

State of Illinois
Department of Children and Family Services
HOME SAFETY CHECKLIST FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

Every year, 120,000 children suffer some form of permanent damage due to accidental injuries, such as permanent brain damage from a head injury, long-term breathing problems from smoke inhalation, disfigurement from burns, or liver or kidney damage from poisoning. According to data from the National SAFE KIDS Campaign:

- Accidental, or unintentional, injury is the leading cause of death among children, teens and young adults.
- The five leading causes of accidental injury are drowning, burns, motor vehicle accidents, falls, and poisonings.
- Burns and fires are the fourth most common causes of accidental death in children.
- Nearly 75 percent of all burns in children are preventable.
- Nearly 2,900 adults and children die every year in fires or from other burn injuries.
- Toddlers and children are more often burned by a scalding or flames.
- The majority of children ages four and under, who are hospitalized for burn-related injuries, suffer from scald burns (65 percent) or contact burns (20 percent).
- Hot tap water burns cause more deaths and hospitalizations than burns from any other hot liquids.

Fire/burns, motor vehicle traffic accidents, suffocation and accidental falls are the leading causes of unintentional deaths of children under the age of five in Illinois. Numerous Illinois children also die each year as a result of domestic violence.

While it may be impossible to eliminate all the dangers children encounter in their homes, one of the most important factors in reducing those hazards is knowledge. The Home Safety Checklist will help you identify any hazards that may exist in your home.

FIRE and BURNS

Please circle your answers.

<i>PARENTS' GUIDE to Fire Safety for Babies and Toddlers</i>	Literature Received:	Yes	No
<i>A HELPFUL GUIDE for PARENTS and CAREGIVERS</i>	Literature Received:	Yes	No

1. My home has a working smoke detector.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No
2. The smoke detector is located near my family's sleeping areas.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No
3. I know how to test and replace the smoke detector battery.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No
4. My family has a fire escape plan.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No
5. We practice the plan so that we can respond quickly in case there is a fire.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No

Young children in Illinois are more than three times as likely to die in a residential fire as the rest of the state's population. Working smoke detectors save lives! Change smoke detector batteries when resetting your clocks in the spring and fall; **SPRING AHEAD and FALL BACK.**

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6. My preschoolers and younger children do not have access to matches or lighters.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No	N/A
7. I never use my stove oven or burners to heat my home.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No	

Forty percent of residential fire related deaths among children are caused by child fire-play. Up to two thirds of child fire-play victims are not the children who were playing with and/or started the fire. Supervision of children will prevent fire-play as well as other accidents. Home heating systems are a leading cause of home fires, and alternative home heating sources such as electric space heaters, kerosene heaters and wood stoves are a major cause of fire deaths. Electric space heaters should be approved by the Underwriters Laboratories (UL), have a thermostat control mechanism, and switch off automatically if the heater falls over. Heaters are not clothes dryers or tables. Keep the heater three feet from combustible materials such as furniture, curtains, blankets, paper, and walls; and unplug the heater when it is not in use. Kerosene heaters should also be UL approved. Never fill a kerosene heater with gasoline or camp stove fuel; both flare-up easily. Only use crystal clear K-1 kerosene. Use the kerosene heater in a well ventilated room and away from combustible materials. Check wood stoves for cracks and inspect legs, hinges and door seals for smooth joints and seams. Burn only seasoned wood, not green wood, artificial logs or trash. Be sure to keep combustible materials at least three feet away from a wood stove.

8. The hot water in my home does not come out of the tap at scalding temperatures.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No	
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To measure your hot water temperature, place a thermometer under the stream of water from a kitchen or bathroom faucet. Keep the thermometer in the stream of water until the recorded temperature stops rising. The water temperature may be measured with outdoor, candy or digital thermometers. Your hot water heater should be set no higher than 120° Fahrenheit to prevent scald burns to children. Children's skin is thinner than an adult's skin, and infants and young children will suffer partial and full-thickness (second and third degree) burns after ten seconds in 130° F water; four seconds in 135° F water; one second in 140° F water, and one half second in 149° F water. The correct temperature for an infant's bath water is between 96.8° and 102.2° F. Never place your child in a bath or under running water without first checking the temperature of the water.

9. I do not keep hot items, such as those listed below, within the reach of my infant, toddler or younger child.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No	N/A
10. I always turn pot handles towards the back of the stove when they are on the stove.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No	N/A

The majority of scald burns to children, especially among those ages six months to two years, are from hot foods and liquids spilled in the kitchen. Kitchens can be especially dangerous for children during meal preparation. Hot items such as coffee, tea, water, food, pots and pans, and lit cigarettes should never be left on tables, countertops or stove tops within the reach of a child. You should not hold your child while you are cooking.

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11. I keep electrical appliances (e.g., hair dryers, curling and clothes irons) out of reach of my younger children.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No	N/A
12. I never plug multiple electrical items into a single plug electrical outlet.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No	

Children have been burned by appliances they have pulled down onto themselves. Children have also electrocuted themselves by dropping appliances into water.

