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Home Safety Search

As colder weather approaches, your child will spend more time indoors. Make sure that his/her surroundings are safe. Use this room-by-room checklist to evaluate the safety of your childcare setting. Identify areas or items that may need improvement.

Inside and outside:

- Look through all cabinets within his reach and remove any breakable dishes, sharp items or poisonous materials. Put childproof locks on all child-height cabinets.
- Remove all cleaning materials, laundry detergent and beauty supplies from under sinks.
- Eliminate the risk of her scalding herself by setting the water-heater temperature to 100-120F.
- Unplug appliances such as toasters, coffee makers, curling irons, blow dryers or shavers when not in use.
- Cover electrical outlets or install safety plugs.
- Make sure furniture is sturdy and not easily overturned. Remove furniture with sharp edges.
- Install smoke detectors in the kitchen, outside sleeping areas and between the kitchen and play area. Do a safety check every month.
- Cover all trash containers. Check for hazards in trash cans.

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FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

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Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) program staff at MSU Extension can answer questions or help you learn more about money management, parent, food, nutrition and health issues. MSU Extension educators integrate university and community resources to provide tools that help families succeed. For more information on FCS programs in Michigan, call your county MSU Extension office. Check the government pages of your phone book for contact information.

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- Place ashtrays, lamps, knick-knacks and other breakables out of his reach. Check for tablecloths that he may pull off and house plants that may overturn.
- Do not smoke around her.
- Install safety gates across stairs.
- Keep plastic bags, tissues and Styrofoam away from him.
- Move cords from lamps, radios, etc. so they do not lie where people walk or she can reach.
- Remove all extension cords used as permanent wiring.
- Remove any peeling paint and repaint with lead-free paint.
- Repair any loose nails, splinters or threads in carpets.
- Remove scatter rugs or use non-skid rugs.
- Mark glass doors or windows with posters to prevent him from running into them.
- Install protective shields over heaters or radiators.

Kitchen and dining areas:

- Store cleaning products so they do not contaminate food or play area.
- Place sharp objects, such as knives, out of his reach.
- Keep a fire extinguisher in the kitchen and learn how to operate it.
- Inspect and remove eating utensils with chips or cracks.
- Always keep matches out of her reach.

Bathroom:

- Remove the lock so she cannot lock herself in.
- Use a tight-lid container for soiled diapers.

Living room or indoor play areas:

- Push TV against the wall so she can't get to the cord or to the back of the set.
- Keep stairs clear of toys or other objects. Make sure railings are strong. Avoid using walkers around stairs.

Bedroom or sleeping areas:

- Use cribs or beds with secure sides to keep infants and toddlers from crawling or rolling onto the floor. Make sure a child cannot reach or easily release the side lock and that all edges and bolts are smooth.

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- Measure crib slats. If there is more than 2-3/8 inches between slats, a baby's head can become stuck. Make sure crib mattresses fit snugly and remove bumper pads so the baby's head cannot get caught. Remove everything but mattresses from the crib to prevent suffocation.
- Place cribs away from windows.

Toys and learning materials:

- Choose toys that are age-appropriate and easy to wash and keep clean. Choose fabric toys labeled flame or fire resistant. Check toys to be sure all parts are safe and nothing is broken or has sharp edges.
 - Give infants and toddlers only toys that are too large to swallow. If you are caring for infants do not use any toys or objects that are smaller than 1¼ inch in diameter or with removable parts that are smaller than 1¼ inch.
 - Read the labels on crayons, paints and other materials to make sure they are nontoxic.
 - Store toys and learning materials on low shelves where he can reach them. Place heavy toys near the floor. Keep toys used by older children out of reach of younger children.
 - Do not let him play with shooting or exploding toys such as bb guns, darts or fireworks.
- Remember, the best thing that you can do to keep your child safe is to watch her and

always know what she is doing!

For more information on this topic and other indoor air quality issues, parenting, money management, food, nutrition or health issues, contact the MSU Extension Office. MSU Extension Family and Consumer Science educators are located in all 83 Michigan counties to integrate university and community resources to help families succeed.

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Sources: Better Kid Care Keeping Kids Healthy and Safe Training Kit, MSU Extension, 2004