

## Home Safety Checklist

Use a checklist like this to make sure that your home meets standard safety requirements. Check off those items that are in good condition and make notes about those that are not.

Please Note:

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### Kitchen

- Are knives, forks, scissors, and other sharp tools in a drawer with a childproof latch?
- Have you installed a dishwasher lock so kids can't open it while it's running and can't reach breakable dishes, knives, and other dangerous objects?
- Have you installed a stove lock and have knob protectors been placed on the stove knobs?
- Are chairs and stepstools positioned away from the stove?
- When cooking, are all pot handles on the stove turned inward or placed on back burners where kids can't reach them?
- Are glass objects and appliances with sharp blades stored out of reach?
- Is the garbage can behind a cabinet door with a childproof latch?
- Are all appliances unplugged when not in use, with cords out of reach?
- Are all vitamin or medicine bottles tightly closed and stored in a high cabinet far from reach?
- Are matches and lighters stored in a locked cabinet?

- Is the cabinet under the sink free of cleaning supplies, bug sprays, dishwasher detergent, and dishwashing liquids? And are these supplies out of the reach of children?
- Are any bottles containing alcohol stored out of reach?
- Are all plastic garbage bags and sandwich bags out of reach?
- Are any cords or wires from wall telephones or cable TV out of reach?
- Are refrigerator magnets and other small objects out of reach?
- Are childproof latches installed on all cabinet doors?
- Is there a working fire extinguisher? Do family members know how to use it?
- Does your child's highchair have a safety belt with a strap between the legs?

### **Child's Room/Bedroom**

- Does your baby's changing table have a safety belt?
- Are all painted cribs, bassinets, and high chairs made after 1978? (Prior to this, paint was lead based.)
- Are crib slats less than 2-3/8 inches (6 centimeters) apart?
- Are the crib's headboard and footboard free of large cut-outs?
- Is all of the hardware on the crib secure?
- Is the crib mattress firm and flat? Does it fit snugly in the crib?
- Is the crib free of a drop side?
- Is the crib free of soft pillows, large stuffed animals, bumper pads, and soft bedding?

- Have any strings or ribbons been clipped off hanging mobiles and crib toys?
- Are window blind and curtain cords tied with clothespins or specially designed cord clips?  
Are they kept well out of reach and away from cribs?
- Are dressers secured to walls with drawers closed?
- Do the lids on toy chests or toy storage containers have a lid support to keep them from slamming shut? Are all toy chests non-locking?
- Has a window guard been placed on any window that isn't an emergency exit?
- Are any night-lights in the room not touching any fabric like bedspreads or curtains?
- Does your child wear flame-retardant sleepwear?
- Is there a smoke alarm outside the bedroom?
- Have you removed all drawstrings from your child's clothing?

### **Adult's Bedroom**

- Are all medication bottles, loose pills, coins, scissors, and any other small or sharp objects out of reach?
- Are window blind and curtain cords tied with clothespins or specially designed cord clips?

If you own firearms:

- Are they stored in a securely locked case out of kids' reach? All firearms should be stored unloaded and in the un-cocked position.
- Is ammunition stored in a separate place and in a securely locked container out of kids' reach?

- Are keys kept where kids can't find them?

### **Bathroom**

- Is the thermostat on the hot water heater set below 120°F (49°C)?
- Are razor blades, nail scissors, and other sharp tools stored in a locked cabinet?
- Are childproof latches installed on all drawers and cabinets?
- Do the outlets have ground fault circuit interrupters (which protect against electrocution if an electrical appliance gets wet)? (If you live in an older home that may not be "up to code," have an electrician inspect your circuit breaker panel.)
- Are toilets always left closed? Is there a toilet-lid lock on the toilet?
- Are all hair dryers, curling irons, and electric razors unplugged when not in use?
- Are there nonskid strips on the bottoms of bathtubs?
- Are there nonslip pads under rugs to hold them securely to the floor?
- Are all prescription and nonprescription medications, cosmetics, and cleaners stored in a locked cabinet? Are childproof caps on all medications?
- Are bottles of mouthwash, perfumes, hair dyes, hair sprays, nail polishes, and nail polish removers stored in a locked cabinet?

### **Garage & Laundry Area**

- Are all tools and supplies used for gardening, automotive, and lawn care stored safely away from children?
- Are all hazardous automotive, pool, and gardening products in a locked area?
- Are recycling containers storing glass and metal out of reach? Are garbage cans covered?

