



Home Safety

Idaho Falls Pediatrics is committed to reducing the impact of injuries on the lives of children and their families through services, research and advocacy. This [safety checklist](#) is intended to help you raise your IQ (Injury Quotient) — your ability to recognize potential dangers in and around your home. Take a moment to walk through your house using this checklist. These few minutes will be wisely invested in protecting your family from injuries.

Smoke, Heat, and Carbon Monoxide Detectors

The leading cause of deaths and injuries to children at home is accidents. Fires are one of the most dangerous of such accidents. Most fatal home fires occur at night, while people sleep. If you are asleep or become disoriented from toxic gases produced by a fire, you may not even realize that there is a fire. A smoke or heat detector can sound an alarm and alert you to the danger in time to escape.

Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas that is made by many household appliances (furnaces, dryers, ranges, ovens, and heaters). Usually, carbon monoxide and other gases are vented to the outside. But, if something goes wrong and carbon monoxide leaks into your home, it could be deadly. The alarm of a carbon monoxide detector will go off in time to get out before a normal adult starts feeling sick. Learn more about [smoke, heat, and carbon monoxide detectors](#).

Child Proofing Your Home

'Childproofing' the home is the best way to keep children safe where they live.

Here is a checklist, from Children's Mercy Hospitals and Clinics and the American Academy of Pediatrics, of things to watch out for to keep your child safe.

- Is there a working smoke detector on every level of the house and in the hallway outside of every bedroom?

- Is there a safety belt on your child's changing table to prevent falls?
- Are drapery and blind cords out of the baby's reach from the crib and changing table? They can strangle children if they are left loose.
- Have bumper pads, toys, pillows, and stuffed animals been removed from the crib by the time the baby can pull up to stand? If large enough, these items can be used as a step for climbing out.
- The slots on the baby's crib should be no more than 2 3/8 inches apart. Widely spaced slots can trap an infant's head.
- Are all screws, bolts and hardware, including mattress supports, in place to prevent the crib from collapsing?
- Check the crib for small parts and pieces that your child could choke on.
- Make sure that window guards are securely in place to prevent a child from falling out the window. Never place a crib, playpen, or other children's furniture near a window.
- To reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, SIDS, put your baby to sleep on their back in the crib with a firm, flat mattress and no soft bedding underneath.
- All medicines, toiletries, household cleaning products and other poisonous substances should be LOCKED up.
- In the bathroom is there a nonskid mat or no-slip strips in the bathtub?
- Are all hairdryers, curling irons, and other electrical appliances unplugged and stored well out of reach? They can cause burns or electrical injuries.
- Are there child-resistant safety latches on all cabinets throughout the house?
- Make sure the water coming from your tap is no greater than 120 degrees (this can be measured with a candy thermometer)?
- Keep sharp knives or other sharp utensils well out of the child's reach (using safety latches or high cabinets).
- Use the back burners and make sure hot handles on the stove are pointing inward so your child cannot reach up and grab them.
- Keep electrical appliance cords tucked away so they cannot be pulled on.
- Are edges and corners of tables padded to prevent injuries?
- Are houseplants out of your child's reach? Certain houseplants may be poisonous.
- Are there any unnecessary or frayed extension cords? Cords should run behind furniture and not hang down for children to pull on them.

For more childproofing information see the American Academy of Pediatrics website at www.aap.org.