13. I do not place extension cords under rugs or furniture.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No	
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Extension cords can wear out and spark. They will quickly cause a fire if they are placed under rugs or furniture.

14. The electrical outlets are covered when not in use to protect my toddlers and younger children from electrical shock.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No	N/A
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Children can be electrocuted if they place small objects in electrical sockets.

SLEEPING

Back to Sleep Literature Received: Yes No

15. My infant sleeps alone in a crib or bassinette.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No	N/A
16. My infant does not sleep in his or her crib with toys, stuffed animals or pillows.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No	N/A
17. My infant is always placed on his or her back to sleep.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No	N/A

When an infant is in the crib, the sides of the crib must be up; the mattress must be in the low position; the crib must not be placed near a window; window blinds; electrical cords must be out of the reach of the child; pillows, stuffed animals and toys must never be left in the crib with the child. A child must never wear a pacifier on a ribbon or string placed around his or her neck.

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CHOKING

18. Plastic bags, pins, buttons, coins, balloons and sharp or breakable items are kept out of the reach of my children.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No	N/A
19. My younger children only play with toys that are too large to swallow, unbreakable and without sharp edges or points.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No	N/A

Food such as hot dogs, hard candy, grapes, popcorn and nuts are common culprits in choking deaths. Small toys, tiny rubber balls, too small pacifiers, and bits of balloons are common non-food choking hazards. Children are also at risk for becoming entangled in the ties on hoods, cords that control window blinds, toys strung across cribs and strings used to attach pacifiers to clothing. As a general rule, any toy that can fit in a toilet paper roll is a choking hazard.

DROWNING

Get water wise.... SUPERVISE Literature Received: Yes No

20. My infant and/or toddler are never left alone when near a bath, pool, bucket or toilet.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No	N/A
21. I always drain the baby pool when not in use.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No	N/A
22. I always supervise my children when they are in or near water.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No	N/A

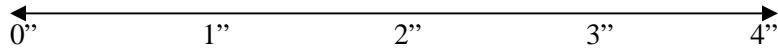
A young child can drown in as little as one inch of water. More than half of the drowning victims under the age of one drown in the bathtub during a brief lapse of supervision by the child's parent or caregiver. A child will lose consciousness within two minutes following submersion. *Children must always be supervised when they are near water.*

FALLS

23. I never leave my infant or toddler alone while they are on changing tables, tables, countertops, etc.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No	N/A
24. I do not have any furniture that my toddler and younger children can climb on placed near a window.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No	N/A
25. I do not use a baby walker.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No	N/A

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Children are likely to die or be severely injured from window-related falls. Children are curious and may try to crawl out of an open window. A screen is not strong enough to hold a child who is leaning against it. Screens are designed to keep insects out of the home, not to keep children from falling out the window. Children jumping on beds are at risk of falling out open windows. Supervision is the key to keeping children safe from injury. A window that is open four inches or more is potentially dangerous to children.



POISON

26. I keep cleaning products, pesticides, medicine and liquor out of the reach of children.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No	
27. I do not keep any of the products listed below in food containers or soft drink bottles.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No	
28. Paint is not chipping or peeling off the walls or woodwork of my home.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No	
29. There are no rats or mice in my home.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No	
30. Rodent poisons are not placed within the reach my infant, toddler or younger children.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No	N/A
31. My toddler and younger children do not have access to rotten food/trash.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No	N/A

Poisoning in childhood is frequently due to household cleaning products, medicines, vitamin supplements, plants and cosmetics. Toddlers and preschoolers may be attracted to medicines and vitamins because they resemble candy; cleaning products may look like sweet beverages; cosmetics may smell like fruit or candy. Because young children explore the world by putting things in their mouths, poisoning is a serious risk. Lead can cause brain damage in a child. The most common way that a child comes into contact with lead is through peeling or chipping paint. If you suspect that the paint in your home contains lead, contact the Illinois Department of Public Health's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, 1-800-545-2200. The National Poison Control hotline number is 1-800-222-1222.

VIOLENCE

<i>Never Shake A Baby!</i>	Literature Received:	Yes	No
<i>Violence Prevention</i>	Literature Received:	Yes	No

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32. I know how to calm my crying baby, and I know that I should NEVER, NEVER shake my baby.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No	N/A
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The number one reason perpetrators have given for killing an infant is that the child would not stop crying. Other reasons perpetrators have given for injuring a child is that the child wet or soiled him or herself or the child was perceived as misbehaving. NEVER, NEVER SHAKE A BABY, and remind your children’s caretaker that he or she should NEVER shake a baby.