- Are all bleaches, detergents, and any other cleaning products out of reach?
- Are laundry chutes locked with childproof locks?

### **Outdoor/Backyard/Pool**

- Are all walkways and outdoor stairways well lit?
- Are all walkways clear of toys, objects, or anything blocking a clear path?
- Are all sidewalks and outdoor stairways clear of concrete cracks or missing pieces?
- Are all garbage cans securely covered?
- Are all swing sets parts free from rust, splinters, and sharp edges?
- Are all parts on swing sets or other outdoor equipment securely fastened?
- Is the surface beneath the swing set soft enough (cushioned with material such as sand, mulch, wood chips, or approved rubber surfacing mats) to absorb the shock of a fall?
- Are all outdoor toys put away in a secure, dry place when not in use?
- Is there climb-proof fencing at least 4 feet (1.2 meters) high on all sides of the pool? Does the fence have a self-closing gate with a childproof lock?
- Have all ladders been removed from an above-ground pool when not in use?

### **Outdoor Safety Issues**

- Have you removed any potentially poisonous houseplants?
- Have you instituted a no-smoking rule in your home to protect kids from environmental tobacco smoke?
- Have you considered possible health risks from — and if indicated, tested for — lead, radon, asbestos, mercury, mold, and carbon monoxide?

- If there are guns in the home, have they been placed in a locked cabinet with the key hidden and the ammunition locked separately?
- Do you always supervise your child around pets, especially dogs?

### **Walls and Floors**

- Are walls in good condition, with no peeling or cracking paint (which could contain lead in older homes)?
- Are there any nails in the walls that should be removed?
- Are mirrors and frames hung securely?
- Are rugs secured to floors or fitted with anti-slip pads underneath?

### **Doors & Windows**

- Have you installed a finger-pinch guard on doors?
- Have you removed the rubber tips from all door stops or installed one-piece door stops?
- Have you placed doorknob covers on doors so that your toddler won't be able to leave the house?
- Do all glass doors in the house contain decorative markers so they won't be mistaken for open doors?
- Do all sliding doors have childproof locks?
- Are there safety bars or window guards installed on upper-story windows?
- Are there window stops to keep the windows from closing all the way?
- Are window blind cords tied with clothespins or specially designed cord clips?

### **Furniture**

- Are bookshelves and other furniture secured with wall brackets so they can't be tipped over?
- Is there protective padding on corners of coffee tables, furniture, and countertops that have sharp edges?
- Do toy chests and other chests have safety hinges to prevent them from closing?
- Have you checked that all used or hand-me-down baby equipment hasn't been recalled?
- Are flatscreen TVs mounted securely on the wall? Are older, heavy TVs on a low, stable piece of furniture?
- Are there stops on all removable drawers to prevent them from falling out?
- Are beds and cribs away from windows?

### **Stairways**

- Are there hardware-mounted safety gates at the top and bottom of every stairway?
- Are stairways clear of tripping hazards, such as loose carpeting or toys?
- Have you placed a guard on banisters and railings if your child can fit through the rails?
- Are the railings and banisters secure?
- Is the door to the basement steps kept locked?
- Is there enough light in the stairway?

### **Electrical**

- Are all unused outlets covered with safety plugs?
- Are all major electrical appliances grounded?
- Have cord holders been used to keep longer cords fastened against walls?

- Have you checked for and removed other potential electrical fire hazards, such as overloaded electrical sockets and electrical wires running under carpets?
- Are televisions, computers, and stereo equipment positioned against walls?

### **Heating & Cooling Elements**

- Are all radiators and baseboard heaters covered with childproof screens if necessary?
- Have gas fireplaces been secured with a valve cover or key?
- Do all working fireplaces have a screen and other barriers in place when in use?
- Have any chimneys been cleaned recently?
- Are all electric space heaters at least 3 feet (91 centimeters) from beds, curtains, or anything flammable?

### **Emergency Equipment & Numbers**

- Have you placed a list of emergency phone numbers near each phone in your home?
- Are there fire extinguishers installed on every floor and in the kitchen?
- Do you have an emergency ladder for the upper floors of your home?
- Are there smoke detectors on each floor of your home?
- Have smoke detectors been installed in the hallways between all bedrooms of your home?
- Have you tested all smoke detectors within the last month?
- Have you changed the batteries in the smoke detectors within the past 6 months?
- If you cook with or heat your home with natural gas or have an attached garage, have you considered installing a carbon monoxide detector in your home?