted toys or toy chests made before 1978; these may have paint that contains lead.
- If you have an older home, have the paint tested for lead. For more information on lead, call the National Lead Information Center at (800) 424-LEAD (5323).
- Keep up on toy recalls due to the use of lead paint. You can receive notifications from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).

### Other items

- Never leave cosmetics and toiletries within easy reach of children. Be especially cautious with perfume, hair dye, hairspray, nail and shoe polish and nail polish remover.
- Keep kids away from houseplants — and plants around your yard — that can be poisonous. A few examples of toxic houseplants include: rhododendron, English ivy, lily of the valley and holiday plants such as holly and mistletoe.
- Discard used button cell batteries (like those in watches) safely and store any unused ones far from kids' reach (alkaline substances are poisonous).

### Be prepared

If you're expecting a baby or you already have a child, it's wise to:

- Learn cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and the abdominal thrust procedure (the Heimlich maneuver).
- Keep the following numbers near the home phone (for yourself and caregivers) and saved in your cell phone:
  - ◆ poison-control number: 1-800-222-1222
  - ◆ doctor's number

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- ◆ parents' work and cell phone numbers
- ◆ neighbor's or nearby relative's number (if you need someone to watch other kids in an emergency)
- Make a first-aid kit and keep emergency instructions inside.
- Install smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors.

## Maintaining a safe, kid-friendly environment

To check your childproofing efforts, get down on your hands and knees in every room to see things from a child's perspective. Be aware of your child's surroundings and what might be potentially dangerous.

Completely childproofing your home can be difficult. If you can't childproof the entire house, you can shut the doors (and install doorknob covers) to any room a child shouldn't enter to prevent wandering into places that haven't been properly childproofed.

Supervision is the very best way to help prevent kids from getting injured. However, even the most vigilant parent can't keep a child 100% safe at all times.