

Home Safety Tips: Preventing Childhood Injuries Presentation

Activity: Home Hazards & Safety Interventions

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to increase parent and caregiver knowledge of and confidence in addressing potential hazards in the home for infants and young children.

Instructions:

For this activity, you will use the four graphics provided of common rooms in the home – the kitchen, living room, nursery, and bathroom. Look at each graphic and find potential hazards or safety concerns for infants and young children. For each potential hazard, come up with a possible intervention to make the item or situation safer and reduce the risk of child injuries.

This activity can be done in small groups or on your own. For small groups, divide the participants into four groups and assign them one of the four rooms. Give the groups approximately 10 minutes for the activity. Finish the activity by bringing all the participants back together and ask each group to share one hazard they found in their room and the corresponding safety intervention. If time permits, encourage more discussion by asking the following questions:

1. Was there anything that challenged or surprised you about this activity?
2. Do you think you would have found any new hazards if the picture of the room was from a small child's point of view (i.e., from the floor)?
3. How do you think the hazards and safety interventions would be different if the child living in this home was 7 months old? 5 years old?
4. What is one change you could make in your home today to make it safer for your child(ren)?

Kitchen



Image Source: Middlesex-London Health Unit (<https://www.healthunit.com/>)

Hazard	Safety Intervention

Living Room



Image Source: Middlesex-London Health Unit (<https://www.healthunit.com/>)

Hazard	Safety Intervention

Nursery



Image Source: Middlesex-London Health Unit (<https://www.healthunit.com/>)

Hazard	Safety Intervention

Bathroom



Image Source: Middlesex-London Health Unit (<https://www.healthunit.com/>)

Hazard	Safety Intervention

ANSWER KEY

Kitchen

Hazard	Safety Intervention
Open cabinet with potentially dangerous chemicals and cleaning supplies	Remove potentially dangerous chemicals and cleaning supplies from areas accessible to children. If not possible, use child-proof cabinet safety locks.
Hot stove burner	Never leave a hot stove burner unattended. Use the back burners on a stove first.
Pot on stove	Turn pot handles towards the center of the stove and use the back burners on a stove first.
Toaster and its power cord	Minimize appliance cords that are visible and accessible to children. When small appliances are not in use, unplug power cords and store the appliances at the back of the counter or a secure cabinet. When in use, do not use small appliances at the edge of the counter (if possible) or leave them unattended.
Red mug on table	Keep hot beverages out of reach of children.
Blue glass on table	Keep breakable items, such as drinking glasses, out of reach of children.
Highchair	Always use the straps and buckles provided when a child is in a highchair. When not in use, tuck in or tightly secure the highchair straps and buckles so they are out of sight.
Chair	Chairs not in use should be pushed into the table so they cannot be used to climb onto the table or nearby counters.
Open cabinets	Close cabinets when not in use. Consider using child-proof cabinet safety locks on lower cabinets with heavy, breakable, and/or potentially dangerous items.
Tablecloth	Tightly secure tablecloth to the table so it cannot be pulled off or remove the tablecloth altogether.
Medications, prescriptions, and vitamins	Keep all medications, prescriptions, and vitamins up high and out of sight, ideally in a locked cabinet or lockbox.
Fire extinguisher, smoke alarm, and carbon monoxide detector	All homes should have at least one fire extinguisher, smoke alarm, and carbon monoxide (CO) detector. Follow the manufacturer instructions on maintaining and replacing these items.

Living Room

Hazard	Safety Intervention
Teddy bear on stairs	Keep stairs free from clutter and ensure there is a secure handrail.
Plant	Ensure plants and any soil or fertilizer used are not poisonous or harmful to humans. If possible, place plants out of reach or use barricades for larger plants on the floor.
Window blinds	Cut the loop out of the blind cord and secure it out of reach of children.
Window	Keep furniture away from the window and install a window guard if the window is above the first floor.
Large bookcase	Securely attach heavy furniture to the wall using angle braces, anchors, or safety straps.
Purse on floor	Store the purse up high and out of reach of children.
Fireplace	Use an appropriate and properly installed fireplace screen or barrier. Keep fireplace tools out of reach of children.
Jacks and marble on floor	Ensure toys are safe for the child's age. For children of different ages, keep toys with small parts that could be a choking hazard separate and out of reach of younger children.
Electrical outlets	Put safety covers on all electrical outlets when not in use.
Charging phone	Minimize cord that are visible and accessible to children. When possible, place phones and other items being charged on a counter or out of reach of children.
Batteries on bookshelf	Do not allow children to play with batteries. Regularly check that toys and household products have screws to secure the battery compartment or use strong tape to cover the compartment. Store batteries not in use up high and out of sight.
Baby gates on stairs	Use wall-mounted safety gates instead of pressure-mounted gates at the top and bottom of stairs.

Nursery

Hazard	Safety Intervention
Teddy bear and blanket	Every surface a baby sleeps on should be firm, flat, and free of stuffed toys, comforters, and pillows.
Bumper pads	Bumper pads are not recommended and should be removed due to the risk of suffocation.
Crib height	When a baby can push themselves up to their hands and knees, lower the crib mattress to the lowest height.
Crib and rocking chair location	Keep furniture away from the window.
Change table	Securely attach furniture to the wall using angle braces, anchors, or safety straps.
Change table supplies	Place everything needed to change a baby's diaper within arms reach before placing the infant on the change table.
Change pad	Ensure the change pad cannot slide off the change table. During a diaper change, use change pad straps, if available, and always keep eyes and a hand on the baby.
Pictures on wall	Move pictures to a different wall or up higher so they cannot be reached when the child gets more mobile and curious.
Window blinds	Cut the loop out of the blind cord and secure it out of reach of children.
Window	Install a window guard if the window is above the first floor.
Rocking chair	Move the rocking chair out of the room when the child becomes more mobile and starts climbing.
Electrical outlets	Put safety covers on all electrical outlets when not in use.

Bathroom

Hazard	Safety Intervention
Open cabinet with cleaning supplies	Remove potentially dangerous chemicals and cleaning supplies from areas accessible to children. If not possible, use child-proof cabinet safety locks.
Open cabinets/drawers	Close cabinets and drawers when not in use. Consider using child-proof cabinet safety locks on cabinets/drawers.
Hair dryer and its power cord	When not in use, store the hair dryer and its power cord out of reach of children.
Toilet	For young children still in diapers, install a locking device on the toilet that is child-proof.
Bathroom door	For young children still in diapers, install a lock on the outside of the bathroom door that is out of reach of the child.
Bathtub	Never use a bath seat or bath ring when bathing an infant or young child.
Bath water temperature	Ensure bath water is warm, but never hot (around 37°C or 98.6°F). Check the temperature using a thermometer or your elbow.
Bathing supplies	Place everything needed for bath time within arms reach before placing the infant in the bathtub. Always keep your eyes and a hand on the child during their bath.
Cosmetics	Keep all cosmetics out of reach of children.
Water on floor	Clean up the spilled water from the floor to avoid falls.
Electrical outlets	Put safety covers on all electrical outlets when not in use.
Medications, prescriptions, and vitamins	Keep all medications, prescriptions, and vitamins up high and out of sight, ideally in a locked cabinet or lockbox.