

Childproofing Checklist

To “childproof” means to make your home safe for your baby. You can childproof in stages, as your baby grows. For any baby or child,

- ❖ Plan ahead.
- ❖ Lock any area that you will not childproof.
- ❖ Read this entire handout.
- ❖ **Never leave your baby or child alone.**
- ❖ Make sure the person watching your child is prepared. Before you hire her, make sure she is trained in basic CPR. Ask her if she smokes. Make sure she has a phone that works. When you leave your child with her, tell her how to reach you. Give her the name and phone number of his doctor or clinic.
- ❖ Make sure the person watching your child is old enough. A responsible teen who is 12 years or older can watch a young child. Only a responsible teen 16 years and older should care for a baby.
- ❖ Keep him safe from falls. Wherever he is, ask yourself, “Could he fall from there?” If the answer is yes, either move him to someplace safer or use a safety belt, if there is one.
- ❖ Keep him safe from burns. If you smoke, ask your doctor for help in quitting. Regularly check your smoke detector.
- ❖ Keep him safe from drowning and suffocation. Watch him when he is in or near water.
- ❖ Keep him safe from poisoning. Regularly check your carbon monoxide detector.

Before your child begins....

Rolling over:

- Get down on your hands and knees. See your home the way your baby sees it.
- Keep your child out of reach of electric wires.
- Make electrical outlets safer. Install safety plates or use outlet caps.
- Put a gate at the top of stairs.
- Only use a bouncy seat on the floor. A “bouncy seat” is a fabric chair that holds your baby in a reclined position. Do not use it if your baby’s feet touch the ground.
- Change diapers as close to the ground as possible. If you use a changing table, use its safety belt.

Crawling

- Do not leave heavy or hot things on top of a tablecloth that your child can reach and pull.
- Empty a bucket, kiddie pool or bathtub when you are finished using it. Put a lock on your toilet seat.
- Keep your child away from things that may be poisonous. These include plants, medicines and things that have been colored (paint, shoe polish, cosmetics) or have a smell (cleaners, perfume, moth balls, bug spray). Before you throw away something like this, make its container safer. Seal it tightly or empty it completely and rinse it.

- Keep syrup of ipecac available. Keep the poison control center phone number by the phone.
- Remove peeling or cracked paint.
- Keep your child away from things that could burn her. These include cigarettes, lighters, matches, candles, and hot irons, heaters, stoves, grills and fireplaces.
- Keep her away from sharp or pointy things. These include knives, pencils and pens, scissors, letter openers, and knitting or sewing needles.
- Keep her away from these things: plastic bags, balloons, anything with little removable parts, coins, beads, pebbles, pearls, popcorn, peanuts, small candy, and hard pet food.
- Keep her away from straps (like those on a purse), strings and cords.
- Dress her in the right size clothing. Wrong size clothing will make it harder for her to crawl.
- **Do not use a walker.** A walker is a thing with wheels that props your baby upright, with her feet hanging down.

Pulling to a stand & "cruising" on furniture

- If you own a gun, please get rid of it. If you keep it, lock it up unloaded. Keep the ammunition locked elsewhere.
- Turn the water heater down so that tap water is not hotter than 120°F.
- Turn the handle of a pot or pan on the stove away from the edge. Set up a barrier so a child cannot turn on the stove.
- Check for windows that your child could fall out of. Set up a barrier so he cannot reach them.
- Remove throw rugs from the top and bottom of stairs. Get rid of throw rugs that skid or slip on the floor.
- Put a non-skid mat in the bottom of the bathtub.
- Put the crib mattress at its lowest level. Keep the side railings up whenever your child is in the crib. Remove from the crib anything that he could use to climb out.
- Keep your child away from sharp things. These include knives, scissors and trash with jagged edges.
- If a piece of furniture has a sharp edge or corner, cover it with a cushion or get rid of it.
- Keep him away from any thing that may be poisonous (See ***Crawling***, above).
- Install a lock on a cabinet or drawer if he can reach it and it contains something that might hurt him.

Walking, running and climbing

- Take the door off or lock any refrigerator or freezer that is not in use.
- Lock up power tools (including lawn mowers and snow blowers).
- Check outside play areas for things (like cigarette butts or syringes) that could hurt your child.
- Close dresser drawers completely and install locks on other drawers she can open.
- Get rid of or put a barrier around furniture that could topple if she tries to climb on it.
- Teach her how to go safely up and down stairs.

Attending school

- Teach your child to safely use knives and scissors.
- If a gun is in the house, teach him about gun safety.
- Teach him how to safely use the stove.
- Teach him about poisons and how to call the poison control center.
- Teach him when to call 911.