



COUNSELING GUIDELINES

From 1 to 4 Years (Part 1)

HOUSEHOLD HAZARDS

1. Do you leave your child alone at home?
2. Are any of your baby-sitters younger than 13 years?
3. Do you keep plastic wrappers, plastic bags, and balloons away from your children?
4. Do you know how to prevent your child from choking?
5. Do you have mechanical garage doors?
6. Are your operable window guards in place?
7. Is your child in the yard while the lawn mower is in use?
8. Do you place gates at the entrance to stairways (for children younger than 3 years)?
9. Is your baby's crib near a window or a drapery covering?

COUNSELING GUIDELINES

Never leave small children alone in the home. Parents should be aware of the child's rapid acquisition of new abilities.

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

Keep plastic bags and balloons out of reach. Plastic wrappers and bags form a tight seal if placed over the mouth and nose and may suffocate the child. Balloons can be inhaled into the windpipe and may result in death from choking.

Small objects and solid foods such as hot dogs, peanuts, grapes, carrots, or popcorn may block your child's airway. Any small objects that can be placed in the mouth are potential hazards. Children should not run or play while eating. Parents should learn CPR and emergency treatment for the choking child. Use the AAP brochure *Choking Prevention and First Aid for Infants and Children*.

Mechanical garage doors may crush a child. Install only garage door openers with sensors.

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. Windows should not be able to open more than 4 inches to prevent a child from falling through. Children leaning on screens can fall through and be seriously injured.

Keep small children out of the yard while the lawn mower is in use. Potential injury results from the machine itself and from objects thrown by the blade. Children should not be passengers on ride-on mowers.

Use gates on stairways. Use gates at the top and bottom of entrances to stairways because young children can quickly crawl or climb up the stairs from the lower level. Accordion-style gates are hazardous and can trap the child's head, causing death.

Place your baby's crib away from windows. Cords from window blinds and draperies can strangle your child. Tie cords high and out of reach.

10. Do you check for safety hazards in the homes of friends or relatives where your child may play?

Check for hazards in homes your child may visit. Other homes, especially those with no children or older children, may pose particular hazards from poisonings, falls, pools, and guns.

11. Have any of your children ever had an injury requiring a visit to the doctor or hospital?

Report any history of injuries to the pediatrician. The pediatrician is able to explore the causes and discuss preventive measures. It has been shown that stressful family situations can be causally linked to repeated injuries in children (3 or more injuries within 12 months). Also note that once an ingestion has occurred, another incident is likely within a year.

FIREARM HAZARDS

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

COUNSELING GUIDELINES

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 bullets in a separate place, and make sure to hide the keys to the locked boxes.

POISONINGS

13. Do you keep household products, medicines (including acetaminophen and iron), and sharp objects out of the reach of your child and in locked cabinets?

COUNSELING GUIDELINES

Keep medicines and hazardous products out of the sight and reach of children. Household products, medicines, and sharp objects should be stored locked in high places out of the child's sight. Keep household products in their original containers and never in food or beverage containers.

14. Do you dispose of old medicines?

Dispose of old medicines. All old medications should be safely disposed of by flushing them down the toilet.

15. Do you have safety caps on all bottles of medicine?

Purchase medicines with child-resistant safety caps. Remember to securely replace the cap and store the medicine out of the child's reach.

16. Does your child chew on paint chips or window sills?

Inspect walls for peeling paint. Paint that is peeling and chipped or is on chewable surfaces is a potential lead hazard. Approximately 85% of all homes built in the United States before 1978 have lead-based paint in them. Housing built before the 1950s poses particular risk for exposure to lead.

17. Do you have the number of the Poison Help Line by your phone?

Learn first aid for poisoning. Parents should be advised about the appropriate action to take when harmful substances have been ingested, and they should be told not to make their children vomit. Instruct parents to dispose of syrup of ipecac by flushing it down the toilet. Give them the telephone number of the national Poison Help Line, 1-800-222-1222.

18. How frequently is the heating system checked where you live?

Heating ventilation systems and fireplaces should be checked at least once a year. This annual inspection helps prevent carbon monoxide poisoning, fires, and system malfunction. Carbon monoxide detectors also are available to provide an early warning before the deadly gas builds up to a dangerous level.



COUNSELING GUIDELINES

From 1 to 4 Years (Part 2)

BURNS

1. Do you use electrical appliances in the bathroom?
2. Do you keep electrical appliances and cords out of your child's reach?
3. Do you keep matches and cigarette lighters out of the reach of your children?
4. Does anyone in your home ever smoke?
5. Do you have a plan for escape from the home in the event of a fire?
6. Do you have working fire extinguishers in your home?
7. Do you have working smoke alarms in your home?
8. Have you checked the temperature of the hot water where you live?
9. Do you keep the handles of pots and pans on the stove out of the reach of children?

