



COUNSELING GUIDELINES

The First Year of Life

HOUSEHOLD HAZARDS

1. Do you put the crib side up whenever you leave your baby in the crib?
2. Do you leave the baby alone on tables or beds, even for a brief moment?
3. Do you leave the baby alone at home?
4. Do you keep plastic wrappers, plastic bags, and balloons away from your children?
5. Does your child wear a pacifier or jewelry around his or her neck?
6. Does your child play with small objects such as beads or nuts?
7. Are any of your baby-sitters younger than 13 years?
8. How frequently is the heating system checked where you live?
9. Are your operable window guards in place?
10. Do you ever place your baby in an infant walker?

COUNSELING GUIDELINES

Keep crib sides raised. Crib sides need to be kept up and firmly secured to prevent falls. Even if your baby currently can't roll over or pull up, there's always a first time.

If you leave, even for a moment, place your baby in a playpen or a crib with the sides up. Emphasize the necessity of anticipating developmental stages; the baby's first rollover should not lead to a fall.

Provide constant supervision. Never leave your baby alone in the home without a capable baby-sitter, at least 13 years old, who can respond to emergency situations. Poisonings may occur in a matter of minutes; choking, falls, fires, and similar emergencies require immediate attention.

Keep plastic bags and balloons away from your children. Plastic wrappers and bags form a tight seal if placed over the nose and mouth. Balloons can be inhaled into the windpipe and may cause death from choking.

Do not put anything around a baby's neck—objects around the neck may strangle the baby. Necklaces, ribbons, or strings around a baby's neck may get caught on parts of furniture or other objects and cause strangulation. Drawstrings also should be removed from all children's clothing.

Do not allow your child to play with small objects. Any small objects that can be placed in the mouth (including plant parts) are potential hazards. Even small pieces of food may cause problems; children should not run or play while eating. Parents should be informed about emergency treatment for the choking child. Use the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) brochure *Choking Prevention and First Aid for Infants and Children*. Round or cylindrical food or objects are especially hazardous.

Select an experienced baby-sitter. All sitters should be at least 13 years old and mature enough to handle common emergencies. Use the TIPP Safety Slip *Baby-sitting Reminders*.

Check heating systems and fireplaces at least once a year. This annual inspection helps prevent carbon monoxide poisoning, fires, and system malfunction.

Place operable window guards on all windows in your home. Window guards should be well repaired and inspected regularly. Keep furniture away from windows that can give a climbing toddler access to a window sill. Apartment windows should have guards above the second floor. The spaces above and below window guards should be less than 4 inches to prevent a child from falling through. Children leaning on screens can fall through and be seriously injured.

Do not place your child in a walker. Every year, more than 8,000 injuries occur to children in walkers.

BURNS

11. Does anyone in your home ever smoke?
12. Do you have a plan for escape from your home in the event of a fire?
13. Do you have working fire extinguishers in your home?
14. Do you have working smoke alarms in your home?
15. Do you ever drink or carry hot liquids when holding your baby?
16. Do you ever use woodstoves or kerosene heaters?

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About one third of home fires involving fatalities are caused by smoking. Smoking in bed or improper disposal of ashes or butts endangers children sleeping in adjacent rooms who may be trapped in the event of fire.

Develop an escape plan in the event of a fire in the home. Identify appropriate exit routes and a family meeting point away from the house.

Buy a fire extinguisher for the home. The most common causes of home fires are cooking and heating equipment. Multipurpose dry chemical extinguishers should be available in the kitchen and in any room with a furnace or fireplace.

Install smoke alarms in your home. Most fire-related deaths occur at night and are the result of inhaling smoke or toxic gas. There is a critical period of 4 minutes to get outside after the alarm sounds. Smoke alarms are recommended for each floor, but particularly for furnace and sleeping areas. Alarms should be checked monthly. It is best to use smoke alarms that use long-life batteries, but if you do not, change the batteries at least once a year.

Do not drink or carry hot liquids when holding your child or when children are nearby. Scalds result from spilled hot food and drink; scalding injuries can be decreased by avoiding use of tablecloths and keeping cups and saucers from the edge of tables.

Erect barriers around space heaters. The use of space heaters, woodstoves, and kerosene heaters has been associated with severe burns to toddlers. Appropriate barriers should protect children.

WATER SAFETY

17. Do you leave the baby alone in or near a tub, pail of water, or toilet, even for a brief moment?
18. Do you have a pool or hot tub where you live?

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Never leave a child alone in or near a tub, pail, toilet, or pool of water. The bathtub is a source of severe scalding burns. If the phone or doorbell rings, don't leave an infant or toddler alone or with another child even for a moment. Baby bath seats are not safety devices and are not substitutes for adult supervision. Young children can drown in less than 2 inches of water.

Fence in your pool or hot tub on all 4 sides. Nationally, drowning is the third leading cause of injury-related death in children younger than 1 year. Four-sided fencing is the only scientifically proven way to prevent drownings in pools and hot tubs.

AUTO SAFETY

19. Do you use a car safety seat in the car on every trip at all times?
20. Does your car have a passenger air bag?
21. Where do you place your child's car safety seat in the car?

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Your child should ride in a car safety seat during every trip, even if you will only be traveling a short distance.

NEVER place an infant in front of an air bag.

Seat a child in the rear seat of the car. This is the safest place in the car. Infants should ride facing the rear of the car until they are at least 1 year of age AND at least 20 pounds.

BICYCLE SAFETY

22. Does your child ride on your bicycle with you?

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Do not carry children younger than 12 months on bicycles. Infants are too young to sit in a rear bike seat because they cannot yet sit well unsupported and their necks are not strong enough to support a helmet. Carrying children in backpacks or frontpacks is not recommended while bicycling.

FIREARM HAZARDS

23. Is there a gun in your home or the home where your child plays or is cared for?

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Remove all guns from places children live and play. More than 5,000 children and adolescents are killed by gunfire each year—injuries almost always inflicted by themselves, a sibling, or a friend. Handguns are especially dangerous. If you choose to keep a gun at home, store it unloaded in a locked place. Lock and store the ammunition in a separate place.