Try the following when your baby is crying:

- Make sure that your baby is not hungry, wet, hot or cold, sick or in pain.
- Offer your baby a pacifier.
- Rock or walk with your baby.
- Sing or talk to your baby.
- Take your baby for a ride in his or her stroller or walk your baby in a snugly body carrier.
- Play soothing music to your baby.
- Run a fan. Babies often like rhythmic noise.
- Lower the lights and turn off noises like the TV or radio if you think your baby is over tired or over stimulated.
- Call a family member, friend or neighbor to talk about your frustration or see if someone can take over for a while and give yourself a well-deserved break.
- As a last resort, gently place the baby on his or her back in the crib, close the door and walk away. Check on the baby every five to ten minutes until he or she stops crying or until you are calm enough again to comfort the child.

Be sure to read the brochure *Never Shake a Baby*.

33. There are no firearms or weapons kept in my or the homes of frequently visited friends or relatives.	Discussed with worker?	Yes	No	N/A
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Fifty percent of all childhood unintentional shooting deaths occur in the home of the victim. Nearly forty percent occur in the home of a friend or relative. If you keep a weapon in the home, it must be unloaded and locked up out of the reach of children. In Illinois, it is illegal to allow a 14 year old to have access to firearms if that youth does not have a Firearm Owners Identification Card. Few children under the age of eight can reliably distinguish between real and toy guns. In one study boys ages eight through who found a real handgun were unsure whether or not it was a toy. Children that are as young as three years of age are strong enough to pull the trigger of many handguns.

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SUPERVISION

34. I always leave my children with an appropriate caregiver when I leave the home. Discussed with worker? Yes No N/A

A parent's/caregiver's supervision is the most important factor in keeping children safe from injury. When choosing someone to watch your children consider the following questions.

The answers to these questions should be YES.

- Does this person want to watch my children?
- I will have an opportunity to watch this person with my children before I leave?
- Is this person good with children my child's age?
- Has this person done a good job caring for other children that I know?
- Will my children be cared for in a place that is safe?
- Does this person know that a baby should never be shaken?

The answers to these questions should be NO.

- Will this person become angry if my children bother him or her?
- If this person is angry with me for leaving, will he or she treat my children roughly?
- Does this person have a history of violence that makes him or her a danger to my children?
- Has this person had children removed from his or her custody because he or she was unable to care for them?

AUTOMOBILES

35 My family has and uses car seats and booster seats. Older children use seat belts. Discussed with worker? Yes No

Illinois state law requires any child under the age of eight to be secured in a car seat or booster seat when riding in an automobile. Children eight years of age and older must be secured with a seat belt while riding in an automobile.

36. I never leave my children unattended in an automobile. Discussed with worker? Yes No

The temperature in an automobile can rise extremely fast and lead to death by heat exposure.

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EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS

37. I have a list of emergency telephone numbers posted near my telephone. Discussed with worker? Yes No

Prepare a list of emergency telephone numbers that include your doctor or clinic, the nearest emergency room, poison control (1-800-222-1222) and Parental Stress Hotline. Keep the list near your telephone or some other easily accessible location.

FIRST AID KIT

38. I have a complete first aid kit in my home. Discussed with worker? Yes No

Every home should have a first aid kit that contains a thermometer, children's pain reliever (e.g., Motrin, Tylenol), bandages, antiseptic solution (e.g., hydrogen peroxide, Bactine) and antibiotic ointment (e.g., Neosporin).

ILLNESS

39. I can recognize signs of illness. Discussed with worker? Yes No

Children that are ill, or becoming ill, will show one or more of the following signs of illness:

- Irregular crying that cannot be consoled
- Irregular sleep patterns
- Irregular breathing or wheezing
- Coughing or sneezing
- Runny nose, unusual discharge
- Rashes
- Fever
- Ear pain
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Poor appetite
- Unusual smell/color to bowel movement
- Abdomen pain
- Pain during urination

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IMMUNIZATIONS

40. My children are up-to-date on their immunizations. Discussed with worker? Yes No

The following schedule of immunizations is recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics, Centers for Disease Control and the American Academy of Family Practitioners.

- Hepatitis B (HepB): given at birth, between 1 – 4 months and between 6 – 18 months
- Diphtheria, Tetanus and Pertussis (DTaP): given at 2,4 & 6 months, between 15 – 18 months, and between 4 – 6 years (and Tetanus and Diphtheria (Td) should be administered between 11 – 12 years)
- Haemophilus influenza type b (Hib): given at 2,4 & 6 months and between 12 – 15 months
- Inactivated Polio (IPV): given at 2 & 4 months, between 6 – 18 months and between 4 – 6 years
- Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR): given between 12 – 15 months and between 4 – 6 years
- Varicella (chicken pox): given between 12 – 18 months
- Pneumococcal (PCV): given at 2, 4 & 6 months and between 12 – 15 months

MEDICAL CARE

41. My children have physical examinations according to their doctor's schedule or the schedule listed below. Discussed with worker? Yes No

Children usually have medical checkups performed by a physician at two weeks; two, four, six, nine, 12, 15 and 18 months; two years and annually thereafter.

DENTAL CARE

42. My children brush their teeth twice per day. Discussed with worker? Yes No

43. My children receive regular dental care check-ups. Discussed with worker? Yes No

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