COUNSELING GUIDELINES

Do not leave electrical appliances within the reach of a child in the bathroom. Electrical current hazards are increased by wetness. Appliances must be used with extreme caution in the presence of water.

Keep electrical cords out of a child's reach. Mouth burns in children can result from chewing on the end of a live extension cord or on a poorly insulated wire. Cords should not be within reach of a child.

Keep matches and lighters out of the reach of children. Annually, 5,600 fires are started by children younger than 5 years playing with matches and lighters. These fires cause 150 deaths per year.

Most deaths due to home fires 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. Twelve percent of residential fires are associated with smoking.

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. Do not use elevators in apartment buildings if there is a fire. Ask your fire department for help in designing an escape plan. Use the TIPP Safety Slip *Protect Your Home Against Fire...Planning Saves Lives*.

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

Install smoke alarms in your home. The majority of 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. Check the alarms 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.

Check hot water temperature. A third-degree burn can occur in only 6 seconds with a water temperature of 140°F. The temperature of your hot water should be no higher than 120°F. In many cases you can adjust your water heater.

Keep hot pots and pans out of the reach of children. Scalds in the kitchen are common; pot handles should be turned inward from the edge of the stove and be out of your child's reach. The kitchen is the most dangerous room for children. Keep children out of the kitchen when you are cooking, or put them in a playpen or high chair to keep them secure.

WATER SAFETY

10. Do you leave your child alone in the bathtub?
11. Do you take your child on a boat?
12. Do you have a pool or hot tub where you live?
13. Do you allow your child to swim unsupervised?

COUNSELING GUIDELINES

Don't leave your child alone in a tub, even for a moment. The bathtub is a source of severe scalds and also poses a potential drowning hazard. If the telephone or doorbell rings, don't leave your child alone or in the care of another child, even for a moment.

Always wear a Coast Guard-approved life jacket. Everyone on the boat should wear a Coast Guard-approved life jacket. At least 1 adult swimmer should be present for each child who cannot swim. Use the TIPP Safety Slip *Life Jackets and Life Preservers*.

Fence in your pool or hot tub on all 4 sides. Drowning is the second leading cause of injury-related death of children nationally in this age group. Four-sided fencing is the only scientifically proven way to prevent drownings in pools and hot tubs.

Do not let children swim without supervision. Never—not even for a moment—leave your children alone or in the care of another child in wading or swimming pools, spas, or other open standing water. A supervising adult should be within an arm's reach—providing “touch supervision”—whenever young children are in or around water.

BICYCLE SAFETY

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

COUNSELING GUIDELINES

Use an approved child carrier. Infants too young to sit in a rear bike seat should never be carried on a bicycle. Children 1 to 4 years of age who can wear a helmet may ride in a rear-mounted seat. Use of backpacks or frontpacks is not recommended. Parents should avoid riding in busy streets. With small children, falls frequently result in head injuries. Children should always wear a helmet that meets Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) or Snell Memorial Foundation standards.

AUTO SAFETY

15. How are your children restrained when they ride in a car?
16. Do you leave your child alone in the car?
17. Where do you seat your children in the car?
18. Does your car have a passenger air bag?
19. Do you lock the car doors before driving?
20. Does your child play in the driveway or in or near the street?

COUNSELING GUIDELINES

Children this age should always be properly restrained in a car safety seat. Select a car safety seat that fits your child's size and weight and that can be installed properly in your car. Your child should ride rear-facing until she is at least a year old AND weighs at least 20 pounds; it is even better for her to ride rear-facing to the highest weight and/or height her car safety seat allows. Use the seat every time you are in the car. Your child should use a car safety seat with a harness until she reaches the seat's upper weight limit or her ears come to the top of the seat, and then she should use a belt-positioning booster seat. Adults wearing seat belts are effective role models. Use the AAP brochure *Car Safety Seats: A Guide for Families* for a list of car safety seats that meet federal standards.

NEVER leave a child alone in a car. Children and car keys should always be removed from the car and the car kept locked. In addition to the many dangers of leaving children alone in the car, death from excess heat may occur in warm weather in a closed car in a short time.

Seat a child in the rear seat of the car. This is the safest place in the car. Never allow children to ride in the cargo area of a station wagon or truck.

Never put children in front of passenger air bags.

Buckle up and lock up! Before the car moves, all seat belts or child safety seats should be properly fastened and all doors should be locked.

Young children should not play in driveways or near busy streets. Parents should always walk behind the car before backing down a driveway. Children may not be seen in the rearview mirror and could be run over.

TOY SAFETY

21. Do you check your child's toys for safety hazards?

COUNSELING GUIDELINES

Inspect toys for safety hazards. Repair or discard broken toys. Inspect your child's toys for projectile and sharp parts or small detachable parts. Some toys may pose hazards from electric shock and burns. Toys intended for older children should not be accessible to toddlers and preschoolers. Follow age guidelines on toy packaging.