



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.

- 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



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