



# SAFE HOME

## Checklist



**For parents  
with children  
birth to  
6 years old**





# You can use this checklist to help make your home a **SAFE HOME** for your child.

- Take the list and go through your home.
- For each question, check **Yes** or **No**, depending on what you find in your home.
- If you check **Yes**, that part of your home is safe for young children.
- If you check **No**, you will need to make some changes to make your home safer.
- If you are renting, items with an asterisk (\*) are required of your landlord by the State Sanitary Code.



# KITCHEN Safety

**Are coffee, hot liquids, and hot foods out of your child's reach?**

- Yes       No

*"Out of reach"* means:

- not in the hands of an adult holding a child
- not at the edge of a counter or table
- not on a tablecloth which could be pulled down

*"Out of reach"* will change as your child grows. Keep checking!

**Are cleaning supplies stored out of your child's reach?**

- Yes       No







**Are cleaning supplies stored separately from food?**

- Yes       No

**Are food, treats, and other things your child might want stored away from the stove?**

- Yes       No

**Do you use extra care when cooking on the stove?**

- Yes       No

*“Extra care”* means

- turning pot handles toward the back of the stove
- testing food heated in the microwave to make sure it’s not too hot before you give it to your child
- keeping your child in a safe place while you cook

**Are knives and other sharp things kept out of your child’s reach?**

- Yes       No

**Do you keep small items and pieces of food that can choke your child out of their reach?**

- Yes       No

# BATHROOM Safety

**When your child is in the bathtub, are they watched ALL the time by an adult?**

Yes       No

- Children can drown in just a few inches of water and in just a few seconds.
- Children can be burned by turning on the hot water themselves.





**Are vitamins and medicines kept out of your child's reach?**

- Yes                       No

**Are electrical appliances unplugged, away from water and beyond your child's reach?**

- Yes                       No

- Electrical appliances such as radios, hair dryers, curling irons, and space heaters are very dangerous and can cause death if they are plugged in and fall into a bathtub or sink with water.
- "Safe" means electrical appliances are out of the bathroom.

**\*Is your hot water heater turned to a safe water temperature?**

- Yes                       No

- What temperature is your hot water heater set at?  
\_\_\_\_\_ degrees
- We recommend a temperature of 120 degrees Fahrenheit (120 °F) or less to prevent hot water burns.

# CHILD AREA Safety

**Have you set up your furniture away from windows so that small children cannot climb up to the windows and fall out?**

- Yes       No

**\*Do all windows have screens that are secure?**

- Yes       No

- Screens keep bugs out, but they do not keep kids in.

**Have you put window guards in those windows that might be easier for your child to reach?**

- Yes       No

**Are toddler gates used at the top and bottom of all stairs?**

- Yes       No

- Use hardware-mounted safety gates. Don't use an accordion-style gate. It can strangle your child and cause death.







### Does the crib mattress fit tight in the crib?

- Yes       No

- A mattress that fits loosely in the crib can cause your child to get stuck and injured or suffocated.
- “Tight” means no more than 2 fingers distance between the mattress and crib frame.

### Are the crib bars $2\frac{3}{8}$ inches or less apart?

- Yes       No

- Your child could be caught or strangled between bars that have more than  $2\frac{3}{8}$  inches of space between them.

### If you have a toy chest, is it safe?

- Yes       No

“Safe” means

- a VERY lightweight lid or no lid at all on the toy chest.
- no way for child to get locked inside.

### Is your furniture secured so that it will not tip over if your child climbs on it?

- Yes       No

- The furniture that can tip most easily onto your child includes:
  - book shelves or book cases
  - desks
  - dressers or bureaus
  - chests
  - TV stands
- Place TVs on low furniture, as far back as possible.
- Use angle-braces or anchor screws or bolts to fasten furniture to the wall.

# GENERAL HOME Safety

**\*Does your house or apartment have 2 exits without obstructions in case of fire or other emergencies?**

- Yes       No

**Are electrical cords out of your child's reach?**

- Yes       No

**Are all electrical and extension cords in safe condition?**

- Yes       No

- "Safe" means not frayed and not overloaded.

**Are indoor plants out of your child's reach?**

- Yes       No

- Some plants are poisonous.

**Are all space heaters safe?**

- Yes       No

"Safe" means all heaters are:

- out of your child's reach.
- approved by the Consumer Product Safety Commission.
- stable on the floor.
- with protective grating or other covering.
- at least 3 feet away from curtains, papers, and furniture.

**If you have a wood burning stove, is it in safe condition and out of your child's reach?**

- Yes       No

"Safe" means

- it has a yearly inspection of stove, stove pipe, and chimney.
- it has a protective screen around the stove.



**\*Are stairs, railings, porches, and balconies strong and in good condition?**

- Yes       No

**\*Is your house or apartment free of any loose or peeling paint?**

- Yes       No

- Children can be poisoned by eating lead paint.

**Has your child been tested for lead poisoning within the last 6 months?**

- Yes       No

**Are your basement and garage secured so that your child can not get into them?**

- Yes       No

- You should have a latch placed 5 feet or higher from the bottom of all doors to the garage and basement, out of your child's reach.

**If you have a pool, is it safe for children?**

- Yes       No

**"Safe" means**

- the pool is surrounded by a fence at least 4 feet high that cannot be climbed.
- the pool fence has a latch that can't be opened by a child.
- pool drains have special covers to keep children's arms and legs from being sucked in and trapped.
- all adults in your house know child CPR and know how to dial 9-1-1 for help in an emergency.

# Safety SUPPLIES

## **\*Do you have safe, working smoke alarms?**

Yes       No

### *“Safe”* means

- alarms are installed on the ceiling.
- alarms are installed one on every floor, in hallway outside sleeping areas, and at bottom of all stairways, including the basement.
- alarms are tested monthly.
- batteries are replaced once a year, or when low (beeping).





**Do you have working carbon monoxide detectors?**

- Yes                       No

- They should be placed near sleeping areas and in the basement.

**Do you have a Poison Control Center phone number sticker on or near your home telephone and is it programmed in to your cellphone?**

- Yes                       No

- You can get a sticker by calling the Poison Control Center toll-free at 1-800-222-1222.

**Do you have safety latches on cabinets and drawers that your child can reach and that contain anything dangerous, like cleaning supplies, medicine, alcohol, knives, or matches?**

- Yes                       No



# Safety PRACTICES

**Do you have a fire escape plan for your family? Have you practiced it?**

Yes       No

- Your family should have a meeting place outside.

**Are matches and lighters kept out of your child's reach?**

Yes       No

**If anyone in your home uses oxygen, do you make sure that no one smokes anywhere near them to prevent the very high risk of fire?**

Yes       No

**If anyone smokes in your home, do they make sure NOT to smoke in bed? No one should smoke near babies or children.**

Yes       No

**Does your child ride in a car safety seat or a booster seat in the back seat during all car travel?**

Yes       No

- The safest place for any child is in the backseat. For information on the proper seat for your child call 1-800-CAR SAFE (227-7328).

**Do you use your seat belt during all car travel to protect yourself and to set a good example for your child?**

Yes       No



STOP



DROP



ROLL YOUR BODY  
TO SMOTHER THE FIRE

**Does your child know how to “stop, drop, and roll” to put out flames if their clothes catch on fire?**

- Yes       No

**Do you always stay with your baby while they are on a high surface, like a changing table?**

- Yes       No

**Does your baby sleep safely?**

- Yes       No

*“Sleep safely” means*

- your baby is put to sleep on their back.
- your baby sleeps in their own crib and is never put down to sleep on a couch, chair, or water bed.
- your baby does not share a bed with adults, other children, or pets.
- there are no pillows, comforters, or soft toys in your baby’s crib.

**Are purses or bags with pills, cigarettes, matches, and small items that are easy to swallow and choke on kept out of your child’s reach?**

- Yes       No

**If you have a gun, is it safely out of reach?**

- Yes       No

*“Safely” means*

- the gun is stored unloaded, locked, and out of sight.
- ammunition is stored in a location that is locked and separate from the locked gun.

**When you finish this SAFE HOME Checklist, you will have taken a BIG STEP toward making your home safer for your children, as well as for yourself!**

List below any changes you need to make to have a safer home.

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- Do you need safety supplies? Try your local hardware store or home improvement store.
- Do you need information on how to get a home Sanitary Code inspection, or to have your child tested for lead? Call your local board of health or your town hall.
- For more information on child safety and injury prevention, please call **617-624-5450** (assistance available in other languages) or visit our website at:  
**[www.mass.gov/dph/injury](http://www.mass.gov/dph/injury)**



**Massachusetts Department of Public Health,  
Injury Prevention and Control Program**